

MOST IMMEDIATE

**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINISTRY OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES
(HEALTH SECTION)**

No. 16(22) HPC/2020

Islamabad, the 5th November, 2020

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Minutes of 1st “National Steering and Coordination Committee for Pakistan Deworming Initiative” Meeting

The undersigned is directed to refer to subject meeting held on 28th October, 2020 under Chairpersonship of Parliamentary Secretary, M/o Planning Development and Special Initiatives and enclose minutes of meeting for your perusal and necessary action.


(Dr. Murtaza Haider)
Assistant Chief/
Secretary of the Committee
051-9269877

Distribution:

1. All Members of National Steering and Coordination Committee.

Copy for Information:

- i. PS to Parliamentary Secretary, M/o Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Islamabad
- ii. PS to Member (SS&D), Planning Commission, Islamabad
- iii. APS to Chief, Health, M/o PD&SI, Islamabad

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Distribution List

S.#	Title & Designation of Participant	Status
1	Joint Secretary, Education, M/o Federal Education & Professional Training, Islamabad	Member
2	DG (Health), M/o National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination, Islamabad	Member
3	Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar	Member
4	Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of Sindh, Karachi	Member
5	Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of Punjab, Lahore	Member
6	Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of Balochistan, Quetta	Member
7	Additional Chief Secretary (Development), Govt. of AJK, Muzaffarabad	Member
8	Additional Chief Secretary (Development), Govt. of Gilgit Baltistan, Gilgit	Member
9	Director Youth Engagement, IRD Pakistan, Office no 15, 2 nd floor Executive Complex Plaza, G-8 Markaz, Islamabad	Member
10	Program Representative, Evidence Action, Office no 15, 2 nd floor Executive Complex Plaza, G-8 Markaz, Islamabad	Member

Government of Pakistan
Planning Commission
Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives
(Health Section)

Subject: Minutes of 1st National Steering & Coordination Committee for Pakistan Deworming Initiative – October 28, 2020, Islamabad

The first meeting of “National Steering & Coordination Committee (NS&CC) for Pakistan Deworming Initiative” was held under the Chairpersonship of Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives (M/o PD&SI) on 28th October 2020 at 3:00 pm in the Committee Room, 2nd Floor, P-Block, Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad. The meeting was attended both in-person and through an online platform by government representatives from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Balochistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K), Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. Technical assistance partners for this program, that is, IRD Pakistan, Indus Health Network and Evidence Action were also part of the meeting proceedings.

Overall, the meeting laid the foundation for an effective partnerships about the deworming program at federal/provincial and regional level under the umbrella of *Pakistan Deworming Initiative* (PDI), to share knowledge and lessons learned from previous rounds of Deworming in ICT, KP and Sindh and to agree upon a way forward for this government-led deworming program with technical assistance of IRD Pakistan. List of participants is annexed.

Parliamentary Secretary, M/o PD&SI welcomed all the participants followed by a round of introductions.

Discussions and decisions made during the meeting are depicted in the below matrix.

Agenda Point	Discussions	Action Points
Welcome by Chairperson & Parliamentary Secretary, M/o PD&SI (Ms. Kanwal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ms. Kanwal Shauzab appreciated efforts of M/o PD&SI and TA partners to arrange the NS&CC meeting despite the challenges imposed by COVID-19.✓ She appreciated ownership taken by the Government of Pakistan to lead the Pakistan	

Shauzab)	<p>Deworming Initiative as demonstrated by the presence of Federal Ministries and Provincial/regional Departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ She ensured that there was a strong political buy-in for the program. Similarly, support has been time and again shown by Ministers of all 3 aforementioned Ministries and by the First Lady of Pakistan, Ms. Samina Alvi during the Launch Event for ICT in 2019. ✓ She said that she was hopeful that all present provincial/regional governments would continue demonstrating their ownership for the program as they have done so today through their representation in the meeting. ✓ She emphasized that children of Pakistan needed this important health initiative to be effective and long-term which means that it should be a long-term commitment. ✓ She suggested that we needed to develop a strong demand generation strategy not only for mass school-based deworming but also for prevention such as hand washing and sanitation. 	
Introduction to the Pakistan Deworming Initiative by Chief Health, M/o PD&SI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assistant Chief Health, M/o PD&SI Dr. Asad Baig shared the background of the Pakistan Deworming Initiative thru a presentation. ✓ He explained the need for the program at global and Pakistan level and also shared the results of first ever National Soil-Transmitted Helminths 	

