Follow-up Meeting of APC 2012

Polio: A National Emergency

Monday, July 15, 2013; Kohinoor Hall, Marriott Hotel, Islamabad

Follow-up Meeting of Political Parties on APC 2012

July 15, 2013
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PILDAT convened an All Parties Conference (APC) on Polio—a National Emergency on December 19, 2013 in Islamabad. A Follow-Up meeting with Parliamentary Leaders and Political Party Representatives on Polio Eradication in association with UNICEF, Pakistan under the Project “To Raise Awareness among Parliamentarians to Enhance the Effectiveness of Anti-Polio” was held on July 15, 2013 in Islamabad.

Parliamentary leadership of leading Political Parties of Pakistan re-affirmed their commitment to eradicate polio from Pakistan at the Follow-Up meeting. Political Parties who participated in the meeting unanimously agreed to the right of all children in Pakistan to vaccination and the duty of the Government to ensure no child is left un-immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases. They agreed to stand ready to support Government at all levels to achieve goal of polio eradication from the country.

Acknowledgement
PILDAT would like to acknowledge the support provided by the UNICEF for the project Raise Awareness among Parliamentarians to Enhance the Effectiveness on Anti Polio Drive. This Report has been prepared as part of the Project.

Disclaimer
Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the contents of this report. Any omission, or error, therefore, is not deliberate and PILDAT does not accept any liability as a result of any such inaccuracy. The contents of this report do not necessarily represent the views of UNICEF.

Islamabad
July 2013
PILDAT convened an All Parties Conference (APC) on Polio—a National Emergency on December 19, 2013 in Islamabad. 13 Political Parties across Pakistan’s Political Spectrum declared Polio a National Emergency and agreed on including Polio Eradication as a goal in respective Party Manifestoes. All the Parties strongly condemned attacks on Polio Workers Teams and appreciated the dedication and efforts of Polio Workers Teams. While signing a Joint Declaration at the APC, the parties pledged to allocate financial and human resources for implementation Polio Eradication strategies as well as to institute an effective elected Local Government system declaring it vital for polio eradication.

The parties joining the APC were represented by Honourable Senator Shahi Syed, Provincial President, Sindh, Awami National Party (ANP), Honourable Dr. Jahanzeb Jamaldini, Acting President, Balochistan National Party - Mengal (BNP-M), Honourable Mr. Liaqat Baloch, Secretary General, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JIP), Honourable Senator Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Central Secretary General, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam – Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F), Honourable Maulana Asmat Ullah, Ameer, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam – Nizriati (JUI-N), Honourable Maulana Hamid Ul Haq Haqqani, Vice President, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam - Samiulhaq (JUI-S), Honourable Mr. Sufyan Yusuf, MNA, Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM), Honourable Senator Mir Hasil Khan Bezinjo, Secretary General, National Party (NP), Honourable Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Secretary General, Pakistan Muslim League (PML), Honourable Barrister Sultan Mahmood Khan, Senior Vice President, Pakistan Muslim League - Functional (PML-F), Honourable Senator Rafiq Rajwana, Member of Senate of Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N), Honourable Syed Yusuf Raza Gailani, Senior Vice Chairman, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Honourable Senator Maulana Asmat Ullah, Ameer, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam – Nizriati (JUI-N), Honourable Mr. Liaqat Baloch, Secretary General, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JIP), Honourable Senator Shahnaz Wazirali, Focal Person and Dr. Altaf Bosan, National Coordinator of Prime Minister’s Polio Monitoring Cell, Ms. Karen Allan, Deputy Country Representative, UNICEF, Dr. Waqar Ajmal, Senior Programme Manager, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Dr. Guido Sabatinelli, Country Representative WHO.

As follow-up of the APC 2012, PILDAT convened a meeting of Parliamentary leadership of leading Political Parties of Pakistan on July 15, 2013 in Islamabad where Leadership and Representatives of the political parties re-affirmed their commitment to eradicate polio from Pakistan. Political parties who were part of the follow-up meeting included the Balochistan National Party - Mengal (BNP-M); Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Samiulhaq Group)-JUI (S), Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM); Pakistan Muslim League Functional (PML-F); Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPP); Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI); Qaumi Watan Party (QWP); Awami Jamhuri Itihad Pakistan (AJIP) and National Party (NP).

