

PPIF QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

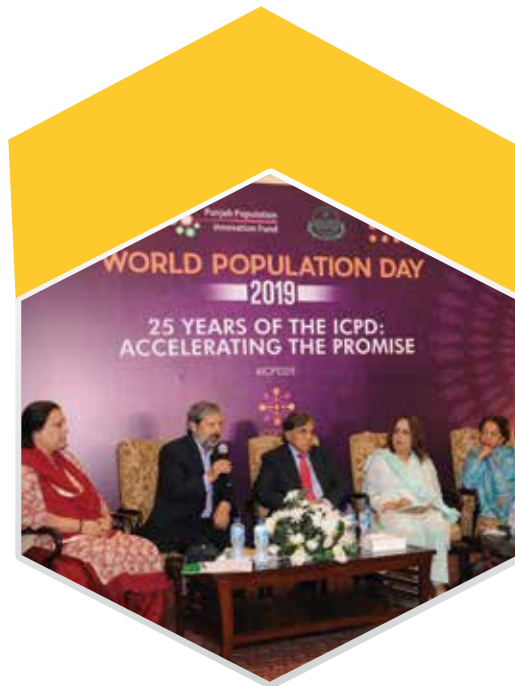
PUNJAB POPULATION INNOVATION FUND

VOL 3

WHAT'S INSIDE



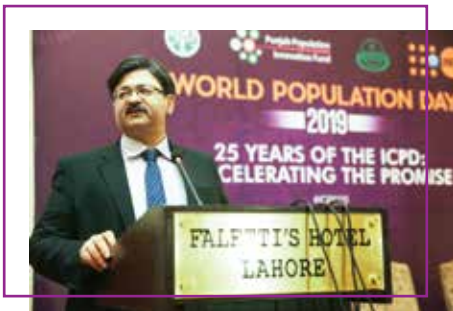
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OF PPIF**



Pakistan is the fifth largest populated country in the world. There have been several plans made to positively tackle population growth but nothing has worked to effectively address this issue. Consequently, we are unable to cater to the burgeoning population and depressing statistics of gross death rate of children at 2.4% meaning almost 7 million children are added to the country's population every year as 30,000 children being born every day.

As a planner, if we make a school that can cater to at least two hundred children, we'll have to be erecting one hundred such schools every day to tackle the growing population. These children need health, recreational and educational facilities and once into their twenties, they will have to be provided with employment opportunities. Several factors underlie the slow progress of curtailling the population growth and I rate awareness at the top of the list, as many people are not aware about the importance of contraceptive usage and its benefits the contraceptive prevalence rate stands at approximately 26% – which is not a good indicator.

Despite the remarkable progress, there are still millions of women who were not permitted or empowered to freely decide the timing and spacing of birth of children, despite the all-out effort made by the Government, many women were still not provided with reproductive health facilities. Added to this are the perceived yet rife social hurdles of religious sentiments and family pressure and preference of having a male child over a female one. All this has pulled the country to a position where the number of malnourished and uneducated in our society has increased drastically. The suggested approach is to devise a plan which brings all the departments concerned on the same page as this cannot be handled by a single department. There is a dire need for a multi-sectoral center consisting of the PWD, NGOs, civil society, influencers from the showbiz industry and intelligentsia amongst others, to collectively work in a manner that a viable solution can be designed and implemented with full vigour.

MR. HABIB UR REHMAN GILANI
CHAIRMAN,
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT,
PUNJAB



I am proud to share this edition of our newsletter covering the many feats achieved in our short-lived existence, as next month will mark Punjab Population Innovation Funds third year since inception. With the continued supervision of the PPIF Board and our Team's dedication PPIF has successfully closed our first round of programs, has kick started our second innovation cycle on male involvement with three new partners, has co-hosted World Population Day, has held an amateur youth film competition, has designed a youth focused next program cycle, is launching the much anticipated BISP voucher scheme and has welcomed a Youth Ambassador. Reiterating the vision of the PPIF Board, the Chairman Planning and Development Department, Mr. Gilani and the Population Minister, Col (R) Sardar Muhammad Hashim Dogar, PPIF is fully forging partnerships with various UN agencies, media influencers, international organizations and potential donors. PPIF in collaboration with the Population Welfare Department (PWD) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) hosted the World Population Day celebrations emphasizing the

need to use edutainment to help engage young people as agents of change to challenge prejudices and help mitigate myths surrounding the uses of family planning. PPIF Youth Ambassador Ms Amna Ilyas will use her social media voice to help demystify family planning as a female domain advocating for couple communication.

PPIF, in its second cycle has designed and launched an innovative program specifically to engage and improve the accessibility for men. Three projects have been selected under the program, 'Kar Buland', by DoctHers in Rahim Yar Khan, 'Connect4FP' by International Rescue Committee in Multan and 'Mil kar Faisla, Khushali ka Waseela,' our partner Greenstar Social Marketing in Faisalabad and Bahawalpur.

As you are reading this, PPIF is engaged in the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) launch ceremony, where the collaboration with Population Council and BISP would provide the rare opportunity of an integrated social development program for enhanced service provision with the benefit of poverty alleviation for female BISP beneficiaries from the most underprivileged strata of society in Rahim Yar Khan.

