

Media Release

Reaching out Every Child is convenient now - Vaccinators on Wheels

In a bid to strengthen the capacity of the EPI program through facilitating the mobility of vaccinators of the Immunization Program, Federal EPI through National Immunization Support Project – NISP procured and handed over motorbikes to the vaccinators.

Based on the need of the area, the motorbikes are distributed to the vaccinators of federating areas (AJK, ICT/CDA, KPTD and Gilgit-Baltistan). Total of 1254 motorbikes have been handed over to the vaccinators of the federating areas; i-e 42 motorbikes are handed over to the vaccinators of Islamabad (CDA/ICT), 376 motorbikes to AJK, 662 motorbikes are handed over to the EPI program of KPTD 164 motorbikes to G-B while 10 motorbikes are with the Federal EPI. Vaccinators are considered as the backbone of the EPI program as they reach every corner of the country to vaccinate all eligible children against vaccine preventable diseases. Mobility of the vaccinators is seen as a main hindrance in order to complete their tasks. Therefore provision of vehicles is a much needed intervention that will facilitate in improving the performance and address the issue of mobility of vaccinators

Earlier to this, 1130 motorbikes have been procured by the EPI Punjab for their vaccinators in 2018-19, similarly EPI Sindh has arranged 500 motorbikes in 2018. Balochistan and KP EPI programs had arranged 300 and 658 motorbikes respectively in recent past.

Given the enormous impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the essential Immunization Services also faced a huge brunt as the coverage went down. Realizing the severity of the situation, the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination took major steps to reinvigorate the program. Based on the evidence, the Program identified the low coverage areas to accelerate outreach activities to cover children in pockets, establishment and refurbishment of existing EPI centres is also one of major steps towards strengthening the basic health structures for the essential Immunization services. To strengthen the program structures and utilize the optimum resources, integration of EPI and PEI is also bearing results in reaching every last child.

The objective of the National Immunization Support Project for Pakistan is to increase equitable coverage of immunization against vaccine preventable diseases (VPD). The Expanded program of Immunization is being supported through a multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) established under National Immunization Support Project (NISP) managed by the World Bank with funding from Gavi, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID.

Immunization services are being provided through Fixed sites, outreach services and mobile strategy for protecting target population against 10 Vaccine preventable diseases and approximately same number of Pregnant women and women of child bearing age by vaccinating them against Tetanus. Government of Sindh has recently introduced Typhoid Conjugate vaccine in its Routine Immunization Schedule. Other provinces also plan to introduce TCV in their EPI schedule in 2020.