Parliamentary Leaders and Political Parties representatives who participated in the follow-up meeting included Honourable Mr. Usman Khan Tarakai, MNA, Parliamentary Leader of Awami Jamhuri Itihad Pakistan (AJIP), Honourable Mr. Abdul Rauf Mengal, Former MNA, Balochistan National Party - Mengal (BNP-M), Honourable Maulana Hamid ul Haq Haqqani, Member of Senate of Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), Honourable Mr. Irfan ul Haq, Member of Senate of Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), Honourable Ms. Anisul Haq, Member of Senate of Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), Honourable Mr. Altaf Bosan, National Coordinator of Prime Minister’s Polio Monitoring Cell, Ms. Karen Allan, Deputy Country Representative, UNICEF, Dr. Waqar Ajmal, Senior Programme Manager, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Dr. Guido Sabatinelli, Country Representative WHO.
Manifesto Pledges of Political Parties

As a result of the advocacy meetings, parties including the PML-N, the PPPP, the PTI, the MQM, the PML-F, and the QWP addressed polio eradication as a critical plank of their pledges on health.

The PML-N, in its Manifesto 2013 pledged that “the basic aim of the health programme will be to achieve, within 5 years, 100% vaccination of children, 50% reduction in maternal and infant mortality and at least 10% reduction in the rate of population growth.”

The PPPP, in its Election 2013 Manifesto, added polio eradication as part of its core priorities, and stated that “We commit to polio eradication as a national priority, integrating it with routine immunization, and will provide enhanced security to Vaccinators.”

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) under the title Healthy People-Healthy Nation in its Manifesto 2013 pledged that “Targets to achieve 100 per cent immunization of children against preventable diseases.”

The Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) in its Manifesto 2013 stated that it “pledges to eradicate polio through a country wide sustainable Anti Polio Vaccination Drive by encouraging citizens' participation.”

The Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) in its 6-point agenda for the Health Sector, pledged to “ensure immunization of every child.” The party, in its Election 2013 manifesto on the subject of Health and Corrective and Preventive Actions, pledged to create “Boards and Councils” to manage health issues. These Boards and Councils, as per the PML-F, are to “include representation from religious leaders to ensure that certain medical rulings, (for example organ donation, contraception, polio vaccines, etc.) are not clouded due to false misperceptions among the public over their religious standing.”

The Quami Watan Party (QWP), in its 2013 manifesto, pledged to increase “infant immunization from the current 60.5% to at least 80%.”

For details, please see:
Follow-Up Meeting of Political Parties on APC
Welcome & Introduction

Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob
President, PILDAT

Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob welcomed and thanked all the political party representatives for their attendance in the follow-up meeting on Polio Eradication. Giving an overview of the All Parties Conference held on December, 10, 2012 in Islamabad he said that on December 19, 2013, 14 Senior Political Party Representatives attended the APC and agreed on a Joint Declaration on the conditions involving to eradicate Polio and now since, new government has come into existence, we need to revive the declaration in front of the newly elected representatives and examine as to what is the status today.

Mr. Mehboob further added that Pakistan is among one of the three Polio-endemic countries in the world along with Nigeria and Afghanistan. There were 144 cases of Polio found in 2010, 198 cases in 2011 and 58 cases in 2012. Since January 2013 to date, a total of 21 polio cases have been reported. He further pointed out three major challenges being faced in Polio Eradication today. Firstly, the deployment of Polio teams in various areas of Pakistan has emerged as a big problem since the recent attacks on Polio workers. Secondly the resistance faced on the part of some parents; they don't allow their children to be given Polio Drops and lastly the accessibility of Polio medicine to far flung areas of Pakistan.

