



# COMMUNICATIONS UPDATES - EPI JUNE | 2019

## Federal EPI convenes a meeting to review and revise AEFI Reporting and Investigation Forms

Federal EPI convened a meeting of AEFI focal persons for revision of AEFI Reporting and Investigation tools. Purpose was to modify the tools for ease of use for field staff after acquiring useful inputs from provincial AEFI focal persons and building consensus on new tools before endorsement of Committee and Program Managers.

Both forms were revised during the meeting, inputs of participants were incorporated into the forms during the meeting. Final forms, obtained from Provincial AEFI focal persons were presented for consensus building at the end of the meeting.

Decisions taken at the meeting are as follow:

- Revised AEFI Reporting and Investigation forms will be shared with participants and core committee members and program managers for endorsement
- Reporting Form will also be translated for better understanding of field staff (one form will have both English and Urdu)
- Federal EPI will convene a meeting for revision of AEFI Guidelines/manual as soon as possible and crisis communication should be made an essential

Dr. Arshad Karim Chandio,  
NPM - Federal EPI  
attending Karachi Roadmap  
meeting with the team of  
Gavi and EPI Sindh



## Federal EPI holds an Orientation for students of Foundations University, College of Nursing

Federal EPI held an orientation for the students of Foundation University, College of Nursing. Young Nurses from the college participated in the orientation session. Dr. Hajr e Aswad, Assistant Director, Training and Dr. Raafia Azhar, Assistant Director Surveillance briefed the students on the functions, roles, and magnitude of the EPI Program.

Detailed presentation was given on the current surveillance system and monitoring mechanism to review and analyse EPI coverage and data collection from across the country. Students were also briefed on the technical aspects of administration of vaccine for various antigens followed by question/ answer session.

Documentary on child friendly character teeku (injection) was also screened for students to highlight the importance of communication activities in convincing parents to vaccinate the children.





## Consultative Process to finalize the Proposal for Health System Strengthening

A month long consultative process underwent to conceptualize, brainstorm, draft and finalize the proposal of HSS additional funding of Gavi.

Representatives from Gavi, EPI departments, partner organizations participated and deliberated to make an effective proposal.

Detailed discussions were undertaken to build consensus among all stakeholders on districts prioritization and areas identification, proposed activities for effective implementation.



# ACTIVITIES

Undertaken  
across Pakistan for  
EPI

## SINDH

### High Powered Mission Visits Federal EPI and Sindh and F to evaluate TCV introduction preparedness Level

The high Level Mission from WHO Headquarters, EMRO, UNICEF – Regional office and Gavi Secretariat along with Federal EPI and partner staffs from WHO and UNICEF country offices visited Sindh to review the preparedness for TCV campaign in selected cities of Sindh in October 2019 and subsequent introduction to RI.

The basic objectives of the visit were:

- **To review the plan** for the TCV campaign and subsequent introduction to RI, particularly, availability of TCV, identifying time lines and roles and responsibilities.
- To advocate with policy/decision makers on the importance of **robust preparations for a quality campaign**
- To follow up on the **engagement and synergy between EPI and PEI** for successful campaign.
- To advocate for **involvement other line ministries and department.**
- To discuss the **proposed budget** and highlight that **local resources** might be required to be mobilized

The Mission members appreciated the political commitment of Provincial leadership and health department in the entire process of TCV introduction. In this regard, the Mission also appreciated the close collaboration of partners including WHO, UNICEF, Gavi ,PPA, PPHI, USAID/JSI, Rotary International, AKU, Education department and CSOs



## Recommendations made by the Mission

While at the debriefing session with the Provincial EPI, Mission members recommended the following:

1. Roles and responsibilities among partners to be identified
2. Total provincial target for SIAs to be adjusted by provincial EPI and aligned with the national application and subsequently distribution plan for vaccine
3. District specific population and resource envelop for each district should be communicated to district for microplanning well in advance.
4. SIA will be implemented in one phase over 12 working days. However, where needed, can be extended till target is achieved.
5. To mobilize maximum Human Resource
6. Domestic resources to be mobilized
7. Partners and donors may be reached for resource mobilization.
8. AEFI system should be well functional during TCV SIAs
9. Risk communication strategy should be in place.
10. Keep the momentum of further building routine immunization system after the successful measles SIA especially through:
  - a. Quality microplanning
  - b. Effective monitoring and supervision
  - c. Zero dose & defaulter tracing
  - d. Strengthening AEFI
  - e. Effective implementation of the routine immunization activities
  - f. Collaboration with EOC
11. Provincial authorities to make efforts to control Typhoid outbreak and ensure safe water supply and promote sanitation through health education.

## **BALUCHISTAN**

### **Balochistan holds an Event on Maternal and Child Health – The Islamic Perspective**

#### **Zoheb Qasim**

The event took place at Quetta Serena Hotel, chaired by Minister Finance Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi and facilitated by additional secretary Health Asadullah Khan Kakar.

Dr. Tariq Jaffar (Divisional Director - Quetta Division) presented a comprehensive overview of situation and key indicators of health.

Following the presentation of the department of health “Tafseer” from the Quran was presented by Professor Dr. Atta Ur Rehman. All major Health related topics relating to maternal and child health were discussed in detail

related topics relating to maternal and child health were discussed in detail including immunization, breastfeeding, infant and young child feeding, birth spacing etc.

Provincial Chief of UNICEF Ms. Reem Tarazi thanked the participants for their participation and requested for support of the health department in improving the health indicators to save lives of the mothers and children in Balochistan and play a role in the prosperity of the society.

In addition, Dr. Faheem Khan (MS BMCH) and representatives of media (Shahzada Zulfiqar), NGO network (Mr. Amanullah Khan) and others also expressed their views regarding importance of health in improving the lives of the people and economic prosperity of the country.



## **PUNJAB**

### **EPI Punjab holds a Training on ILR and Cold Chain**

The Expanded Program on Immunization Punjab organized training on ILR and Cold Chain at the Directorate office of General Health Services Punjab on 20 May. Director EPI Dr. Saeed Akhtar chaired the proceedings. All districts EPI Focal Persons attended the training.

The UNICEF vaccine management staff highlighted vaccine wastage rate of different districts for all antigens. Comparative analysis of wastage rate for previous polio campaigns and post campaign stock taking mechanism was analyzed. The participants were apprised of the salient features of the vLMIS and how it can be helpful in getting status and maintenance of stock in the provincial office. The DHS EPI shared video training modules that have been prepared and available online as well.

Effective cold chain system is a backbone of the EPI program. It needs continuous training, refreshers and cascade trainings, to be conducted at district level, said Director EPI, Punjab. The DHS EPI further expressed concern that district vaccine management committees were not effectively being utilized as were supposed to be. The OPV stock and its wastage rate was discussed both for RI and Polio SIAs. The system of cold chain maintenance was also explained to the participants.

# KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

## Bottleneck Analysis for Demand Generation in Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Huma Nayab

To know the factors associated with low coverage rates, a comprehensive Bottleneck Analysis was conducted in Dera Ismail Khan at both district and union council level to assess the gaps in demand-side of immunization services. The aim was to take the perspective of community, health care providers and senior management, religious leaders and academics/school teachers.

