

# NEWSLETTER

Vol: 2 | Issue No. 9 | September 2021



## EXPANDED PROGRAM ON IMMUNIZATION

Federal EPI Cell, PM National Health Complex, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad.

Tel: 051-9255101 | Fax: 051-9255086 | [f](#) | [t](#) | [i](#) | @epipakistanofficial | [epi.gov.pk](http://epi.gov.pk)





## PATRON:

DR. RANA MUHAMMAD SAFDAR

DR. MUHAMMAD AKRAM SHAH

## PROFOUND CONTRIBUTORS:

DR. MUKHTAR AHMED

Director Health Services, EPI-Punjab

DR. IRSHAD MEMON

Additional Director, EPI-Sindh

DR. MUHAMMAD ARIF

Director, EPI-KP

DR. MUHAMMAD ISHAQUE PANEZAI

Project Coordinator, EPI-Balochistan

DR. ABDUL SATTAR

Provincial Program Manager, EPI -AJK

DR. MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Provincial Program Manager, EPI-Gilgit

DR. HASAN OROOJ

Director General Health Services, CDA-ISB

DR. ZAEEM ZIA

District Health Officer, ICT

## EDITORS:

DR. SOOFIA YUNUS

DR. ZAREEF UDDIN KHAN

DR. M. SARBULAND KHAN

## THIS ISSUE INCLUDES UPDATES FROM:

- FEDERAL EPI
- PUNJAB EPI
- SINDH EPI
- KP EPI
- BALOCHISTAN EPI
- AJ&K EPI
- GB EPI
- CDA EPI
- ICT EPI

## WRITTEN & COMPILED BY:

MS. ZARTASHA NIAZI

MR. ZAHID WASIF

## DESIGN BY:

REHAN SALEEM

# CONTENT LIST

## PAGE 3

### Groundbreaking Ceremony for EPI Dry Store

Groundbreaking ceremony of EPI dry Store was held at Federal EPI, Islamabad on September...

## PAGE 4

### EPI Steering Committee Meeting

The EPI steering committee meeting was held on September 11. The steering committee of...

## PAGE 5

### Infotainment: A Gaming Application 'EPI Rehnuma' for knowledge management

EPI gamification application was rolled out in 30...

## PAGE 6

### Cascade training on Interpersonal Communication Skills for Immunization for Vaccinator of Balochistan

Federal EPI conducted two (2) day Training on" ...

## PAGE 7

### Provincial TOT of MR Catch-up Campaign

Following the National TOT, EPI-KP conducted provincial ToT of Measles Rubella campaign from...

### Inauguration of EPI Data Center

To strengthen the monitoring, evaluation, learning and accountability system of immunization data, EPI GB ...

## PAGE 8

### EPI Monthly Meeting

EPI monthly meeting was chaired by Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, EPI Focal Person. During the meeting Identified...

### COVID-19 Vaccination at Medical Center G-9

Medical Center G-9 CDA is providing COVID-19 vaccination facility to the general public. Being...

## PAGE 9

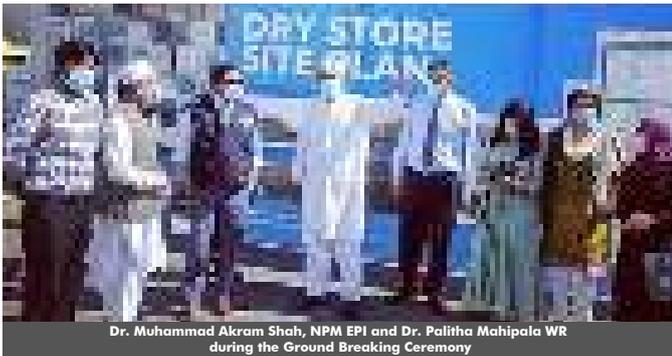
### Training for upcoming NIDs

Trainings were conducted in all 10 districts of AJK before the upcoming NIDs on September 8th...

## FEDERAL

### Groundbreaking Ceremony for EPI Dry Store

Groundbreaking ceremony of EPI dry Store was held at Federal EPI, Islamabad on September 24th, Dr. Muhamad Akram Shah, NPM-EPI and Dr. Palitha Mahipala, WR Pakistan jointly inaugurated the event that formally marked the beginning of another milestone towards enhancing the vaccine storage capacity of Federal EPI. Dr. Akram Shah in his speech stated that it would go a long way in providing additional space for the storage of COVID-19 and the Measles-Rubella vaccine supplies.



Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, NPM EPI and Dr. Palitha Mahipala WR during the Ground Breaking Ceremony

### National Training of Trainers on Measles-Rubella Catch-up Campaign

Federal EPI successfully organized the training of 1st and 2nd batch of master trainers on upcoming measles-rubella campaign. The four day training fully equipped the two batches with various tools and materials to ensure the smooth run of campaign in their provinces/areas. The participants from all the provinces/area participated in workshop and took active part in enrich discussions. The training of 1st and 2nd batch was organized from September 13th – 16th, at Federal EPI. Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, NPM EPI chaired whereas the Deputy NPM, EPI convened the significant capacity building intervention.

During these four days the participants were oriented on all aspects of campaign inclusive of campaign strategy development, cold chain management, vaccine administration, injection safety, AEFI Management and crisis communications, ACSM activities, waste management and many others. The National MR Campaign is planned to be conducted from 15th to 27th November, 2021. The measles-rubella campaign is largest one in country as it will reach out to around 91.5 million children across Pakistan. The nationwide campaign will help to control and eliminate measles-rubella in the country.



Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, NPM EPI addressing the participants of National TOT on MR Campaign Preparation

### Round table discussion with Entrepreneurs

A roundtable meeting with the theme "Children FIRST"- Accelerating Action for Immunization" was organized at on September 14th. The initiative was led by Dr. Shahzad Asif Baig, NEOC Coordinator, attended by Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, NPM EPI and senior entrepreneurs from both the corporate and humanitarian sectors of Pakistan. The idea was to identify common grounds and areas of mutual interest to help the Polio Eradication Initiative with the last mile towards making Pakistan a Polio Free country, on the other hand to assist the Expanded Programme on Immunization in routine immunization interventions to prevent the targeted 12 vaccine preventable diseases.



Dr. Shahzad Baig, NEOC Coordinator and Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah at the Head Table of Round Table Meeting

### Training of Vaccinators

10 days training of Master Trainers on Newly Developed EPI Modules, a capacity building initiative by Federal EPI, Health Services Academy and UNICEF was organized from 23rd August to 3rd, September, 2021 for Participants from Khyberpaktunkhwa and Merged Districts. This was the 2nd batch out of total four batches trained. Dr. Niaz Muhammad, DG Health Services, KP presided over as the Chief Guest whereas top Govt. health officials inclusive of Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, NPM EPI and Dr. Muhammad Arif, Director KP EPI were present at the head table to grace the closing ceremony.



Dr. Niaz Muhamamd DG, Health KP Addressing the participants of Training of Vaccinators

## PUNJAB

### EPI Steering Committee Meeting

The EPI steering committee meeting was held on September 11. The steering committee of the Expanded Program on Immunization met at the Directorate General Health Services Punjab on special directions of Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid. The Chairman National Immunization Technical Advisory Group and Chairman EPI Steering Committee, Professor Tariq Iqbal Bhutta reviewed the surveillance data leading to the upcoming Measles Rubella Campaign scheduled in November, 2021. He said periodic review of existing data shall continuously be made with larger focus on routine immunization.

Director Headquarter DG Office Dr. Suhail Rana chaired the proceedings and Director Health Services EPI Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed shared measles data from 36 districts. The meeting was also attended by experts from Children Hospital and Child Health University, University of Health Sciences, Institute of Public Health, Representative of Pakistan Pediatric Association; technical experts from WHO, Unicef, Gates Foundation and senior officials from the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department.

The Director Health Services EPI Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed presented countdown calendar for Measles Rubella campaign with details of microplanning activities, campaign roadmap and activities timelines, resource plan, microplanning process, desk review and field validation, school vaccination plan, Readiness Assessment Tools, challenges and way forward.

The Director Health Services EPI also shared that the last Measles SIA was conducted in 2018 and cases had reduced significantly then. However, resurgence of cases was reported from across the country in the last one year hence the Federal government in consultation with Provinces had decided to hold the campaign in November with addition of Rubella antigen. He said Punjab had reported measles outbreaks in 14 districts in last 8 months. WHO Technical Officer shared that international tools were being used and a dashboard was also developed for the campaign. Unicef representative shared that out of school children must be included through special strategies.