	<p>(STH) prevalence survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Through a heat map, he showed that currently 45 districts across Pakistan has been identified as at-risk of STH infection and in need of annual mass deworming for school-age children as per WHO guidelines. 	
<p>Deworming program updates by Program Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Program Director, PDI, IRD Pakistan shared the journey of Pakistan Deworming Initiative so far and its technical assistance roadmap with the participants. ✓ He informed that the program phase started in 2017 will be completed in 2022 (5 years duration) ✓ He explained in detail the mechanisms of the program that has made it successful to-date in ICT, KP and Sindh and that will be further rolled-out in other regions. These include; program designing and planning, medicine procurement and supply chain mechanism, training & distribution cascade, reverse cascade and data reporting, public awareness and community mobilization and monitoring & evaluation of the program. ✓ He also shared plans by technical assistance partners for deworming in 2020-21 which was to support provincial, regional and federal governments to conduct 7 Mass Drug Administrations (MDAs) across 45 target districts in Pakistan. Through this approximately 10 	<p>Parliamentary Secretary, M/o PD&SI appreciated all the efforts made for Pakistan Deworming Initiative to-date and made following recommendations to further improve its coverage and visibility:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Implementation of a robust Demand Generation Strategy to bring discourse about Deworming Program into public, parents and community-level discussions.</u> To this end, she offered her support to air deworming related Public Service Messages (PSMs) and information through morning shows in national TV channels. She also recommended utilizing PEMRA's platform for public health initiatives to air deworming content at national level.

	<p>million school-age children will be dewormed by end of 2021.</p> <p><u>National-level Demand Generation Strategy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Qadeer Baig agreed with the recommendation of Ms. Kanwal Shauzab about national level focus on demand generation strategy and program visibility to increase public awareness about this important health issue. ✓ He shared that in this regard two important steps were being taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A nation-wide Demand Generation Strategy will be developed and implemented during the 1st two weeks of January 2021. 2. A program website will be designed and launched within 6 months as a central platform to showcase efforts made to-date and planned for future of Pakistan Deworming Initiative in all provinces and territories. <p><u>National-level achievements of the program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Health, M/o PD&SI and Program Director, IRD Pakistan apprised participants about the achievements of Pakistan Deworming Initiative to-date despite the COVID-19 pandemic scenario. ✓ They shared that even during COVID-19 shutdown the focus on public awareness was not 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Formulation of sub-committee/working group with representation of all target regions to lead demand generation strategy and website development process.</u> 3. Ms. Kanwal Shauzab recommended that IT or communication experts from federal and provincial/regional government departments should be nominated for this working group to ensure the process goes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adding to this, <u>Chief Health, M/o PD&SI recommended revising PC-1 allocation by Federal and Professional Training to include demand generation and website development to ensure budget is available for these important tasks.</u> 4. <u>Leveraging polio workers to conduct community-level</u>
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	<p>lost and that deworming content was also aired for parents and children awareness through teleschool and other social media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ They also informed that Deeni Madaris across Pakistan have been finally brought onboard through a successful orientation of <u>heads of Wafaq and Deeni Madaris</u> hosted by Council of Islamic Ideology (CII). During the meeting notable religious personalities attended the meeting from ICT, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. All participants inked a “declaration” committing their public support of the program and mobilizing Deeni Madaris under them to participate in this important health initiative. ✓ They also informed the forum about successful engagement of AJ&K’s and Balochistan’s governments through official letters sent by the M/o PD&SI, requesting them to lead deworming programs in at-risk districts starting 2021. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Health also recommended that since only one district in Balochistan, i.e. Lasbela, has been identified as at-risk of STH infection, its implementation should be conducted in collaboration with Sindh Deworming Initiative. 	<p><u>deworming and focus on children who were not dewormed through school.</u> Chief Health, M/o PD&SI agreed that this modality can be leveraged upon for the deworming program for children under 5 and women of reproductive age.</p>
<p>Program updates for Provincial/ Regional Governments</p>	<p>Secretary, Planning and Assistant Chief Health, Planning & Development Department, Government of KP, shared following updates for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Deworming Initiative:</p>	<p>Some of the key way forward with regards to the recommended by chairperson, Ms. Kanwal Shauzab, are as follows:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1st MDA was successfully implemented in October 2019 through with approximately 2.7 million school-age children were dewormed with support of 24,000 teachers trained through a cascade. 2. Deworming was conducted in 19 at-risk districts in 2019 instead of 22. 3. However, by 2021 all 22 at-risk districts will be targeted for deworming. <p>Sr. Chief (Education), Chief Health – I, and Chief Health – II, Planning & Development Board, Govt. of the Punjab shared following updates for <u>Punjab Deworming Initiative</u>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Working Group for Punjab Deworming Initiative has been notified. 2. The working group had a productive meeting on 27th October 2020, to plan for 1st school-based deworming effort in Feb/March 2021. 3. Punjab Deworming Initiative will engage Schools Education Department, IRMNCH, PSPU & Nutrition Program. <p>Chief Health, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the AJ&K shared updates for <u>AJ&K Deworming Initiative</u>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He appreciated AJ&K's presence and inclusion in the Pakistan Deworming Initiative. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Health was requested to hold bilateral consultative meetings with participants from Balochistan and AJ&K to apprise them about the Deworming Initiative and expectations from them to lead the program. 2. Consideration of a Government of Pakistan-led study to see if more districts need to be added to the ambit of deworming. 3. Focus demand generation strategies on prevention and sanitation in addition to the focus on mass deworming. Also translation of mass messaging into local languages to ensure all regions are well represented. 4. The Planning Commission will provide necessary support to partner provincial and regional governments if needed.
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2. He backed Parliamentary Secretary, M/o PD&SI recommendation about a strong public awareness strategy to ensure acceptability by the masses.
3. Finally, he showed commitment on behalf of AJ&K government to provide support to the program and requested guidance and support from NS&CC and IRD Pakistan.

