



22 February 2018 – The World Health Organization and Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination have signed the 2-year Joint Programme Review and Planning Mission (JPRM) document. JPRM is a planning and consultative process, which aims to ensure that collaborative programmes are in line with the national health policy and will strengthen national capacity to achieve health goals and aspirations. The JPRM 2018–2019 has been developed in a consultative manner through engagement of all provincial health departments and national health authorities.

During the JPRM process, operational plans for various collaborative programmes are developed listing in detail the products or services and the activities to be delivered during the biennium. The JPRM was signed by Dr Assai Ardakani, WHO Representative in Pakistan, and Dr Safi Malik, Director of Programmes and focal person for the JPRM.

Dr Assai said, “WHO is committed to extending its unconditional support to the Ministry for strengthening the health care sector in Pakistan. WHO will continue to work in close collaboration towards achieving joint goals. I appreciate the role of the Honourable Minister of Health and her team, including the Secretary and Director-General of Health who work and deliver diligently and realize that an improved and strengthened health care system is instrumental and critical for the social and economic well-being of its citizens and development of the country. The health sector is complex and requires continuous interventions for its enhanced efficiency in service delivery in its all dimensions and I believe that together WHO and the Ministry can bridge the gaps, minimize disparities in the rural and urban health care system and upscale the health care services ensuring that everyone has access to health care”. Dr Assai briefly described the components of each work plan and what is expected to be achieved.

Mr Naveed Kamran Baloch, Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, expressed appreciation for the role of WHO in Pakistan for strengthening the health care system and extending support to the Ministry. The honourable secretary also expressed appreciation for the role of Dr Assai and WHO's valuable support. WHO has always been a trusted ally when it came to working to improve the health sector in Pakistan."

The process of development was initiated in 2017 with consultations conducted at the federal and provincial level through participatory workshops including all relevant stakeholders to capture the health priorities for each province and draw upon lessons learned over the past period of implementation. With the identification of priority programme areas to be supported, country outputs were formulated and consequent activity planning and budgeting was set for each area of work. The current plan includes 30 expected outcomes with 81 major outputs to be achieved during the 2 years. Technical and financial support for implementation will be provided by the WHO country office in Islamabad and sub-offices in 4 provinces.

The JPRM was formulated to provide technical support and advice to the national health authorities in Pakistan to address priority health issues, which are based on evidence drawn from the burden of disease and priority health challenges. Delivery of accessible, affordable and of quality health services can not be achieved without a health system which is fully functional in all its domains. The plan aims at system strengthening at all levels for improved levels of coverage and provision of services and public health interventions.

Outputs of the plan are aligned to the national health vision 2016–2025 as the guiding reference and have been harmonized to provide assistance towards the achievement of the health-related SDGs. Achieving universal health coverage remains the mainstay of joint work between the WHO and national health authorities to improve the health of citizens of Pakistan.

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