I urge you to continue reading to find out more about the exciting advances

MR. JAWAD QURESHI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
PUNJAB POPULATION INNOVATION FUND



The threat of population explosion, currently facing the country, could undermine all efforts towards ensuring economic progress in Pakistan.

Dr Sania Nishtar
Chairperson
Benazir Income Support Program



Pakistan was water abundant till 1981 and eventually became water-stressed by 1998 due to the increase in population, which has reached a staggering figure of 210 million.

Dr Zeba Sathar
Country Director
Population Council



Innovative collaboration of PPIF, with BISP and Population Council will reduce cost-related barriers and accelerate FP uptake amongst poorest of poor.

Dr Ijaz Nabi
Chairman
Punjab Population Innovation Fund

REDUCING COST-RELATED BARRIERS

Fertility is, globally, more common among the poor, rural, and uneducated women than among their well-off, urban and educated counterparts – although this disparity is much smaller in countries with strong family planning programs. In Pakistan, however, the Total Fertility Rate for the lowest and highest wealth quintile stands at 4.9 and 2.8, respectively.

Nevertheless, the Punjab Population Innovation Fund (PPIF) aims to ensure that family planning services are easily and readily accessible, especially for the poor and the marginalized, through interventions that focus on clients' financial decision-making process – for example: Vouchers that can be redeemed at trained private health service providers and/or family planning be included in health insurance.

The opportunity of integrating with poverty alleviation and other social development programs, for enhanced service provisions while also reinforcing the message that family planning can be an effective approach that can further contribute to broad development goals of poverty reduction, will also be explored.



INTERVENTION

The collaborated intervention will enable female BISP beneficiaries from the most underprivileged segments of the society to avail family planning services which ensures their rights of avoiding mistimed pregnancies and births, apart from improving maternal and child health outcomes in their communities.

The project will mitigate cost and information related barriers by financing the uptake of family planning services for approximately 20,000 BISP beneficiaries that are Married Women Of Reproductive Age (MWRAs 15-49) and create community-based information channels for an additional 60,000 BISP beneficiaries through BISP Beneficiaries Committee's (BBC)/ BISP Mother Ambassadors (MAs), social mobilizers and Lady Health Workers (LHWs). The intervention will be based in all four Tehsils of Rahim Yar Khan, for a duration of 18 months.

A quality-assured network will be developed, comprising of maximum 60 private health service providers as well as those in the public sector. The intervention will have a digitized voucher management system, which will be based on a mobile application for the verification and disbursement of funds to the beneficiaries and the service providers.

Moreover, the transportation costs, to the nearest health facilities, will also be reimbursed to the BISP beneficiaries for efficient and improved access to the service. With the presence of over 2 Million BISP beneficiaries in Punjab, there is an immense opportunity to scale-up the intervention, once the pilot is successfully tested.

THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Punjab Population Innovation Fund (PPIF), Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), and the Population Council (PC) signed an MoU on January 4, 2019 at the BISP Secretariat, Islamabad.

Speaking at the occasion, BISP Chairperson Dr Sania Nishtar stated that the goal of eradicating poverty across the country was inextricably tied to interventions that empower people to make choices to improve their living conditions, including accessibility to family planning services. CEO PPIF Mr Qureshi said that the Punjab Population Innovation Fund has been created to introduce out of the box solutions tackling barriers for the uptake of family planning services – especially among the low-income communities. Dr Zeba Sathar stated that the census results had propelled the issue of population growth onto the agenda of the highest executive and judicial forums in the country. BISP Secretary Omer Hamid Khan stated that the 'BISP household survey' was unprecedented in the country and the resulting data was an invaluable resource – which could be utilized for evidence-based development planning.



"The PPIF-funded projects are already enabling better access to contraceptive services in different parts of Punjab."

Jawad Ahmed Qureshi
CEO PPIF

Q: Is there recognition on the part of the current political leadership that rapid population growth is a fundamental development concern? If so, has a revised strategy been put in place to address the issue?

Ans: The population of Pakistan is multiplying by the minute and will double meaning it will reach 25 crores figure in 2030 with the current growth rate. This has consequences for all aspects of security of the citizens, be it food and water to education and health. Meeting an ever-increasing demand given the resources of the government will prove a relentless battle against the mushrooming multitude and impact its developmental targets unless the general public is sensitized to this alarming growth. Population development is high on the agenda of the current administration as is evident from the statements made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. There is increased transparency and accountability in the current dispensation of power which is merit-based and results-oriented. The task force on Population has made a comprehensive set of recommendations and we are following through on progress against each of these, whether it is implementation of an effective communications campaign to evince public support for the issue, introducing legislative changes such as those that afford protection to the rights of teenagers or whether putting into effect a composite strategy that consolidates the efforts of all stakeholders for maximum impact in the sector.

Q: As Pakistan's projected population is set to peak at quarter of a billion crores within this decade, what measures can the Government of Punjab undertake to help stabilize the growth rate?

Punjab being the most populated province, housing more than half of the population is included in the priorities of the government as evidenced by the Prime Ministerial Task Force on population unlike the past governments who had relegated it to the back burner.