Director Headquarter Dr. Sohail Rana said EPI was the backbone and most important program of the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department. He said Punjab had achieved all of its Disbursement Linked Indicators and this was made possible through hard work of frontline workers.



Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid chairing the meeting

### BMGF Team calls on Health Minister, Punjab

Health Minister Punjab, Dr. Yasmin Rashid met with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in her office on September 15th. Punjab Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid stressed on the synergy between Polio Program and the Expanded Program on Immunization working as one team.

In a meeting with a delegation of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Health Minister said that special focus must be given on birth registration. Present in the meeting were Additional Secretary Coordination Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Ms. Sundas Irshad, PEOC Technical Focal Person BMGF Dr. Naeed Majeed and Dr. Zeina Ali Siam.

The Health Minister said, "The government is utilizing all resources to eradicate polio. A central data repository was developed to register polio vaccination record of children. Overall 90% routine immunization coverage was achieved in the province. We are restructuring and scaling up the Expanded Program on Immunization. Dr. Zeina Ali Siam from BMGF appreciated Punjab efforts for PEI and EPI and assured complete support from her organization.



BMGF Team meeting with the owner honourable on Health Minister, Punjab

### Trainings of District Monitors for MR Catch-up Campaign

Two-day training of district monitors was conducted on September 21-22nd to provide the new staff round up of the campaign activities so far and familiarize them with microplanning and reporting tools, effective cold chain management and communication activities. Director Health Services EPI, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed was the chief guest in training session. The chair welcomed the participants after formal introduction and presented the Measles Rubella Campaign that will be held across the country in November 2021. He provided brief introduction on the EPI program and appreciated the contribution of all partners. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed shared that these monitors shall provide support to the district staff underscoring the importance of the meeting



Trainings of District Monitors for MR Catch-up Campaign

## PUNJAB

timelines without compromise on the quality of work. DHS EPI shared 14 districts had reported 63 measles outbreaks in last eight months and 78% of children who contracted measles fall in the age bracket for the upcoming MR campaign. The technical session of the training covered microplanning activities, campaign roadmap & activities timelines, resource plan, microplanning process for MR Campaign, School Vaccination Plan, Readiness Assessment Tool, and Challenges & Way Forward.

### Provincial Workshop on Desk Review and Field Validation of MR Micro Plan

Director Health Services Expanded Program on Immunization Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed presented main agenda items and shared the preparations of campaign. Provincial and Divisional Health Director, Monitors and technical staff from WHO and UNICEF attended the workshop. WHO Technical Officers shared latest monitoring and reporting tools along with audio visual demonstrations. International level reporting tools were used in the campaign. The WHO has also shared the latest dashboard for MR catch-up campaign with the participants.



Provincial Workshop on Desk Review and Field Validation of MR Micro plan

### EPI MR Technical Sub Committee Meeting

DHS EPI called the meeting of MR sub-committee meeting on September 28th with partner staff and review the tasks at hand, identify bottlenecks and provide suggestions on areas requiring immediate attention. The chair welcomed the participants and after formal introduction, Director Health Services EPI Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed presented the main agenda item i.e. Measles Rubella Campaign that will be conducted across the country in November 2021.

Dr. Imran Qureshi, Technical Officer, EPI shared details of the microplanning activities, campaign activities timelines, resource plan, microplanning process for MR Campaign, school vaccination plan, readiness assessment tool, challenges & way forward. The convener shared that the last Measles SIA was organized in 2018 and cases had reduced significantly after that campaign.



EPI MR Technical Sub Committee Meeting

## SINDH

### Infotainment: A Gaming Application 'EPI Rehnuma' for knowledge management

EPI gamification application was rolled out in 30 districts of Sindh. The application that can be downloaded free of cost is currently available in the full version on Google Playstore, with the full set of 6 training modules for vaccinators to explore. During the training sessions, vaccinators in all districts have provided with a positive feedback on the modules to test their knowledge and concepts. The leaderboard in the app showcases the high level of interest being taken by most districts to participate and earn recognition. EPI Rehnuma aims to make refresher training and a more engaging and convenient experience for vaccinators across Sindh. Being very user friendly, vaccinators can access the app at their own time and convenience and gain the benefit of learning through play to improve their performance and enhance their skills.



