



Provide logistical, supply and contractual Support to workforce capacity activities

Project Information

- ◆ Department: Center of Excellence for Applied Epidemiology
- ◆ Unit: Workforce Capacity

OBJECTIVES

Three projects will be implemented in Pakistan and following are the objective under each project:

- **Strengthening and Expansion of Sentinel Surveillance Systems, by Strengthening Mortality Surveillance System in Pakistan:**
Project will support estimating the overall excess deaths and understand their causes during the pandemic in specific regions of Pakistan and compared to baseline in partner countries. Also, to report the findings to government partners to respond to the causes of the increase in preventable deaths and build long term capacity in mortality surveillance.
- **COVID-19 Contact Tracing & Rumor Surveillance, Faith Based contract tracing project in Pakistan:**
Project will support in accelerating community mitigation of COVID-19 by engaging faith leaders that have an influence on the communities, to help communities rapidly adopt critical mitigation behaviors and support contact tracing efforts.
- **Conducting FETP & COVID -19 KAP survey in Pakistan**
Provision of Improved and timely knowledge and information sources to decision makers about Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) of citizens vis a vis Covid 19 so that mitigation measures such as use of NPI (Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions) can be improved.

BENEFICIARIES National Public Health Institutes (FELTP), Policy makers at national, provincial and district level who are tasked with dealing with Covid 19 response especially implementation of contact tracing activity, Adults 18 years and older in Pakistan.

PROJECT PHASES

This project involves phases as follow:

Phase 1 - Specify the need through collecting secondary data.

Phase 2 - Contracting: Signing the contractual agreement with selected personnel or institutions to provide the needed logistical and/or financial support as needed.

Phase 3 - Implementation: GHD will oversee the progress and interventions in the target areas, in addition to procuring essential supplies as needed to support the projects.

REGIONS OF WORK

Republic of Pakistan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mortality and Excess Death Project: Mortality surveillance assesses the impact of outbreaks on morbidity and mortality and guides programs to improve maternal and child health. The project objective is to strengthen a functioning maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response system at district, provincial, and national levels, including the civil registration system, during the COVID-19 pandemic. In specific a retrospective study will be conducted to estimate overall excess deaths and their causes during the pandemic in specific regions of Pakistan, compared to baseline in partner countries, and report findings to government partners. GHD will support Gallup to implement the project and conduct set of activities. The study team will conduct a meeting with stakeholders and will develop and pilot the study tool, then they will train the data collector, healthcare personnel and the LHS for the verbal autopsy. In addition, label smart phones will be procured for the health facilities for notifying of the maternal and perinatal deaths. Finally, implementing awardee will conduct data management and analysis to serve as a baseline assessment of civil registration system, assessing other data sources on deaths and burials, assessing data on deaths in private health facilities, assessing deaths reported in the community, and monitor if there have been excess deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to preceding time period.

Faith Based contract tracing project: Currently, in Pakistan, tracking and tracing of potential COVID-19 suspect cases take place through various government departments. Once a COVID-19 positive case is reported, a team is dispatched to investigate the patient and apply a standardized method to track and trace individuals with whom the positive patient may have been in contact. There are potential gaps in the timely conduction of tracking and tracing method due to various logistical and behavioral reasons. Accordingly, a pilot a program is envisioned in which the government role is performed by a faith-based organization. The trained members of the faith-based organization will basically aid in the communication and the mitigation efforts and measures against COVID-19 in the community. Engaging faith communities aims at advancing COVID-19 risk communication and mitigation which is pivotal opportunity to accelerate pandemic control. The project will be focusing on accelerating community mitigation of COVID-19 by engaging faith leaders that have an influence on the communities, to help communities rapidly adopt critical mitigation behaviors, and support contact tracing efforts. Also, engaging faith organizations to work closely with governmental health authorities to raise awareness and acceptance of COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing nationally and participate in case investigation and contact tracing implementation in geographic focus areas.

KAP Study: The study protocol describes a survey measuring individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) around COVID-19 and the personal impacts of the pandemic, including psychosocial effects, on adults 18 and over in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, and other territories such as Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in Pakistan. The first activity is survey of adult population in all territories of Pakistan, followed by dissemination of survey findings, and ended with follow up survey.

Project Start and End Date	11/1/2021 – 09/30/2022
Partner Organizations	CDC Pakistan Country Office
Funded by	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Collaborators	Gallup Pakistan



Currently . . .

Civil and Vital registration systems have many issues of completeness, timeliness, and coverage in developing countries like Pakistan. Moreover, there is under-reporting for certain causes of deaths particularly related to maternal, neonatal and children health. This is partly due to the lack of availability, access and use of healthcare services for these groups. Mortality surveillance can not only guide programs trying to improve maternal and child health but can also help to assess impact of pandemics/outbreaks in terms of direct and indirect increase in morbidity and mortality in the population.

Currently in Pakistan tracking and tracing of potential COVID-19 suspect cases happens through various government departments. Once a COVID-19 positive case is reported, a team is dispatched to meet with the patient and then deploy a carefully designed method to track and trace other individuals that the positive patient may have been in contact with. There is some literature that points to potential gaps in the execution of this because of various logistical and behavioral reasons and the outcomes expected i.e. complete tracking and tracing in timely manner may also be explored.

COVID-19 outbreak in Pakistan was declared on February 26, 2020 when the first case was reported. As of March 31, 2021 there have been over 650,000 cases and 14,000 deaths. Subsequently, the government enacted a number of mitigation measures including quarantines, suspending public transport and flights and the closing of businesses. In March 2020, The Ministry of National Health Services in Pakistan formed a nine-member COVID-19 Emergency Management Task Force to oversee interventions which help to limit the spread of COVID-19.

What's next . . .

- Conduct baseline assessment of civil registration system and assessing other data sources on deaths and burials.
- Accelerating community mitigation of COVID-19 by engaging faith leaders that have an influence on the communities, to help communities rapidly adopt critical mitigation behaviors.
- Conduct KAP survey in urban, rural and specific geography areas to measure key variables to develop context specific evidence-based recommendations to more effectively address COVID-19

By the Numbers

4 provinces of Pakistan and 2 territories will be targeted for KAP survey

Targeted Faith Leaders in 4 provinces of Pakistan will be engaged to support contact tracing capacity/ performance

GHD|EMPHNET Information: Global Health Development (GHD) and Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) works at achieving its mission by responding to public health needs with deliberate efforts that allow for health promotion and disease prevention

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