Firstly, our policies will focus youth as we who constitute more than half of Pakistan's population at 63%. It is thus imperative to make them aware of their responsibilities towards nation building that include informed decisions on family size, destigmatizing this issue by including religio-cultural influencers for narrative building and debunking myths surrounding services that are more a fallacy than reality. I am working towards including this in curriculums to educate our youth and am glad that PPIF has taken aboard a Youth Ambassador and will undertake a campus sensitization campaign.

Secondly, involving men to actively engage within this debate is vital to draw links between affordability and family size that is currently causing stunted growth in children and malnutrition in the females as due to poverty men are unable to provide a nutritious diet and other amenities most notably education. In contrast, educated families have smaller family sizes with healthier mother and children. To counter the problem of stunting, I have instructed to incentivise nursing mothers for a period of two years as ordained in the Holy Qur'aan that will also help in birth spacing, indirectly helping reduce the growth ratio.

Thirdly, our government realizes population pressures on cities due to urbanization and will establish eight Education Cities in Punjab including academic institutions like medical colleges and engineering universities. Provision of these will not only foster choices for better education and employment opportunities beyond big cities but also help stabilise de-urbanization as will out of the box solutions and creating synergies across sectors



Q: What in your opinion is the one key area in the population welfare sector towards which resources should be directed in order for Punjab and the rest of the country to meet its development goals as well as the international commitments?

Ans: I believe the answer lies in affording greater opportunities to women so that they are empowered to make decisions about their health and welfare. Any programs that are aimed at educating women and providing them economic independence or giving them a voice and making them equal participants in decision-making within the given family structure would go a long way in ameliorating the current situation. Ultimately, this has to do with social and behavior change where men facilitate women empowerment and are supportive of their choices. A sustained gender sensitive communications campaign reflecting these priorities would be a good start.

Q: Punjab Population Innovation Fund was established to test out innovative models of service delivery and find scalable service delivery models that could be replicated by the public sector on a greater scale. What kind role do you envisage for the PPIF?

Ans: We are seeking to complement evidence-based policies in the province and are closely following the results of PPIF interventions aimed at improving accessibility and the population programmes in the province will be guided by these results. One area where PPIF can play a major role is to bring in private sector investment in the sector whether it is in the form of an increased share in Family Planning service delivery or highlighting the importance of the issue for corporate philanthropy initiatives.

I believe that enunciating a consensus-based public opinion around the issue may be taken up by PPIF so if an opinion is latent in the collective consciousness of the society then it can be brought to the foreground so that individual actions reflect the greater good of the society. In my personal capacity and as the Minister Population, whenever I have spoken about the issue of population growth, I have not encountered opposition even from religious quarters. So, I believe, the people of Pakistan must be made cognizant through all platforms including PPIF, of the threat that unplanned growth in population poses for the future of the country by severely depleting its resources and that a large family size is, by and large, is neither a sign of prosperity nor will serve their families or country well.

INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

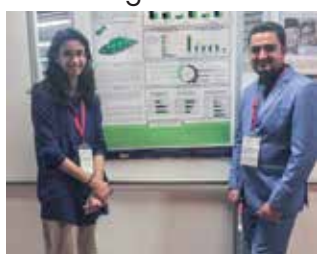
Punjab Population Innovation Fund envisions to be a market maker with the immediate goal of accelerating a rise in contraceptive prevalence and reduction in unmet need for family planning services to meet targets and country level commitments highlighted in FP2020, Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Punjab Population Policy Goals.

Its fundamental role is to test the impact of innovations that spark off a significant increase in consumer market for family planning through greater determination and information availability, enhanced provider motivation, and wider provision of quality family planning services. Recognizing the need for increasing both acceptability and availability simultaneously, the Fund supports interventions in areas of high poverty and high unmet need for family planning.

Expanding access to family planning (FP) at the community level is a priority strategy for accelerating progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially universal access to reproductive health (RH), including FP services. However, the achievement of universal access to FP and RH services remains a major challenge when 40% of Punjab is uncovered by Lady Health Worker (LHW) and merely 10% of the women given information on family planning during a postnatal checkup. PPIF aims to improve accessibility by developing new formal partnerships with public and private providers and invest in bringing family planning services to where people live and work, through door-step delivery models such as social franchising and marketing of private providers, social entrepreneurship and mobile services to improve the accessibility for family planning services. It will implement interventions which provide a wide range of FP services through an aggregated network of pharmacies/drug shops and private health service providers and explore the opportunity of integrating with other development programs specifically immunization, post-partum healthcare services.

INTERVENTIONS

The first program cycle piloted two interventions that tested the doorstep delivery model that enables community-based women to have an additional income source by selling household items and replenishing short term contraceptives along with family planning advisory services at their doorsteps; while referring clients for family planning services to a quality assured network of private/public health practitioners. Health and Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) implemented the model in non-LHW covered 15UCs of district Muzaffargarh whereas Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center (AHKRC) in partnership with NUST implemented the project in 4 UCs in peri-urban slums of Rawalpindi. A Video Library on FP topics was also developed by HANDS and readily made available to both the smart and regular phone users to be shown by the community workers. AKHRC employed a Positive Deviance Inquiry and Cognitive Behavior Therapy model developed by NUST that addressed family planning myths and misconceptions as well as improved the uptake of long-term contraceptive methods in the area.