Orientation on EPI Rehnuma

### Training on Birth Registry Feature

In collaboration with EPI Sindh, IRD Global and UNICEF through the birth registry team successfully planned and implemented training sessions with vaccinators on Zindagi Mehfooz's Birth Registry features. The sessions were conducted at government health facilities with the purpose of equipping trainees with the expertise required to use the Birth Registry feature.

Birth Registry equip and enable the area vaccinators to follow up with and track pregnant women along with their newborns, link them to immunization services, and form a complete tracking system with the aim to eliminate as many zero dose cases as possible. This also facilitate gender equity as it has the potential to facilitate thousands of women with the service and support that is necessary to ensure safe deliveries and immunization of their children.



Training on Birth Registry Feature

# BALUCHISTAN

## Cascade training on Interpersonal Communication Skills for Immunization for Vaccinator of Balochistan

Federal EPI conducted two (2) day Training on “Interpersonal Communication Skills for Immunization” based on global IPC toolkit in Quetta in different batches. The main aim of the training was to improve the IPC skills of vaccinators. The training enhanced their skill to engage and mobilize caregiver/communities to bring their children to fixed centers for vaccination. Facilitators from UNICEF capitalized on a hybrid training module for maximum knowledge transformation.



1st batch 2 days divisional ToT for MR catch-up campaign



IPC Training of District Quetta Vaccinators

## Meeting of the Advocacy, communication and social mobilization committee for Measles-Rubella catch-up campaign

Meeting of ACSM Measles Rubella catch-up campaign committee was conducted on Friday 3rd September, 2021. The meeting was chaired by provincial coordinator EPI to discuss in detail the preparation of upcoming measles rubella campaign. The agenda of the meeting also included to bring on board external stakeholders like representatives from Pakistan Pediatric Association, Pakistan Medical Association etc. to play their role in pre and during campaign for awareness creation.

## Two days Training of Districts Consultant & Monitors for MR Catch-up Campaign

EPI Balochistan successfully conducted two days training on “Measles Rubella Catch-up Campaign” for districts consultant and monitors of Balochistan from 21st to 22nd September. The training facilitators conducted different sessions to build the capacity of participants on vaccines & diseases, vaccination techniques, immunization safety, cold chain, monitoring, supportive supervision, R & R tools, MIS and effective communication skills etc.



1st batch 2 days training of Districts Consultant & Monitor for MR catch-up campaign



Meeting of Measles-Rubella SIA Coordination, Advocacy & communication committee

## Two Days Divisional ToT for MR Catch-up Campaign

Two days divisional Training of Trainers on “Measles Rubella Catch-up Campaign” was conducted in Quetta on September 27th -28th. The main aim of the training was to equip participants with enough knowledge on the roll out of upcoming measles-rubella campaign. The nationwide campaign will provide protection to children (9 month to less than 15 years old) against deadly measles and rubella virus which is extremely contagious.



## KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

### Provincial TOT of MR Catch-up Campaign

Following the National TOT, EPI-KP conducted provincial ToT of Measles Rubella campaign from September 27th to 5th of October in Swat. More than 270 participants were trained in twelve batches from 36 districts. Each batch was trained for 2 days. Additional Director General Health Services, Director EPI & Federal EPI representatives monitored the training sessions. Districts have developed the cascade training plan and started trickling down the knowledge to UCs level.



Dr Ikram Ullah-ADG Health KP addressing the MR Training participants

### Advocacy meetings for EI & MR Catch-up Campaign

For strengthening essential immunization and successful conduction of MR campaign, Provincial EPI KP held a series of advocacy meetings with different stakeholders. In this regard a session was conducted with key religious leaders from all over KP on September 9.

In another meeting, Director EPI and EPI team met with the chairperson of provincial standing committee on Health Ms. Rabia Basri. The coordination meeting were also organized with the education department, rescue 1122, PPA and PMA representatives (KP Chapter). All stakeholders ensured their full support for the upcoming MR SIA.



Advocacy meeting with Chairperson Health Standing Committee, Ms Rabia Basri

## GILGIT BALTISTAN

### Inauguration of EPI Data Center

To strengthen the monitoring, evaluation, learning and accountability system of immunization data, EPI GB established a data cell in collaboration with the Aga Khan University. The inaugural ceremony was held on September 6th in Gilgit. The Chief Guest Secretary Health, Mir Waqar Ahmed inaugurated the data center along with Director EPI and officials from the Aga Khan University.