He stressed the need of All Political parties, Federal and Provincial governments to make a united effort to strengthen polio eradication in Pakistan. No Government can face these challenges alone. The main purpose to invite all political Party representatives was to discuss and suggest as to how we could counter these Challenges. Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob reminded that there can be an international ban on Pakistanis travelling out of the country, if we fail to eradicate Polio. PILDAT wants Political Parties to highlight the negative impact of Polio on population.

Dr. Obaid Ul Islam
National AFP Surveillance Coordinator / WHO Provincial Team Leader

Dr. Obaid Ul Islam, National AFP Surveillance Coordinator while giving a presentation highlighted that there are only 3 countries left in the world where Polio exists. There are some specific areas both in Nigeria and Pakistan, where Polio exists. From the last six months, the new development is the transmission of Polio Virus from Northern Nigeria to Somalia and Kenya too. Talking about Pakistan he said majority of the cases have been reported in North and South Waziristan; there are 2.5 lac children who have not been given polio drops since 2010 but failure is not an option for polio eradication program.

Dr. Shamsher Ali Khan
High Risk Districts Coordinator

Highlighting the basic role of National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) to eradicate and eliminate Polio completely till the end of 2013 Dr. Shamsher Ali Khan said that the major initiative in Polio Eradication will be to devise a strategy for far flung areas such as FATA to be made accessible and accountability mechanism should be introduced at Union Council level and District level. Different types of Polio Eradication committees have been formed because of NEAP’s initiative. He further added that NEAP has been successful in establishing Polio Control Rooms at District, Provincial and Federal level. Explaining the security risk factor, he accepted that there is a major threat to Polio workers and 17 Polio workers have been gunned down and 4 Policemen have been killed till now.

Mr. Dan Rohrmann
Country Representative, UNICEF

Mr. Dan Rohrmann appreciated the Political parties’ representation in the Session and highlighted the importance of their presence in the meeting. Discussing the severity of the situation, he said that we have only between now and October to get everything right because between October and April next year this is the time when the campaign really needs to function. This time going forward is really important. You have all the details of Polio cases etc. He also enquired from the representatives that as Parliamentarians what they needed that they do not have currently. Mr. Rohrmann extended UNICEF’s assistance to talk to their constituents. He further added if we can eradicate Polio, there will be a complete change of motivation in every constituency. People will be supportive because once the Parliamentarian has done one thing he can do other things with people’s support. But, he said that the current period was critical. He assured the availability of UNICEF for any assistance required by the Parliamentarians so the major goal is achieved.

Dr. Neema Abid
World Health Organization (WHO)

Dr. Neema Abid told the participants that 21 cases have been reported in Pakistan so far. Dr. Abid said these are not cases; these are paralyzed children due to a completely preventable disease. If we do not achieve Polio eradication, nearly thousands of Pakistani children will be paralyzed. In addition to this, the International community’s confidence in Pakistan will be lost and shaken. Dr. Abid stressed the need of a political intervention and support for polio eradication and an effective management system.
Q & A / Discussion

Usman Khan Tarrakai, MNA
Parliamentary Leader, AJIP
(NA-12, Swabi-I, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, AJIP)

Mr. Usman Khan Tarrakai thanked PILDAT for organising an informative program. He said that The All Parties Conference facilitated by PILDAT on Polio Eradication and the signing of a Joint Declaration at the end of the Conference by all the political parties was an important step in the eradication of Polio. Speaking on the security situation he said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA areas have higher security risks because of the continuous immigration from Afghanistan. Citing example of his constituency he witnessed that the social workers are facing extreme threats. He also explained that to curb this menace, they have taken initiative to take all Ulemas on board so that immunization process is not hampered. He also informed about the areas where immunization team failed to reach because of some local Maddressas restrictions. In his constituency their party has also involved females of the area, especially mothers of children, and managed to achieve their targets to some extent. There is also a problem of less Polio team workers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He invited every party to participate in this campaign.

