

# EVENT REPORT

## Consultation on Contraceptive Pool Procurement

February 18, 2021



## **Disclaimer:**

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## Background

In 2018, the Supreme Court of Pakistan took a *sou moto* action on alarmingly high population growth rate in the country. Supreme Court constituted a committee to form a uniform national policy which resulted in the National Action Plan (NAP) 2019-24 to take immediate and long-term actions to control population in consultation with all provincial governments, development partners, and population experts. A Federal Task Force (FTF) to oversee the progress on NAP was notified under the chair of Honorable President of Pakistan.

In the third FTF meeting, Honorable President Dr. Alvi, emphasized on the need of uninterrupted provision of contraceptives/modern family planning methods for healthy birth spacing. President endorsed the idea of national pool procurement of contraceptives and all the Chief Ministers kindly agreed to the proposal.

The Population Program Wing (PPW), Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MoNHSR&C) with the technical assistance of USAID funded Global Health Supply Chain Program – Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project, reviewed the federal and provincial procurement rules, and held consultations with procurement and legal experts.

This meeting was also part of the consultation process and aimed to seek guidance from the experts of procurement regulatory authorities and provincial health and population welfare departments.

## Proceedings

### Opening Remarks and Context

The meeting commenced with registration of the participants followed by recitation from the verses of Holy Quran. The participants were welcomed on the occasion and the floor was handed over to the Director General, PPW/MoNHSR&C for his opening remarks. **Annex-I: Participants List**



DG PPW, MoNHSR&C

Director General, PPW/ MoNHSR&C, Dr. Shahid Hanif, opened the dialogue with a brief introduction by providing some background, informing the participants on why they were here, and highlighting the significance of the meeting. He apprised the participants on the action points of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Federal Task Force meeting and emphasized the need for the uninterrupted provision of modern family planning (FP) methods through the strategy of national pool procurement. He apprised the participants about the success story of the first ever regional contraceptive pool procurement FY2019-20 and stated that in order to ensure sustainable contraceptive

commodity security across the country, achieve economies of scale and efficient use of public funds, this meeting would be crucial in terms of chalking out a future roadmap for national pool procurement.

### What is at stake: Commodity Security and Economies of Scale

To ensure sustainable contraceptive commodity security across the country, Dr. Muhammad Tariq, Country Director, USAID funded GHSC-PSM project, highlighted the need to achieve economies of scale and use public funds more efficiently as defragmented procurements and small volumes had less appeal for international bidders. He enunciated that we have precedents of pool procurement like joint contraceptive pool procurement (PWD and DOH) by provinces, Federal government/ Regional contraceptive pool procurement applying the concept of centralized tendering and de-centralized payments and Vaccines/ COVID-19



Country Director, USAID funded GHSC-PSM project

procurement by the federal government on behalf of all provincial governments. By procuring a larger volume of contraceptives, and placing more response and competitive bids, the country could have a greater availability of internationally produced products. He also presented the proposed mechanisms for national contraceptive pool procurement.

## Need of National Contraceptive Pool Procurement



*Ex-SAPM on Health/ Public Health Specialist*

Dr. Zafar Mirza, Ex-SAPM on Health / Public Health Expert, provided a brief description of the FP context in Pakistan, the urgent need for action, and the progress that has been made so far with respect to Contraceptive Pool Procurement. He said that the group purchasing of contraceptives by all the provinces and regions would lead to economies of scale. He emphasized that no amount of economic development could satisfy the growing need for resources left by an alarmingly growing population and the need for collective action to ensure the easy availability, improved access, and a greater choice of contraceptives.

## Planning Commission Perspective; FP & National Security

Dr. Shabnum Sarfraz, Member Social Sector, M/o PD&SI, commented on the population situation analysis and assured participants that there is no shortage of funds for FP at the planning commission. Since 2015-21, there has been a sharp decline in the allocation of funds for population and that needs to be addressed. She also encouraged the creation of a national program for FP with special significance to Public-Private partnerships and reassured to extend full support to all provincial and regional governments for population welfare initiatives.