Secretary Health, Mir Waqar Ahmed Inaugurating the EPI Data Center

### Orientation of Consultants & Monitors for MR Catch-up Campaign

Orientation session for the newly hired district consultants and monitors for Measles Rubella catch-up Campaign was conducted in Gilgit. Director EPI GB, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal chaired the session. The Technical Officer EPI-WHO briefed the participants on upcoming MR Campaign and the important role that they are expected to play during the campaign make it a successful campaign.



Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Director EPI GB chairing the meeting

### Micro-Plan Desk Review of MR Catch-up Campaign

The micro-plans were developed for upcoming MR catch-up campaign in Gilgit-Baltistan. The desk review remained to be a continuous process during the month of September reviewing all developed micro-plans through NEOC Application. All Government and partner staff including WHO-EPI/PEI, district monitors and consultants have started desk reviews of micro-plans and it will be completed before cascade trainings on MR catch-up campaign.



## ICT

### EPI Monthly Meeting

EPI monthly meeting was chaired by Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, EPI Focal Person. During the meeting Identified gaps were discussed and guidance was given to all EPI staff members to improve the EPI coverage. The main agenda of the meeting was to review the preparation status of MR Campaign in the areas of cold chain management, campaign strategy development, vaccine administration, injection safety, AEFI Management and crisis communications, ACSM activities, waste management and other aspects.



Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, EPI Focal Person ICT Chairing a meeting on MR campaign

### Visit to Vaccination Centers

Representative of WHO (WR) and Dr. Zaeem Zia, District Health Officer visited the COVID-19 vaccination center and met with polio teams in the field. Both the representative appreciated the untiring efforts of health care providers. The polio team also shared the challenges and concerns for further action.



Dr. Zaeem Zia and Dr. Palitha Mahipala with field teams

## CDA

### COVID-19 Vaccination at Medical Center G-9

Medical Center G-9 CDA is providing COVID-19 vaccination facility to the general public. Being located in the heart of city and center point of public transport, it serves as a hub to cater for most of the urban population of Islamabad. All credit goes to the CDA/MCI team for organizing the vaccination drive in a very organized manner.

### Training of UCMOS/1st Level Supervisors for MR Catch-up Campaign

Training of UCMO/1st level supervisors was conducted in Islamabad dated 29 Sep to 8th Oct. During the training the participants were oriented on all pre, during and post campaign aspects inclusive of campaign strategy, cold chain management, vaccine administration, injection safety, AEFI Management and crisis communications, ACSM activities, waste management and many others.



Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah NPM EPI Delivering his remarks

### Polio Eradication Initiative/Polio SIA:

With the support of NEOC and IPCR, entire CDA portion was converted into special mobile team area. The SIA was successfully completed and overall 98% coverage of PCM assessed by WHO. Further, 70% LQAS lots are passed for NID Sep 2021. Under the chairman ship of DC Islamabad, Polio Review meeting was conducted at Chief Commissioner Office ICT Islamabad on October 5th, 2021.



DC Islamabad chairing the Polio review meeting (With MR discussion points)

## AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR

### Training for upcoming NIDs

Trainings were conducted in all 10 districts of AJK before the upcoming NIDs on September 8th -11th to ensure the preparedness. The teams were trained on tally sheet marking, door marking, finger marking and IPC skills using the stall method which is a great way as it gives the best understanding to the participants.

### National ToT on Measles Rubella Campaign

Measles and rubella campaign is planned to be conducted from November 15 to November 27, 2021. To enhance the capacity of AJK front line health workers a training of trainers on measles rubella campaign was conducted from September 13-16th, 2021. During the four days training the participants were oriented on all aspects of campaign inclusive of cold chain management, campaign strategy development, vaccine administration, injection safety, AEFI Management and crisis communications, ACSM activities, waste management and many others. The nationwide Measles and rubella campaign is planned to be conducted from November 15 to November 27, 2021. It will target children from 9 months to less than 15 years of age for immunization against measles and rubella through Expanded Program on Immunization across Pakistan.



National ToT on Measles Rubella Campaign in progress



**Expanded Program  
on Immunization**  
Government of Pakistan