Mr. Abdul Rauf Mengal
Former Member, National Assembly of Pakistan, BNP-M

Mr. Abdul Rauf Mengal, while talking about Balochistan highlighted the particular areas that border the Dadu and Larkana districts of Sindh where people are not even aware of the Polio disease. He said that we lack communication between the Federation and the Provinces. Mr. Mengal thanked PILDAT, for organizing such events. He offered his full support and assured that he will identify those areas of Balochistan where no polio worker team has reached till now.

Moulana Hamid Ul Haq Haqqani
Senior Vice President, JUI-S
Former Member, National Assembly of Pakistan

Moulana Hamid Ul Haq Haqqani suggested for an Ulema Conference to be held all over Pakistan. Women should be encouraged to spread polio campaign, particularly those women who are studying in Maddressas.

Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan, MNA
(NA-326, Women Reserved Seat, Sindh, MQM)

Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan thanked PILDAT for providing an informative Polio eradication awareness Platform to the Parliamentarians. She emphasised that MQM organizes special awareness programs especially for females. She suggested to take ownership of the program at the provincial level to achieve positive results in eradicating Polio from Pakistan. She also suggested for the re-establishment of Local Body System that can help target the areas that are inaccessible, the Nazis of a particular district can make himself accessible to his area, hygiene of polio workers should be ensured so that masses do not show reservations, monitoring on the spot should be done so that preservation procedure should be managed and since media is playing an important role today in our lives; we should spread the message through plays and documentaries, so that people should be more aware.

Dr. Yaseen Baloch
President, Quetta, NP

Dr. Yaseen Baloch highlighted the particular areas in
Pakistan where cases are not being reported. We should check more and Polio workers should reach far flung areas, where there is lack of communication. He stressed on Health Education and termed it the basic need to create awareness among people. Health Education should be initiated and seminars and workshops should be organized. Political parties and NGOs can play a positive role. Dr. Baloch said his party has included Polio in their election manifesto. He also emphasised to stop corruption at lower levels.

**Mr. Nadeem Ahmed Mirza**  
*Secretary Information, PML-F*

Mr. Nadeem Ahmed Mirza congratulated and thanked for organising the event. He also appreciated PILDAT’s efforts in bringing this issue to the political level as there is a lack of political will on the issue. He suggested to educate the Polio Workers. If polio workers are educated then polio drops can be given through various means. He also urged to make Polio drops necessary in every government, semi government and even non-government hospital. Awareness for Polio disease should be emanated in detail as to how many drops should be given to a Child and till what age children can be given polio drops. He assured that PMLF would take the initiative in eliminating Polio and will make every effort to help eradicate Polio particularly from Sindh.

**Mr. Mohammed Ayaz Soomro, MNA**  
*(NA-204, Larkana (Old Larkana), Sindh, PPPP)*

Mr. Mohammed Ayaz Soomro thanked PILDAT, UNICEF and WHO, on behalf of PPPP for organizing the briefing session. He said that struggle to eradicate Polio is same as to serve the Country. Sincerely bypassing caste, social status, race and any political party differences we can achieve to eliminate polio from our country.

**Dr. Raja Amer Zaman, MNA**  
*(NA-19, Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PTI)*

Dr. Raja Amer Zaman thanked PILDAT team for organizing the briefing session and also showed his gratitude to all political party representatives and welcomed UNICEF and WHO. He said that the donor agencies have been struggling from years to eradicate Polio from Pakistan. While giving example of his personal experience of the year 2001 in Haripur he said that when a Polio case was reported in his area he called on an emergency meeting and developed a District Health Board in the capacity of the Nazim of that area. They ensured that the existing structure would take part in Polio Campaign. They declared a Provincial Health emergency not only of Polio but in the uplift of health system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Zaman further suggested, in order to eradicate Polio there should be a cold chain maintained from the production of the Vaccine to the administration of the Vaccine.

**Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahirkeli, MPA**  
*(WR-18, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, QWP)*

Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahirkeli thanked PILDAT for organising the event and also expressed her gratitude to the concerned donor agencies. She said that many new polio cases were reported in this year which was not satisfactory. She further said that the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan was the major source of Polio dispersion in Pakistan. It should be checked. The areas that are not reachable should be identified. She added that there were many cases of Polio Health Workers being killed particularly the Lady Health workers and the school teachers who were asked to carry out the Polio campaign. She expressed her concern as to why were the school
teachers being dragged into Polio Campaigns? Ms. Tahirkhel added that the KP government is fully geared up and is going to take Polio Eradication as the most important task. Government's resolve is to interrupt its transmission and eradicate it fully.
Appendix A

Presentation: Polio Eradication Update (July 15, 2013) by Dr. Shamsher Ali Khan, High Risk District Coordinator

Three Key zones of Polio transmission Globally

*Excludes vaccine derived polioviruses and viruses detected from environmental surveillance

Data in WHO HQ as of 18 June 2013
### Global Update for polio cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan*</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases in endemic countries</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases in non-endemic countries (Somalia &amp; Kenya)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cases</strong></td>
<td><strong>96</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comparison of polio cases by province/region; 2011 - 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/ Province</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATA / FR Areas</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilgit-Baltistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pakistan</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Polio Cases Reported during 2011 & 2012*

2011

Total no. of infected districts = 60

- P1 = 196
- P3 = 2

2012

Total no. of infected districts = 28

- P1 = 55
- P3 = 2
- P1 + P3 = 1

Polio Virus isolates, 2013*

- WPV cases = 10
- Sewage water = 5
- Total = 15

*Alp. rec Data as of 11-07-2013
National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP)

- Goal
  - Interrupt transmission of polioviruses by Dec. 2013
- Key NEAP strategies
  - Translate high level government oversight and ownership into meaningful accountability at district and UC levels
  - Through engagement with political leaders at all levels, media, and partners to galvanize commitment, active participation, and resources to ensure the milestones set forth in the President's National Emergency Action Plan are achieved
  - Ensure highest quality polio vaccination in the high risk districts/ agencies, UC/ Areas and populations
  - Through engagement with influential gate-keepers to facilitate access for vaccination teams as well as promotion and support for OPV
  - Ensure consistent access to all the children in FATA
  - By raising awareness among all stakeholders of the importance of OPV vaccination

National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP)

Key Oversight Structures

- National Task Force
  - Headed by the Prime Minister
- Provincial Task Force
  - Headed by the CM/CS
- District Polio Eradication Committees (DPEC)
  - Chaired by the DC/DCO/PA
- UC Polio Eradication Committee (UPEC)
  - Chaired by the UC Medical Officer
- National Communication Technical Committee (NCTC)
  - Chaired by Health Advisor (PM Cell), UNICEF/WHO members
- Provincial Communication Technical Committee
  - Recently notified

Guiding principles for NEAP 2013

- Integrated action plans for reservoirs and missed children
- Short Interval Additional Dose strategy (SIADs) is the key strategy across all reservoirs, high risk areas and outbreak areas
- Special Strategies to be implemented targeting Pashtun, migrant and transit populations
- All missed Children to be tracked and vaccinated after each campaign
- Effective and integrated control rooms will be ensured at all levels
- Independent intra campaign monitoring will be introduced for all SIAs
- Zero tolerance for misreporting and financial misappropriation
- Direct Disbursement Mechanism will be the only method for payment to front line workers
Pakistan made substantial progress during the last 18 months

- Decrease in polio cases & polio virus in Sewage
- After massive operational review, including social mobilization, Hyderabad and Larama have had a negative environmental sample for the first time
- The virus has been contained to three reservoir areas: Quetta Block (Quetta, Pishin, Killa-Abdullah), UC-4 Gaddap Town, Karachi and FATA/Central Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- Refusals of OPV are on all time low nationwide (less than 0.5%) with some exception in some areas of KP/Quetta Block
- 373,000 children missed in last nationwide polio campaign

More than 250,000 children remain unimmunized due to ban on polio vaccination in North and South Waziristan
Situation Summary