Recently completed projects by PPIF in its intervention districts namely Rawalpindi and Muzaffargarh underscore general perceptions regarding behaviours associated with contraceptive use such as initial knowledge of methods to avoid pregnancy come subsequent to the initiation of the childbearing process. Community-centered social and behavior change campaigns as a part of PPIF interventions, promote engagement of men, along with women as equal partners to foster positive social norms around family planning.

PPIF has a communications strategy that mandates a distinct communication for demand generation component for every project funded by the organization rendering support to partners where necessary, in order to ensure that the demand generation component adequately supports program interventions for securing access to family planning services. To encourage couples as potential contraceptive users and joint decision-makers for family healthcare, PPIF organised multifarious communication activities namely, organizing street theaters and health melas alongside IEC dissemination focusing on debunking myths and misconceptions associated with contraceptive use.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FAMILY PLANNING KIGALI, RWANDA

International Conference on Family Planning, Kigali, Rwanda. The Government of Rwanda hosted the fifth International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) in Kigali, Rwanda, with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health. The Conference was held at the Kigali Convention Centre from the 12th to the 15th of November 2018. The theme of the Conference in Rwanda was "Investing for a Lifetime of Returns".

PPIF submitted an abstract based on the findings of the baseline surveys conducted by PPIF in intervention areas, i.e., the urban slums of Rawalpindi and rural sections of Muzaffargarh. PPIF has a strong focus on implementing interventions based on the evidence of the needs of local communities but that could be replicated and scaled-up for greater returns on investment. An abstract was co-authored by Ms. Amna Akhsheed, Mr Imran Ahmed and Ms Nida Sheikh and a poster based on the abstract was presented at the conference.

EMPLOYING EDUTAINMENT FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES

Through interventions in the first program cycle, 80,000 Married Women of Reproductive Age were reached and 17,000 Additional new users were generated during 18 months. On average, there has been more than 30% uptake of long-term methods among additional new users in the interventions. 25 private providers and almost 200 community mobilizers (women) were trained to provide family planning services. These interventions foresee a 15% increase in Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) however, the exact figures can be shared after the end line evaluation of the interventions that is due to be completed by end of September 2019. PPIF is making efforts to mobilize funds to scale up the successful intervention in the 40% uncovered area in Punjab.

ENGAGING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In Muzaffargarh, the target audience belonged to a rural setup with limited access to modern means of communication. Culturally-relevant street theatres, developed in the language of the community were chosen as the medium of communication to attract the largest possible audience and get positive messages across in an entertaining and humorous way. The campaign was kicked off by an event recognizing the contribution of the social entrepreneurs, Noors, for positively influencing behaviours around family planning. Members of district administration including office bearers from the district Population Welfare Department were also present at the event and appreciated PPIF's efforts to introduce community workers in areas uncovered by the workers from Health and Population Welfare Department. An extensive campaign was thereafter run in all localities of Muzaffargarh including Sultan pur, Khairpur Sadat, Chak 523, Chak 646, Gujrat, Basti Sonata, Gujrat Dhari, Jatoli Shumali, Jhugi Wala and Manikpur. The average attendance at these events was around 300 people, men as well as women.

A similar campaign was organized in Rawalpindi to counter negative public perceptions around contraceptive use. A district-level stakeholder sensitisation event was organized to disseminate the work being undertaken by the Noor Workers in Rawalpindi. Members of district administration, Population Welfare Department, Non-Government Organizations and civil society were present at the event and were apprised of the objectives of the project as well as the progress made against those objectives, including the training of Noors as social entrepreneurs.



At regular intervals, across the intervention areas inter alia at Fauji Colony, Dhok Hassu (North & South) and Dhok Mangtal where communities were engaged through Health melas (community fairs) and street theatres. Messages around family planning behaviours were specifically developed to meet the information needs of the communities and engender a positive response towards desired behavior change and reinforced through repeated iterations to ensure recall among the participants of the fairs. The events were largely attended by men and women who enjoyed the edutainment fairs with keen interest in the health camps organized alongside dispensing information and services through the project Private providers. To engage men, males displaying positive behaviours thereby having a positive influence on communal weal were also depicted.





PARTNERS



As a planner, if we make a school that can cater at least 200 children, we'll have to be erecting 100 such schools everyday to tackle the growing population. Unfortunately, such issues outnumber the solutions being offered

Mr Habib ur Rehman Gilani
Chairman,
Planning and Development Department
Punjab



In the last 25 years, there has been significant progress in expanding access to reproductive health including the use of modern contraceptives. A lot has been done but still it has not been realized in its entirety

Muhammad Hasan Iqbal
Secretary
Population Welfare Department
Punjab



We must seed and spread innovative ideas that are measurable and sustainable in order to strengthen access to family planning services.

Mr Jawad Qureshi
Chief Executive Officer
Punjab Population Innovation Fund



The agenda of ICPD25 can be accelerated by implementing the recommendations of the Council of Common Interest with full vigour.