### Findings

#### ***Perceptions of Health Officials on Demand Generation***

The officials of health facilities were interviewed to assess the perceptions on social mobilization needs and the bottlenecks they observed. From the interviews, the impact of supply-side shortages and community related issues were assessed. It was found that the community attitudes are affected by the following:

### **Observations**

#### **1. Attitude of people regarding Routine Immunization**

- a. Depends on literacy level of the community, the coverage rate is high where people are literate while low on the other side
- b. Low awareness of the community
- c. Get influenced by religious & political bodies
- d. Measles vaccine acceptance is high as significantly promoted

#### **2. Any social Mobilization plan developed & implemented for EPI Demand generation**

- a. Polio communication plan implemented under EPI-PEI synergy with support of partner staff
- b. CMWs developed plan including promotion of EI

#### **3. Key issues of low EPI coverage, considering community issues and external factors**

- a. Community expressed its concerns over fever following administration of Penta vaccine.
- b. Misconception towards vaccine was linked with Low literacy rate
- c. Difficulty in access to health facilities & non-LHW catchment areas
- d. Poor Inter personal communication skills of Vaccinator & LHW
- e. Low capacity of HR to involve community and address their concerns

*The Bottleneck Analysis was carried out to:*

*To identify demand-side barriers in Routine Immunization.*

*To identify the factors associated with low-immunization coverage in-terms of access to health facilities.*

*To develop an appropriate communication plan based on the findings.*



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- f. No liaison between EPI and pediatrician.
  - g. Spread of rumors and ineffective ways of controlling them
  - h. Repeated campaign.

### ***Community Perceptions at Union Council Level***

The perspectives were observed from the community, the religious representative and parents. The responses from the key-informants were gathered from semi-structured questionnaires. They further provided recommendations/suggestions for removing disparities between service delivery and demand generation.

#### **1. Barriers identified by Academia Representative in EPI services**

- a. Negative propaganda/rumors against Vaccine preventable diseases
- b. No proper mechanism to reach population on move, IDPs and nomad

#### **2. Suggestions by Academic Representative in EPI services**

- a. At time of admission EPI card should be mandatory to promote vaccination.
- b. Benazir income and sehat insaf cards may also be linked with immunization

#### **3. Barriers identified by Religious Representative in EPI services**

- a. Lack of knowledge
- b. Community following ill rumors
- c. Propagation of myths that immunization is foreign agenda
- d. Community perspective/concern increasing on free provision of vaccine.
- e. Community concerns on Government focusing only on vaccination program and not on other requirements

#### **4. Suggestions by Religious representatives**

- a. Mass campaign to raise community awareness
- b. Liaison with religious imams of society to support program
- c. Involve doctors in promotion of EPI services as doctors are the most trusted professional.

#### **5. Barriers identified by HF Incharge in EPI services**

- a. No mechanism for identification of Missed/zero dose
- b. Registration of the target children
- c. Budget provision for communication activities
- d. Overburdened vaccinator

#### **6. Suggestions by HF-Incharge**

- a. Counseling of the parents
- b. Outreach plan must be shared in advance with the community for their availability and consideration
- c. Awareness sessions through community meetings

Focus-group discussion was conducted with the parents of fully immunized, partial immunized & zero dose children to have a snapshot on barriers that come in the way of completion of vaccination course.