Member Social Sector and Senior Chief (Health), Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Sindh shared updates for **Sindh Deworming Initiative**:

1. They explained the shared governance structure of Sindh - A Steering Committee and Technical working group supported by Deworming District Management Committees in all 7 districts of Karachi.
2. They also shared achievements of Deworming pilot round implemented in Sindh in Jan 2020 and plans for next round of MDA in Feb/March 2021.

Chief Economist, and Assistant Chief – Health Sector, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Gilgit-Baltistan shared updates for **Gilgit-Baltistan Deworming Initiative**:

1. They requested consideration of addition of all the districts of Baltistan region into the ambit

of deworming to ensure school-age children of all the districts are benefited through this health initiative.

Joint Secretary (Formal Education), Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Education and Project Director, Deworm Islamabad Initiative, Federal Directorate of Education shared updates for Islamabad Deworming Initiative:

1. They shared the successful 2nd round of deworming conducted in January 2020 under PC-1.
2. They also offered support in knowledge sharing with other regions who will also allocate resources for deworming under PC-1 in future rounds.
3. He suggested revising the incentives for teachers engaged with deworming exercise and pursue a strong demand generation strategy. He requested need for additional resources to the ICT Deworming Initiative by revising current PCI.

Chief Health presented the need for a program website and plans for engaging an agency with support from IRD Pakistan to **design and launch an interactive website** to serve as one stop depository of Deworming program by Federal, Provincial and Regional governments. He requested

	to nominate a sub-committee to work with TA partner in this regards,.	
Extension of the Membership of NS&CC	Program Director, IRD Pakistan mentioned that since the Multi-Sectoral Steering Committees at the provincial level are in place and World Health Organization (WHO) providing the mebendazole medicines through the Drug Donation Program, the membership of the NS&CC extended to the WHO and Chairpersons of Multi-Sectoral Steering Committees.	The Chairperson agreed to extend the membership to the Chairs of the provincial Multi-Sectoral Steering Committees and to the representative of WHO.
The meeting ended with the vote of thanks by the Chair.		

List of Participants:

1. Ms. Kanwal Shauzeb, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
2. Dr. M. Asif, Chief Health, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
3. Mr. Farooq Khan, Joint Secretary (Formal Education), Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Education
4. Dr. Asad Baig, Assistant Chief (Health), Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
5. Mr. Javed Iqbal Mirza, Project Director, Deworm Islamabad Initiative, Federal Directorate of Education

Balochistan

6. Mr. Ghulam Farooq, Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Balochistan

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

7. Mr. Amer Sultan Tareen, Secretary, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the KP
8. Dr. Kashif Nazeer, Assistant Chief Health, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the KP

Sindh

9. Dr. Fawad Shaikh, Member Social Sector, Planning & Development Board, Govt. of the Sindh
10. Ms. Sarwat Sultana, Senior Chief (Health), Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Sindh

Punjab

11. Mr. Abid Razaq, Sr. Chief (Education), Planning & Development Board, Govt. of the Punjab
12. Mr. Saleem Masih, Chief Health – I, Planning & Development Board, Govt. of the Punjab
13. Ms. Uzman Hafeez, Chief Health – II, Planning & Development Board, Govt. of the Punjab

Gilgit-Baltistan

14. Mr. M. Baqir, Chief Economist, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Gilgit-Baltistan
15. Mr. Farman Karim, Assistant Chief – Health Sector, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Gilgit-Baltistan

Azad Jammu & Kashmir

16. Mr. Matloob Hussain, Chief Health, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of the Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Technical Assistance Partners

17. Mr. Qadeer Baig, Program Director, PDI, IRD Pakistan
18. Dr. Nauman Safdar, Project Director, Indus Health Network
19. Mr. Intezar Ahmed, Program Representative Evidence Action
20. Mr. Waleed Rabbani, Sr. National Program Manager, IRD Pakistan
21. Ms. Habiba Salman, Regional Manager ICT & GB, IRD Pakistan
22. Ms. Ujala Sarfaraz, Sr. Program Officer, IRD Pakistan