Mr Shoaib Ahmed
Technical Specialist
UNFPA, Pakistan

World Population Day is observed each year by the international community raising awareness around population-related concerns particularly the importance of family planning, maternal health and its consequential impact on governance and human development indicators. This Year Punjab Population Innovation Fund collaborated with Population Welfare Department, Punjab, and the United Nations Population Fund, Pakistan organized a multi-sectoral event at a local hotel to highlight the theme for 2019 **"25 Years of the ICPD: Accelerating the Promise."**

Chief Guest, Mr Habib ur Rehman Gilani, Chairman Planning and Development Department advocated a multi-sectoral synergy between the government, private sector and the intelligentsia to help stabilize the accelerating population of Pakistan. Mapping the milestones and persisting challenges of Punjab's population, Secretary Population Welfare Department, Punjab Mr Muhammad Hasan Iqbal said that Pakistan was one of the pioneer countries integrating family planning services into its health services since 1960s. However, owing to stagnated level of modern contraceptive prevalence, high unmet need and poor quality of care Pakistan, Pakistan's population is set to double in 30 years.

Chief Executive Officer, PPIF Mr Jawad Qureshi stressed the need for innovative solutions for service delivery and information diffusion especially youth as agents of change to fulfil ICPD25 promise. He highlighted the need for engaging the opinion influencers to educate the urban and rural public. UNFPA Technical Specialist, Mr Shoaib Ahmed provided an overview of this year's theme spotlighting the unfinished agenda of the International Conference for Population Development and its 25th anniversary to be held in Nairobi in November 2019.

Dr. Yasmeen, as moderator, briefed that the agenda of the panel discussion is to discuss and the challenges of the population sector, way forward in changing the landscape of family planning and to accelerate the ICPD25 agenda in Punjab.

Dr. Zeba Sathar, initiated the discussion by highlighting the situation of Punjab noting that there has been tremendous improvement in health indicators with declining maternal and infant mortality rates, improved antenatal visits with skilled birth attendance from '41% to 75%' in the last ten years. However, she observed that the family planning indicators have been stagnant for a decade reflecting lack of commitment to the issue. The abortion rates have doubled to 'upto 1.3 million in Punjab' in last 15 years that bears enormous emotional, social and financial cost. The government needs to enable other stakeholders including NGOs to work efficiently by not getting involved in the service delivery whereas encourage institutions to add-on family planning services in their frameworks

Dr. Yasmeen then inquired Dr. Abdul Ghaffar on why have we not been able to convert the unwanted fertility and unmet need even when we now see the political will in the form of the CCI Action Plan?

Dr. Abdul Ghaffar said that 'the program structure is the same as it was in 1993, same family welfare centres, same reproductive health centres, same district officers, same provincial officers, and same provincial setups, except of the revolution of 2010 that came unprepared and without requisite preparation.' However, post-Chief Justice suo-motto a Task Force has been formed and a fast track framework of recommendations has been developed, approved by the Council of Common Interest (CCI) and translated into a national and provincial action plan.

ELISTS



Moving forward, Dr. Yasmeen emphasized on the importance of commitments made by governments on international platforms but said that 'lack of accountability, monitoring' and analysing whether we are seeing results is one area that really needs attention. Dr. Yasmeen, while inviting Dr. Saman Yazdani Khan, inquired about the policy and cultural barriers especially in light of on-ground successes of NGOs which have not translated on a national scale. Dr. Yazdani said that reproductive health is immensely associated with a diverse social and cultural system of local communities in Punjab and emphasized on the importance of incorporating it in developing frameworks. She lamented that there are numerous small cities as well that are being ignored with inaccessible family planning services. Having private businesses at the very center of these cities, population clinics should also be part of the main areas while also maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of clients, as compared to their current location in remote parts of these cities.

Dr. Yasmeen, before inviting Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, pointed out that inequalities play a significant role in family planning where the PDHS has consistently shows an inverse relationship of wealth and education with fertility. Dr. Nizamuddin, being involved with the family planning programs since 1965, said that access to quality services is the main barrier to an accelerating CPR and should be the prime focus to reduce the unmet need. He further said that, when we talk about population growth, we must also talk about population asset. With more than 60% of the population under the age of 30, youth have become our asset.' He noted, 'if skilled education can be given to our young people and the government invests in the area, a huge difference can be made.'

Dr. Yasmeen reiterated the importance of quality family planning services quoting Dr. Zeba's study that the discontinuation rate is the 'leaking bucket' in the family planning ecosystem and inquired the next guest, Dr. Tahir, about UNICEF's role in linking nutrition, children health, stunting with high fertility and maternal mortality etc. Dr. Tahir said that focusing millions of unmarried, out-of-school boys and girls who has largely been ignored in FP programming, is one of the prime agendas of UNICEF's interventions in Punjab. Dr. Yasmeen concluded by saying that the political commitment can make a significant difference that has recently been witnessed among government stakeholders.

PPIF Youth Ambassador Ms Amna Ilyas advocated women empowerment and demystifying family planning as a female domain supporting couple communication at the forefront of narrative. Executive Director Ajoka, Mr Shahid Nadeem recounted introducing family planning mentions into PTV's narrative in a nuanced manner particularly in his iconic Janjalpura reiterating that ICPD25 Agenda can be amplified through Pakistan's edutainment media. Director Mr Sarmad Khoosat exhorted involving the artist fraternity to bring about a revolution to curb the existing prejudice and myopia around family planning narrative. He commended the Short Films screened during the event proposing using big screen for mass social impact education.