*Member Social Sector, M/o PD&SI*

## Remarks by FP Advisor, UNFPA



*FP Advisor, UNFPA*

Dr. Yilma Alazar, FP Advisor, UNFPA, appreciated the unprecedented commitment at the highest level for provision of uninterrupted family planning services. He said that without successful implementation of Recommendation 7 of National Action Plan, it's very hard to make progress on rest of the proposed activities. All provincial and regional governments are committed to allocate funds but the only challenge is speeding up the process of procurement of national and international contraceptives.

## Provincial Governments' and Regulatory Perspective

The floor was then handed over to the representatives of the provincial governments and public procurement regulatory authorities.

Mr. Amir Afaq, Special Secretary Health, Department of Health KP, shared his insight on group purchase from KP perspective and reiterated his province's support of the program, which has already been cleared by the Chief Minister KP. Dr. Aman Ullah, Director, KPPRA, fully supported the concept of pooled procurement and proposed that a Joint Procurement Unit may be notified by the Honourable President of Pakistan, having representation from all provinces that would serve as a centralized procurement committee. He said that the pool procurement may be conducted as per the rule stated in all Federal and provincial PPRAs i.e. "When the price of goods, services

or works is fixed by the Government or any other authority, agency or body duly authorized by the Government on its behalf'. Its 42 /C6 in Federal PPRA rules, 59/C6 in Punjab PRA rules, 16/B6 in SPPRA rules, 51/B6 in BPPRA rules and 10/C2, 3 (2) c in KPPRA rules.

Mr. Malik Bhulla, Director General, Population Welfare Department Punjab, opened by saying that following the formation of the federal task force, the provinces were very pleased as they felt their concerns were being addressed at the highest level and echoed his province's support of the initiative. He then stated that although there was an issue with the availability of contraceptives, there needs to be a change in priorities with a greater focus on demand generation by increasing budget allocation for advertisements and education. He also reiterated Dr. Shabnum Sarfraz's comments that without an increase in funding for population welfare programs, we cannot achieve the desired outcomes we are hoping for.

Mr. Shah Faisal Director Admin, Procurement & HR, Population Welfare Department Sindh, said that the procurement situation in Sindh was different from the other provinces as they have been procuring independently and efficiently since devolution. He underscored that the practical issue was the lack of local manufacturing, which is needed for a competitive bidding process, without which manufacturers set their prices too high. As such, Government of Sindh does not support pooled procurement; they feel their priorities are different and that they can handle their system more efficiently if managed independently.

Dr. Pervaiz Ahmed Nusherwani, Director General, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Balochistan, remarked that as far as group purchasing was concerned, it was neither allowed nor disallowed in existing public procurement legal framework. He then emphasized that it was a question of policy not procurement rules; group purchasing would adhere to the principles of procurement, i.e. value for money, and that this would not be in violation of the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment because no legislation would be written for any province or the federal government. As such, from a legal perspective, it is allowed and is in adherence to the principles of public procurement. Mr. Noor Ullah, Deputy Director, PWD Balochistan concluded by reiterating Balochistan's full support of the pool procurement plan.

Mr. Ibrahim Rahman, Deputy Director (M&E), Federal PPRA Islamabad apprised that prices cannot be negotiated once vendor is finalized, as per the Federal PPRA rules. The representatives from regions i.e AJ&K, GB and Islamabad shared their experience about the first ever regional pool procurement and apprised that the procurement concept of "Centralized Tenders and De-centralized payments" was very successful and ensured commodity security and economies of scale at the same time.

## **Wrap up and Roadmap**

In the concluding session, Dr. Zafar Mirza, recapitulated the discussion and thanked all the participants for their invaluable contributions during this session. Following action points were agreed by the meeting participants:

1. A feasibility report to be drafted in consultation with federal and provincial procurement authorities on contraceptive group purchase in light of current public procurement rules
2. On the basis of feasibility report, a future roadmap will be proposed to carry out contraceptive pool procurement
3. National Contraceptives Procurement Committee to be notified with representation from federal and provincial governments including officials from MoNHSR&C, health and population welfare departments, and procurement regulatory authorities.

## Remarks by USAID

Dr. Enilda Martin, Director Health Office USAID, who joined virtually, appreciated the highest-level of political commitment shown by the Pakistan Government towards FP. She encouraged the MoNHSR&C, provincial governments, and procurement regulatory authorities to accelerate efforts toward achieving the national action plan and the federal task force goal of enhanced contraceptive security. Furthermore, she encouraged the efforts of Ministries of Science and Technology, Commerce, and Trade to engage the private sector and develop friendly business policies which are crucial to promote the local production of medicines, contraceptives, and supplies that meet local needs at a low cost.



