

In response to COVID-19 outbreak, UNFPA Pakistan has developed a comprehensive Strategic Response Framework, in line with national response plan, aligned with UNFPA’s global strategy and WHO’s Operational Planning Guidelines. UNFPA’s response strategy has two main pillars.

**Pillar 1- Health Systems Strengthening:** includes provision of protection/universal precaution, infection prevention, supply of essential equipment and commodities, training of managers and health care providers, provision of psycho social support to service providers and supporting continuity of coordination platforms.

**Pillar 2- Community Empowerment/ Gender centered interventions:** includes prevention of gender based violence, provision of protection services and psycho social support to vulnerable population including women, girls and elderly, and awareness raising in collaboration with government and UN agencies.

**Fast Facts**



**21,680 personal protective equipment (PPEs)** for frontline health workers distributed across Pakistan.



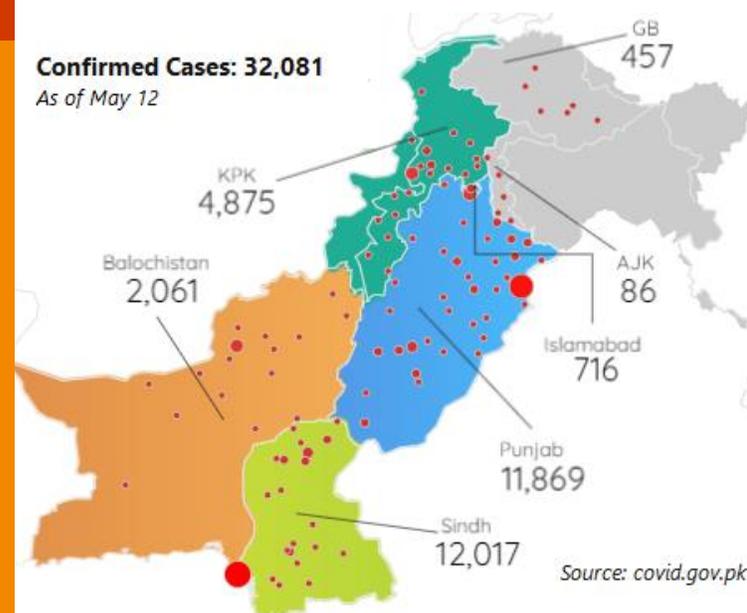
**2,280** live births attended during Feb-Apr by trained health care providers at UNFPA-supported health facilities in KP and Balochistan.



**600** young people including students, midwives and community workers are raising awareness on COVID-19 among marginalized communities in 6 districts of Karachi under **Neighbourhood Watch Programme**.



**694** callers received **tele-psycho-social support** on stress and issues related to COVID-19, reproductive health, GBV, emotional and physical abuse and family conflicts.



**Prevention and Management of Gender Based Violence**



In collaboration with NDMA, UNFPA has developed **Guidelines for Minimum Standards of Care during COVID-19** for women shelters including Darulaman and women centres.

UNFPA, through its partner ROZAN, has provided **tele-psycho-social support to 694 callers** on stress and issues related to COVID-19, reproductive health, GBV, emotional and physical abuse and family conflicts.

- **Women Friendly Health Spaces** for Afghan refugees’ settlements in Balochistan, KP and Sindh remain functional and continue to support areas affected by COVID-19 pandemic through case management, referral, and basic GBV and SRH services including care for pregnant women, safe deliveries including emergency obstetric and new-born care, postpartum care, family planning and prevention of sexually transmitted infections.
- **Psycho-social support, RH and GBV** services are being provided at five health facilities in Khyber and Peshawar districts of KP. UNFPA, along with its partner ROZAN, has further trained the psychologists on GBV and psychosocial support for anxiety and fear related to COVID-19. These trained Psychologists are linked with government designated health facilities to provide psychosocial support and counselling to patients and health workers at the frontlines.

## Risk Communication and Reproductive Health and Family Planning



A **Neighbourhood Watch Programme** has been launched engaging 600 young people (university students, midwives and community workers) to raise awareness among 150,000 people on COVID-19 in socio-economically disadvantaged communities in 6 districts of Karachi. Posters with awareness messages on COVID-19 have been placed on rickshaws.