Three short films on male responsibility in Family Planning, importance of maternal and child health and Family Planning is the key to reduce poverty, were also screened at the event. The team of Iqra University, Islamabad was adjudged the first prize winner by the Jury and the creative winners were awarded prizes and certificates by the Chief Guest Mr Habib ur Rehman Gilani.

SPEAKERS



Sarmad Khoosat
Screenwriter
Actor & Director

We are living in an age where celebrities are powerful influencers. Artists can contribute and initiate revolution to challenge the prejudice and myopia around Family Planning.



Amna Ilyas
Actor, Model
PPIF Youth Ambassador

We must demystify family planning as a female domain and bring couple communication at the forefront of narrative.



Laraib Abid
Founder MASHAL

I started MASHAL to work for sexual and reproductive health and gender equality, with one focus being Punjab SRH Policy and the stereotypes surrounding contraception affecting specific genders. I will continue to raise my voice on all platforms including PPIF, on these themes as I can empathize with the problems and I have seen inequality happening everywhere around me.



Shahid Nadeem
Executive Director
Ajoka

We need a youthful approach which can engage and inspire our youth and can impact them. our youth is living in a different space and moving at a different pace. We (practitioners and do-gooders) have to move very fast to catch up to them.

Despite husbands predominantly being the decision makers of the household and their understanding of family planning significantly affecting women's use of contraception, most family planning programs in Pakistan are still largely directed at women with limited opportunities for men to acquire information, counselling, and services. With more than 50% of the couples having a disagreement on family size and 30% men wanting more children than women require for not only engaging men individually but also as couples. PPIF aims to engage men where they live, work and recreate and enhance couple communication. To achieve that, PPIF designed and launched a program specifically to improve the accessibility for men. Three projects have been selected under the program that are collectively expected to reach more than 140,000 MWRAs and generate 18,500 additional family planning users.

INTERVENTIONS



PPIF will be implementing three projects specifically focusing on male engagement. The first one, being implemented by DoctHers, will reach men and women working in 20 factories/distribution centers of Unilever and Reckitt Benckiser as well as its surrounding communities to increase accessibility to FP information and consultation via an online Community Health Worker (CHW)-assisted telemedicine platform (HD-video-consultation). Family planning is being added to the employee's health insurance system and a low-cost health insurance package will be introduced in the surrounding communities. The intervention is being implemented in districts of Lahore, RY Khan, Muzaffargarh, Multan, Bahawalpur, Gujranwala, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi. The project is expected to reach more than 40,000 MWRAs, generate 6000 Additional Family Planning Users and offer wide range of quality FP services through 40 service providers. 40% of MAWRAs availing services are expected to choose long term FP methods.



The second one, being implemented by International Rescue Committee, will offer a comprehensive client-centered FP package including FP counselling, treatment/management and referrals through a trained network of pharmacies/medical stores, private providers (Male & Female GPs) and public providers. Trained Family Planning Champions will conduct community mobilization and a performance-based remuneration will also be provided to incentivize the mobilization activities. Viamo, as technical partner, will provide high-tech and low-cost mobile solution linking clients with service providers in hard to reach communities and for data collection. The intervention will be carried out in 9 Union Councils of district Multan and is expected to reach more than 54,000 MWRAs, generate 7300 Additional Family Planning Users and offer wide range of quality FP services through 88 service providers. 30% of MAWRAs availing services are expected to choose long term FP methods.



The third one, being implemented by Greenstar Social Marketing, will reach men and couples at first point-of-contact services. It will develop a network of Male General Practitioners providing FP services at polyclinics (female provider assisted), Female Health Providers, Pharmacies, Hakims and Homeopaths. The project will involve previously inactive Male Service Providers, Hakims and Homeopaths in the family planning ecosystem. It will also establish male friendly spaces at pharmacies for the provision of FP counseling. The health clinics will also observe fixed day FP services to further accelerate the promotion of family planning services. The intervention will be carried out in 6 Union Councils of district Bahawalpur and three Union Councils of district Faisalabad. The project is expected to reach more than 47,000 MWRAs, generate 5200 Additional Family Planning Users and offer wide range of quality FP services through 175 service providers. 30% of MAWRAs availing services are expected to choose long term FP methods.



Punjab Population Innovation Fund (PPIF) is the Government of Punjab's initiative to invite strong innovative ideas that can provide sustainable and scalable solutions to address population growth in the province.

At PPIF we define innovation as, 'doing the same at lower cost or doing better at same cost.' This innovation requires a strong focus on monitoring and learning to work on an adaptive design to manage the fund activities.

As it is evident from the flow chart above monitoring and learning is an integral part of the process. The monitoring framework of PPIF captures multiple tiers of monitoring activities that range from monitoring of grants, monitoring for evaluation and monitoring and learning for deriving innovation and process improvement. PPIF prides itself for a robust approach in place. The following are the key activities of monitoring and learning:

- PPIF awards grants through an extremely competitive process. The successful grants develop strong results based framework that contains key milestones and verifiable indicators. These are agreed in advance and are linked to payments to grants on successful completion.



Two levels of monitoring is conducted; PPIF internal monitoring wing conducts random checks and corroborates the information and analysis to develop a meaningful analysis for the grants section to take appropriate actions. Third party monitors are also put in place to collect data and develop analysis to support the team make informed decisions about progress and releasing payments.