## AZAD JAMMU KASHMIR

### Partners Coordination Committee Meeting in Azad Jammu Kashmir for EPI and PEI

**Raja Babar**

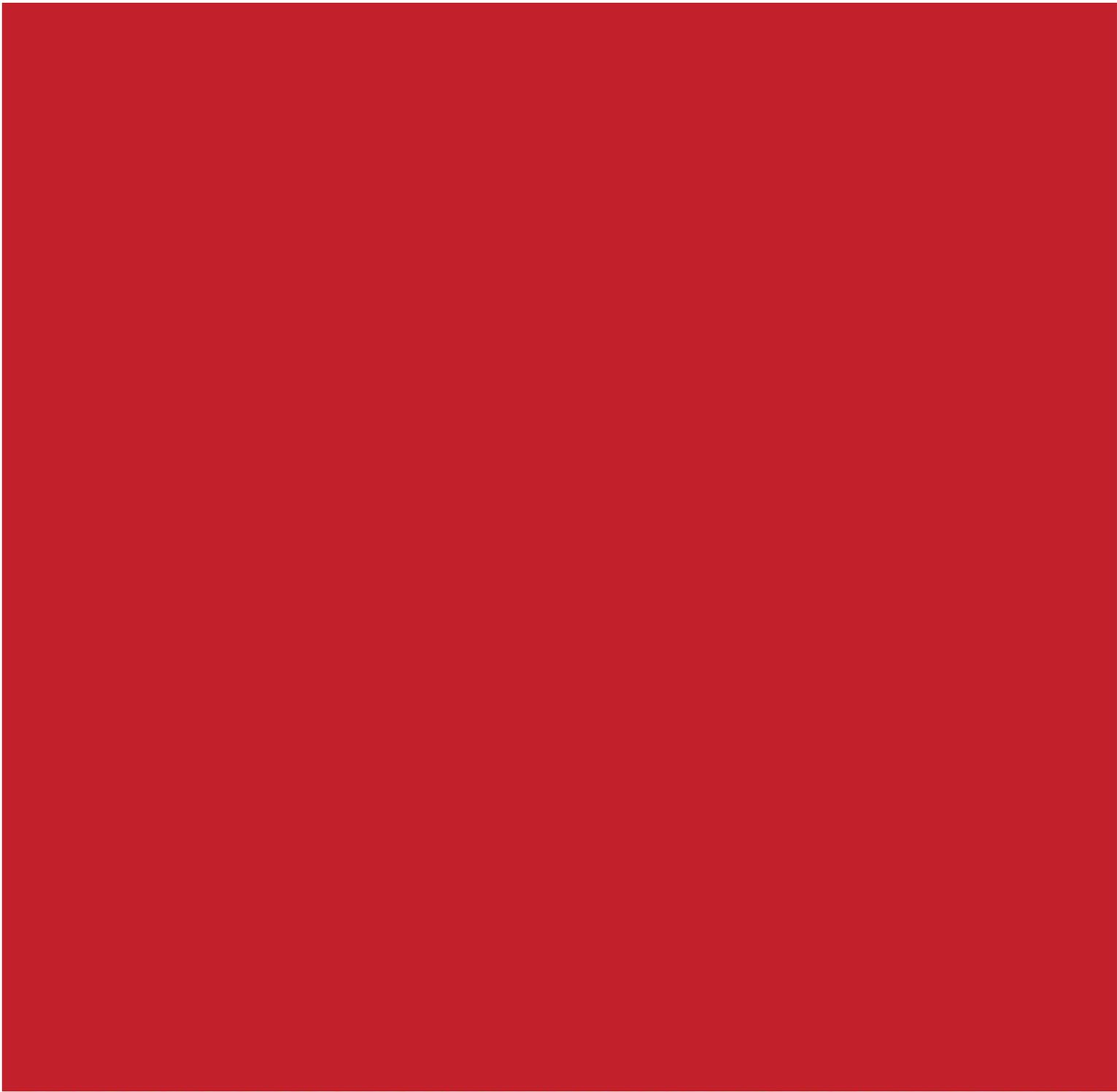
A meeting of the Partner's Coordination Committee was held on 14th May 2019 at 12:00 pm in Muzaffarabad. The meeting was chaired by Program Manager, EPI-AJK Dr. Bushra Shams. Committee took important decisions under the chairpersonship of Dr. Bushra Shams.

The chair directed to issue a letter to all districts for timely sharing the list of zero dose children found during the NID's and advised to follow and correspond with all DSV for the compilation of zero dose children lists. During the discussion, the chair also advised to ensure the involvement of Vaccinators as Area incharge instead of UCMO's for the Polio NID's.

During the discussion, the EPI ManagerAJK, also directed the formation of High Risk Mobile Population (HRMP) Task Team at AJK to identify, track and vaccinate high risk and mobile population.

“All important cultural and religious events to be held in Shrines in the AJK need to be capitalized as an opportunity to raise awareness about Routine Immunization to vaccinate eligible children against polio”, said Dr. Bushra





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