- Dr. Rafat Jan Rukanuddin, President, Midwifery Association of Pakistan represented the Asia and Pacific in UNFPA's 'Tribute to Midwives: Healthcare Heroes' on **International Day of the Midwifery**, May 5. She commended UNFPA's steady support for midwives in Pakistan, especially for their education and regularization.
- An **awareness campaign** featuring messages by Obstetricians and Gynecologists on safe motherhood, family planning and GBV is underway on **FM101 radio channel** across its 19 stations since April 9 until May 20. A total of **378 spots** are slotted out of which 189 spots have been broadcasted. More messages by parliamentarians and religious scholars on family planning and safe motherhood and messages in regional languages including Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pashtu, Hindku, Gilgiti and Kashmiri are under production. These will be broadcasted through local FM stations in phase II of the radio campaign.
- UNFPA has **distributed 14,000 printed IEC material across Pakistan** carrying messages on COVID-19, hygiene, pregnancy, breastfeeding and maternity care. In Sindh, these IECs have been handed over to the Department of Health, Population Welfare Department and Pakistan Primary Health Initiatives (PPHI) for dissemination to district to the district level health facilities.
- A social **media campaign with an aim to reach 225,000 young** people (age 13-29 years) with awareness on their Reproductive Health & Rights (RHR) during COVID-19 has been planned.
- Seminar for members of **media coalition on population and family planning** is scheduled for mid-May. The objective is to sensitize them on reporting on issues of family planning and reproductive health during COVID-19 pandemic.
- UNFPA assisted the Population Welfare Department, KP in global procurement of **26 million condoms** for LHW programme by Department of Health to ensure supply of contraceptive and FP commodities.

## Coordination/ Technical Support

- UNFPA continued providing **technical support to NDMA** through deploying senior technical experts on gender and sexual and reproductive health to strengthen the national COVID-19 response with lens of women's health and rights.
- UNFPA has been designated its mandated **role of co-chair** of the Health (RH) and Protection (GBV) Sector Working Groups by NDMA both at national and provincial level.
- UNFPA continued to strengthen its **technical support to the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination (MoNHSRC)** through deployment of senior public health expert, Epidemiologist and consultants for strategic communications and data analysis to strengthen the COVID19 response capacity.
- UNFPA assisted Ministry of Health in convening **Contraceptives Commodity Security Working Group** meeting which was attended by members from public and private sector to discuss stock availability status.
- UNFPA, in collaboration with H5 partners (UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS, UNHCR and WB) has drafted **Essential Services Packages for SRH and Family Planning** to ensure continuity of life saving services during the pandemic.
- UNFPA coordinated the meeting of **FP2020 Working Group in Sindh** province on 28<sup>th</sup> April which was chaired by Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Minister of Health and Population, Sindh.

# Health Service Providers Protection: Procurement of Equipment/ Capacity Development

- **402 Master Trainers** trained by UNFPA have embarked on **trickledown trainings** on Infection Prevention and Control/Universal Precautionary Measures for doctors, nurses and midwives across Pakistan. 2000 health workers have already been trained.
- **Telemedicine platform** has been setup with 100 lady doctors to team up with newly trained health care providers to support the COVID-19 response.
- On-site trainings of **quarantine facility** managers and support-staff including cleaners, ambulance drivers and security guards on infection prevention and standard precautionary measures regarding COVID-19 are underway.

## Voices from field – Healing with Hope

COVID-10 pandemic is taking a heavy psychological toll on communities who are witnessing rising numbers of cases around them every day. This is why UNFPA prioritized provision of psychosocial support for affected communities, especially women & girls and frontline health workers as a critical part of its response to COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan.

In Khyber and Peshawar districts, UNFPA, with the support from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia, has supported five health facilities with trained health staff including doctors, Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) & psychologists, equipment & medicines, family planning supplies and dignity kits to serve women and girls of Afghan refugees and host communities. These doctors and health workers are ensuring continuity of life-saving maternal and reproductive health services during COVID-19 pandemic and the Psychologists are providing psychosocial support for anxiety and fear related to COVID-19.

Zarina, a 33 years old woman, is a mother of six young children from Khyber district. She became an orphan at the age of eight and was married off at the age of sixteen as a second wife to a daily-wage laborer. It was hard for them to make both ends meet. When her husband could not find work, he would beat her up to vent his frustration. In 2019, Zarmina gave birth to her sixth child at the UNFPA-supported RHC and the same year her husband died in an accident. Zarmina was worried and traumatized as she had to provide for her children. The Psychologist at the RHC counseled Zarmina to help her heal and cope better with her situation. Gaining the confidence after the sessions, Zarmina opened a mini-shop at her house to make a living. It was not long before COVID-19 pandemic hit the country. Zarmina, in an already fragile mental and emotional state, experienced fear and anxiety and developed feelings of helplessness. She reached out to the staff at RHC and received four awareness and counselling sessions on the precautions for COVID-19 and the management of anxiety caused by the pandemic. *“I was scared, I thought I will die because of Coronavirus and my children will be left alone in this world. They are orphans, no one will take care of them. This worry was eating me alive. I am the only hope for my children. I feel so encouraged and aware, when the doctor (psychologist) talks to me. Now I am standing strong”* says Zarmina.

*“We know that humanitarian crises produce mental and psychological suffering which threaten the health and well-being of vulnerable people including women and girls. During COVID-19 pandemic, we are closely working with our humanitarian and development partners to provide psychosocial support, access to safe spaces and referrals to health services to the women and girls survivors of violence and abuse. Precious lives can be saved with right information, counselling and timely services.”* Says Ms. Lina Mousa, Country Representative, UNFPA Pakistan.



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