- In addition to making payments, the monitoring reports are used to make recommendations and hold dialogues with grantees to revise project design and incorporate learning as early as possible in the process to increase the probability of success. This lies at the basis of PPIF design where a problem drive iterative adaption design is followed to ensure that learning are fully integrated and the fund does not keep on doing something that is wrong and learn based on problems faced.

- Thirdly, base-line and end-line surveys are conducted independently to evaluate the success of each pilot for impact. The impact analysis is strongly used as a communication tool by converting results in products and easy to understand numbers or the key stakeholders. Therefore, communication is critical for scaling up successful projects and PPIF has integrated it strongly with the overall process.



- Lastly, monitoring and learning outcomes are used to improve the design of fund management at PPIF. After completing Round I, PPIF has conducted an extensive review of its process to identify critical issues that has halted the progress, slowed the process and resulted in sub-optimal results. This process of PPIF of self-learning makes it a unique tool in the government as it derives efficient at its heart.



In international development, more and more emphasis is now on results and outcomes, therefore, PPIF prides itself to have a robust system where it does not only monitor its work, but string use the learning to inform its communication, branding and self-improvement. With this process in a few rounds PPIF may achieve a design that can inform major part of innovative development in the public sector.



Mr. Usman Khan is an international development specialist working in areas of policy, strategy and problem driven governance reform across various sector and at the macro level. His recent works include the Punjab Growth Strategy 2023 and Punjab M&E Policy. He is also part of economics faculty at LUMS.

PIF Programmatic Focus explained by Ms. Amna Akhsheed, General Manager, Grants

PPIF envisions to be a market maker with the immediate goal of accelerating a rise in contraceptive prevalence and reduction in unmet need for family planning services to meet targets and country level commitments highlighted in FP2020, Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Punjab Population Policy Goals.

Its fundamental role is to test the impact of innovations that spark off a significant increase in consumer market for family planning through greater determination and information availability, enhanced provider motivation, and wider provision of quality family planning services. Recognizing the need for increasing both acceptability and availability simultaneously, the Fund supports interventions in areas of high poverty and high unmet need for family planning. Our interventions ensure that consumers are able to make informed method choices that fit their reproductive intentions, health condition, and cultural, socio-economic, and other constraints and advantages.

The strategic focus of these interventions, as per the PPIF 5-year strategy, is as follows:

- Increase accessibility of family planning services
- Reduce cost related barriers
- Strengthen male engagement
- Promote youth-centered information & services
- Address family planning barriers through social & behaviour change communication (sbcc) Quality Assurance and leveraging electronic and mobile health solutions are at the center of all PPIF interventions.

PROMOTING YOUTH-CENTERED INFORMATION & SERVICES

Youth have not been the focus of reproductive health information and communication campaigns in Pakistan. Young people who are able to exercise their sexual rights, including by contributing to social cohesion and public health, accessing services, have the potential to be agents of change by challenging prejudices and contributing to social cohesion and public health. Low levels of information combined with an early age of marriage and high unmet need of 18% among married women of reproductive age (15 to 19 years) in Pakistan has led to a high incidence of pregnancy in this age group. PPIF is committed to working with young people by expanding access to quality information through increased channels, integration with education programs, knowledge generation on changing youth needs and most importantly creating structures to ensure meaningful and sustainable youth engagement on reproductive health and family planning at all levels. PPIF has recently also launched a Call for Abstracts for successful youth specific interventions in the country which will contribute in developing the upcoming call for youth centered interventions

To encourage amateur film makers and encourage the creative youth, Punjab Population Innovation Fund (PPIF) in collaboration with the Population Welfare Department (PWD) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) invited Short Films from young makers, to mark the World Population Day 2019 on the following thematic areas.

- Male responsibility in Family Planning is essential for joint decision making among couples
- No woman should die giving birth
- Family planning is the key to economic growth and poverty alleviation

The winning Short Films were awarded cash prizes, screened at the World Population Day 2019. Speaking at the event the winning Film Maker Mr Asghar Zaman of Iqra University said, 'It is imperative that youth gets such creative platforms to highlight social issues. My film Socho Tau Sahi propagates 'thinking and planning families' and documents the marital communication between a young couple alongside highlighting the social pressures faced by them while planning a family.

WINNERS



ADDRESSING FAMILY PLANNING BARRIERS THROUGH SOCIAL & BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION (SBCC)

Enabling individuals to voluntarily make positive healthcare decisions concerning contraceptive use requires effective dissemination of information regarding the nexus between modern contraceptive use for limiting and spacing births and improving maternal and child health outcomes. To reiterate, increasing healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy through family planning does not merely require ensuring availability of contraceptive commodities and high quality family planning services, but also focused attention to social and behavior change.

Only less than 15% of men and women are ever exposed to main stream media messages for importance of education, early marriages and reduction in maternal and child deaths in relation to family planning. Cultural taboos, stigmatized nomenclature, myths and misconceptions play a critical role in shaping attitudes and behaviours. The Landscape study conducted by Population Council also shows that 38 percent of urban pharmacies, 22 percent of rural pharmacies in Lahore were not selling contraceptives because it was perceived as impermissible in Islam.