## Keynote by SAPM on Health



The meeting was ended after the keynote by Excellency SAPM on Health, Dr. Faisal Sultan, who reiterated his complete support to the provincial governments for adopting the pool procurement mechanism for contraceptive procurement and informed that an Integrated Supply Chain Management and Procurement Cell is being established within the Ministry with the technical support of USAID funded GHSC-PSM project. He further apprised that the Cell would usher an era of defragmentation of supply chain and procurement functions within the ICT as well as Federating Areas and will coordinate with provinces to gain resource efficiencies and quality assurance of health products being procured and managed by the Ministry. He concluded that he was excited to have procurers and procurement

regulators sitting on one table for the greater national cause and eluded that population welfare is the top agenda for the current government.



## Annex I: Participants List

Sr. No.	Name	Designation
1	Dr. Faisal Sultan	SAPM on Health, MoNHSR&C
2	Dr. Shahid Hanif	Director General PPW, MoNHSR&C
3	Dr. Shabnum Sarfaraz	Member Social Sector and Devolution, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives
4	Dr. Zafar Mirza	Ex-SAPM on Health /Public Health Expert
5	Dr. Enilda Martin	Director Health Office, USAID
6	Dr. Muhammad Tariq	Country Director, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
7	Dr. Yilma Melkamu Alazar	Advisor FP, UNFPA
8	Mr. Ibrahim Rahman	Deputy Director (M&E), Federal PPRA
9	Mr. Malik Bhulla	Director General, Population Welfare Department, Punjab
10	Malik Sanaullah Khan	Additional Secretary Procurement, Department of Health, Punjab
11	Dr. Asif	Deputy Director IRMNCH, Punjab
12	Mr. Riaz Hussain Soomro	Managing Director, Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
13	Mr. Shah Faisal	Director Admin, Procurement & HR, Population Welfare Department, Sindh
14	Mr. Noor Ullah	Deputy Director, Population Welfare Department, Balochistan
15	Dr. Abadgar Baloch	Official Planning Cell, Department of Health, Balochistan
16	Dr. Pervaiz Ahmed Nusherwani	Director General, Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
17	Mr. Kashif Khan	Deputy Director C&L, Population Welfare Department, KP
18	Mr. Amir Afaq	Special Secretary Health, Department of Health, KP
19	Dr. Iktam ullah Khan	Director Public Health, Department of Health, KP
20	Dr. Aman Ullah	Director Enforcement, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
21	Dr. Ashfaq	Director, Population Welfare Department, AJ&K
22	Dr. Tanvir Shafi	Director Admin Health, Department of Health, AJ&K
23	Dr. Farhat Shaheen	Regional Director, MNCH Program, AJ&K
24	Mr. Amin Khan	Deputy Director, Population Welfare Department, GB
25	Dr. Syeda Rashida	Technical Officer, DHO ICT
26	Mr. Taj Wali	Director (P), PPW, MoNHSR&C
27	Mr. Ehsan UI Haq	Director PPW, MoNHSR&C
28	Mr. Inamullah Khan	Advisor to Ministry,
29	Mr. Nabeel Ahmad Maqbool	Director VPID, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
30	Ms. Ambreen Khan	Director BHS, USAID funded GHSC-PSM

Sr. No.	Name	Designation
31	Mr. Masood Anwar	National Public Health Supply Chain Specialist, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
32	Mr. Ameer Abdul Sami	Sr. Manager Logistics, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
33	Mr. Irfan Khan	Sr. Provincial Supply Chain Manager, KP, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
34	Dr. Tanweer Hussain	Hep-C Consultant, Sindh, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
35	Dr. Farooq Azam Jan	Hep-C Consultant, Balochistan, USAID funded GHSC-PSM
36	Dr. Jamil Ahmed Chaudhry	Program Specialist - Sexual & Reproductive Health,
37	Dr. Khurram Shehzad	Consultant, UNFPA
38	Dr. Muhammad Asif Wazir	Technical Specialist, UNFPA