



#VACCINESWORK

2019

WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK

**PROTECTED  
TOGETHER**



## IN THE LINE OF DUTY...



“My son was an angel - he had a short life in which he positively influenced the lives of many children,” said a teary-eyed Yousaf Khan, father of Sajidullah, 25, a local Vaccine Hero from Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who lost his life in a road accident in April 2019 - as he was on duty for his regular outreach visits.

Karak is an area characterized by rough terrains, underdeveloped road infrastructure, and a harsh weather. To make matters difficult, the local people used to believe in myths and superstitions related to vaccinations, consequentially reducing the immunization coverage of the area. This, however, was never a deterring factor for Sajidullah, who devoted his life to serving his community and ensuring full immunization coverage in his assigned catchment area. He was awarded the best vaccinator shield for his untiring commitment and his EPI center was declared as a model vaccination center of the district by the District Health Office.

"Sajidullah always wanted to become a doctor so he could work for the benefit of our community but due to financial constraints this dream could not become a reality. He chose to do what was possible and would still meet his vision, so he became a vaccinator for the Expanded Programme on Immunization. He felt content when he vaccinated children believing that by saving lives of children from vaccine preventable diseases, he is saving the future of our country," said Zulfiqar, Sajidullah's brother. He added with a smile, albeit painfully, "Sajidullah considered the EPI center his home and used to spend a portion of his pocket money in decorating and renovating the center."



Sajidullah's father, Younas Khan (middle), and brothers, Zulfiqar (left) and Abid (right)

When Sajidullah joined EPI in Banda Daud Shah Karak, it was one of the low performing areas of the district. It was due to his efforts in investing in strong relationships with the community, motivating his colleagues to work harder, and building trust regarding immunization that led to a gradual improvement in immunization coverage of the area. "Sajidullah had always been a trend setter. He had strong, innovative, and effective ideas which he also executed with remarkable passion," said Dr. Khalid, the EPI Coordinator of Karak and Sajidullah's supervisor.

He added, "We were having issues in creating demand for vaccination in Karak - Sajidullah identified that it was because of myths related to vaccines. He then involved religious leaders in his awareness campaigns and worked diligently, even during official holidays, to change perceptions of the local people. He has etched an eternal place in the hearts of the community members."

Sajidullah will be remembered forever by his colleagues and community members because of his friendly and lovable personality and his contribution to the area. Sajidullah was a Vaccine Hero who, in his short life, has become an inspiration for all of us.