- Central Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA are a serious threat for the progress & efforts made
  - Management issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
  - Ban in North and South Waziristan Agencies
  - Unreached children in Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency
- Situation in Gaddap Town Karachi is a serious risk for polio spread
  - Continuous threats to anti-polio workers
- Security & threat to polio workers
  - 17 anti-polio workers killed since July 2012
  - 4 Police escorts killed while providing security to anti-polio workers
- Low Morale of health care workers
  - Management issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
  - Ban in North and South Waziristan Agencies
  - Unreached children in Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency
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- Low Morale of health care workers

Polio Partner’s Response

- **Security Part of District Micro Plan:** Sporadic campaigns, district micro-plans to include security plan.
- **Permanent Transit Vaccination Posts:** Vaccinating children “on the move”
- **Engagement with Religious Leaders:** No major religious leader has opposed the polio vaccination- Wafaq-ul Madaris conference; International Meeting of religious scholars to support polio vaccination
- **Strengthening of Health Systems:** Vaccine management protocols & SOP’s introduced; Federal, Provincial and District Vaccine Management committees established; Training of more than 1400 UCMOs in KP
- **Social Mobilization and Mass Media:** more than 1000 social mobilizers working in all polio high risk districts to address concerns of Parents regarding polio vaccination

What if we fail to eradicate polio?

- Pakistan is at risk of exporting the virus to other parts of the world, re-infecting countries which are currently polio-free
- Pakistani’s might face travel restrictions even for Hajj and Umrah
- Compulsory polio vaccination for all travelers (will have huge budgetary implications
- All grants given to Pakistan for Polio Eradication under various donor agreements could be converted to loans

What if we fail to eradicate polio?

- Participate in the DPEC Meeting (in person or a rep.)
  - Help ensuring accountability through political influence
- Nominate focal person for high risk UCs
  - Help UPEC to reaching all children & providing security for polio workers
- Utilize the energy of young political workers at the UC level to promote polio vaccination
- Include polio eradication in the agenda of the public meetings
- The FATA parliamentarians may use their influence to gain access to all parts of the tribal agencies
- Speak out against attacks against health workers
- Attackers of Health Care workers should be identified and brought to justice
- Work to strengthen routine immunization system
Appendix B

Polio Brief

2 drops of Polio vaccine
every child, every time.

In 1994 when polio eradication campaigns first started in Pakistan, polio was raging everywhere. More than 30,000 children were being paralyzed by polio annually. Many of the polio survivors experience life-long consequences from the disease that can lead to further decline in health status, independence, functional status, life satisfaction and overall quality of life. The rehabilitation of those affected involves costly and holistic approaches that include not only physical but also mental and social rehabilitation and integration into mainstream society.

The global effort to eradicate polio, began in 1988, has reduced the number of annual cases by 99% and averted incalculable suffering from a painful and paralyzing disease. Yet, the last 1% of polio is proving tough to crack. Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan remain the world's polio endemic reservoirs who have never freed themselves from the diseases. Until poliovirus transmission is interrupted in these three countries, all countries remain at risk of importation of polio.

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) report of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), recommends the imposition of international travel restrictions on every child or adult travelling out of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria without a valid vaccination certificate so that they do not carry the risk of polio with them to imperil the hard-earned status of countries that are now free of the crippling virus.

An Islamic Advisory Council is also established at the regional level in March 2013 and a consultation with Islamic scholars under the title 'Polio Eradication in the Light of Islam' was conducted in June 2013 in Islamabad where a National Islamic Advisory Council has been constituted by Islamic scholars of all school of thoughts of Pakistan to address misconceptions.

We are fortunate to have a political consensus on this issue and all major political leadership is on the same page in commitment to eradicate this peril from the country. This consensus is manifested through a joint declaration that was signed by 14 major political parties pledging to eliminate this crippling disease in an 'All Parties Conference' held in Islamabad in December 2012. 

Copy of the Joint Declaration is enclosed for your kind information.