PPIF has always sought to implement innovative approaches in the delivery of its messages. Corporate workers represent a willing audience, one that is familiar with the need for family planning services but may be impeded in taking up these services due to information barriers and non-availability of choices. CEO NETSOL Technologies, Mr. Saleem Ghauri invited PPIF to organise awareness sessions for the corporate workers at Netsol to answer their queries about available choices and to address concerns relating to contraceptive uptake. Netsol CEO Mr Saleem Ghauri announced the establishment of a healthcare counter at the premises of Netsol for the benefit of staff members. He thanked PPIF to disseminate targeted information to organize separate sessions for his male and female staff and extended full co-operation for collaboration of similar sessions to other corporate entities in the city. Dr Anika Muhammad, Master Trainer Green Star Marketing, Mr Ali Imran, Manager Technical and Ms Sadia Malik from PPIF were engaged to address all issues to the satisfaction of the attendees.

I am passionate about raising awareness and finding solutions for Pakistan's mammoth population challenge. Around me I see couples with meager incomes but large families that lead them to a life cycle of missed opportunities for themselves and their children. I believe PPIF has tremendous potential to impact such individuals, couples and communities through multi-channel approaches to demystify the misconceptions, strengthen service outreach and employ mHealth technologies to dramatically accelerate the goals envisaged by this organization.

Mr. Saleem Ghauri
CEO NETSOL Technologies



PEOPLE BEHIND PPIF



Nida Shiekh
Research Associate

My time at PPIF was both personally and professionally enriching. Not only did I add to my professional experience and skillset, I also made personal connections that I will cherish for life. The guidance and leadership there particularly were an indelible part of the experience. I genuinely value the learning and camaraderie I accumulated at the organisation.



Khadija Ikram
Research Associate,
Grants

It was exciting to work with PPIF-family, from the beginning when PPIF was growing inside one of the spare rooms of P&D department, till the time it was 'developed enough' to execute its own amazing Innovation Cycle and have its first scary Audit.

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INTRODUCING PPIF YOUTH AMBASSADOR

PPIF not only aims to will design programs with effective SBCC components, paying particular attention to important demographic variables to ensure the appropriateness of SBCC messages but also strengthen the knowledge base through multiple information channels by identifying and demystifying FP misconceptions, addressing social barriers and increasing channels of access to correct information at all levels for the youth, men and women. PPIF will further advocate by targeting key institutions, engaging parliamentarians and community and religious networks.

PPIF has launched a call for proposals focusing on Improving Family planning knowledge, positive attitudes and practice through systematic and evidence-based Social and Behavior Change Communication Interventions especially targeted towards men. The call encourages intervention that improve informed choice by developing information pathways and create gender equitable attitudes that increase joint decision making among couples. Proposals have been received and are in the evaluation process.

The focus of the proposals received includes social and mass media engagement, telefilm production, mobile solutions, interactive activities like street theatres among other very interesting ideas. PPIF is also making efforts to mobilize resources in order to support high scale interventions as part of this cycle.

Ms Amna Ilyas is a renowned actor and Luxe Style Award-winning model who has starred in Good Morning Karachi, Zinda Bhaag (a Mosaic International South Asian Film Festival Award, Toronto) and the recently launched Baaji. She won the Lux Style Award for Best Female Model and used her acceptance speech to send across a strong message on the concept of “dark is beautiful”. She is also associated with Depilex Smile Again Foundation, which is focusing on providing medical care to acid survivors.

“It is a great privilege for me to be part of Punjab Population Innovation Fund, for its awareness campaigns with special focus on the youth. As a pre-requisite to effective health care, everyone requires access to reliable and Up-to-date Family Planning information in the right language, with the right slant and at the right time. Given the high population growth and Pakistan’s youth bulge, the time is ripe for the youth particularly to become aware of their right to family planning information and education, specially recognized under sustainable development goals.



“As a responsible Pakistani citizen, I’m honoured to be spearheading the campaign called ‘Amna Samna’ - Facing the Population Challenge. As the Youth Ambassador I will undertake the following activities:

Firstly, I will sensitise the youth through my social media as the majority of Pakistan is younger than 30 which means the youth bulge stands at 60 percent.

Secondly, as part of the assignment, I will use my influencer status to help debunk several socio-cultural myths associated with family planning. As the Ambassador of PPIF, I will be touring Punjab-wide campuses especially universities and colleges to have a face to face interaction with the students about the population pressures on Pakistan. The girl students in particular, will be sensitised about the health issues of unplanned motherhood and the men and women both will be made aware of the financial costs associated with large families.

Finally, I believe Media has a huge role to play as a force multiplier and as a media person I will encourage the social media bloggers, journalists and anchorperson to spotlight this issue as Pakistanis remain apathetic to the consequences of Pakistan’s unsustainable population growth.

I believe these are achievable goals as regionally India and Bangladesh have done it. Muslim states like Indonesia and Iran have used innovative solutions to take the message to the wider public. I especially like the Iranian approach of a newly married couple undergoing an FP counselling session before marriage. It is a mandatory requirement before Nikah. In Pakistan we can replicate global practices like these to achieve success and as a responsible Pakistan citizen in the public eye, I’m honoured and motivated to do my bit.