Multiple challenges based on religious misconception, ignorance, social and security factors are having serious impact on polio eradication efforts in Pakistan. The persistent wild poliovirus transmission in Pakistan is restricted to three groups of districts: (1) Karachi city, (2) Quetta Block, Kila Abdullah and Pishin in Balochistan Province, and (3) districts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and (4) the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In addition, Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan repeatedly re-infect one other, due to the substantial population movements within and between the two countries.

Lack of access to populations remains a major risk to Pakistan's eradication efforts. Children in areas where insecurity is hampering access, and in North and South Waziristan where a ban on immunization has been issued, are at particular risk of polio. The violent attacks against health workers in December 2012, as well as the constant threats and shooting of polio vaccinators in 2013, have brought significant media and international attention to the anti-polio efforts. The deteriorating security situation has forced the government to engage law enforcement agencies and police forces in campaign planning and implementation.

Polio will not be stamped out in Pakistan unless the national programme reaches out to parents from high-risk groups, such as
low-income Pashtun communities who suffer the greatest burden of this disease. The Pashtun community represents only 15% of the population, but more than three-quarters of confirmed polio cases have occurred in this community this year.

The Augmented NEAP views the role of parliamentarians to be very crucial through personal engagement in supporting the ongoing vaccination activities and the ultimate attainment of the polio eradication goal in Pakistan. Although major political parties represented in the Parliament vowed their full support and commitment to work towards eradication of this menace from the country but due to transitional period and change of administration, the polio eradication efforts needs a fresh kick and a vigorous pace. In current circumstances when polio epidemic has emerged as an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while the same indigenous polio virus is circulating throughout Pakistan, caused paralysis in children of Punjab and Sindh, and current wave of attacks on polio team members, need for political leadership to express their support to the programme has been increased.

Henceforth the proposed activity has been planned to revitalize the political commitment to have a trickle-down effect at the ground level. Technical Experts on the subject will present an overall situation of polio crisis in the country and recapture their action plans in light of the guidance provided by the political leadership. It is anticipated that at the end of the briefing, political leadership will issue a mutual statement to the media expressing their strong commitment to the national cause of **Polio Free Pakistan**.
Appendix C

Joint Declaration of APC 2012 on Polio-a National Emergency

All Parties' Conference
Polio - A National Emergency
Wednesday, December 19, 2012
Islamabad, Pakistan

Joint Declaration

Preamble
Recalling resolution WHA (World Health Assembly) 61.1 on poliomyelitis where nations of the world made a commitment to eradicate Poliomyelitis, a disease that was paralyzing 350,000 children every year;

Mindful of the resolutions of the Organization of Islamic Conference calling upon the last three Muslim nations harbouring the Poliovirus to redouble efforts towards a Polio-free Umamah;

Noting that Pakistan is a victim of and in a state of war against terrorism which has so far hampered polio eradication efforts;

WE the Political Parties of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan AS/PARTNER our commitment to saving every Pakistani child from disability for life caused by the Polio virus through the following interventions:

1. Make Polio Eradication plan a part of our Manifestos for General Election 2013

2. Will declare Polio transmission a "National Public Health Emergency" making polioeradication a national priority programme, requiring the development and full implementation of emergency action plans, to be updated every six months, until such time as poliovirus transmission has been interrupted;

3. Allocate resources, both financial and human, for full implementation of current and future Polio Eradication strategies as endorsed by international and national technical bodies and forums for Polio Eradication;

4. Full implementation of current and new Polio Eradication strategies by evolving an institution of strong national oversight and accountability mechanisms for all areas affected by poliovirus;

5. To institute an effective elected Local Government system which is vital for the eradication of Polio

6. We appreciate the dedication and efforts of Polio Workers Teams working across Pakistan. All Political Parties of Pakistan condemn any attacks or deterrance caused by anyone in the effective discharge of responsibilities of Polio Workers Teams.

1. Awami National Party (ANP):

2. Balochistan National Party - Merged (BNP-M):

3. Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JIP):


7. Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM):

8. National Party (NP):

9. Pakistan Muslim League (PML):

10. Pakistan Muslim League - Functional (PML-F):

11. Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N):

12. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP):

13. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI):

14. Quami Watan Party (QWP):