Media Update
3 March 2021

UNDP
PRESS RELEASE

UNDP, United States Government, and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government strengthen justice sector capacity

Islamabad, 2 March 2021—Successful governance institutions have systems and processes in place that contribute greatly towards their success. For this reason, on March 2-3, 2021, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan organized a two-day consultative workshop in Islamabad on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Prosecution Academy.

Funded by the United States Government through U.S. Embassy Pakistan’s International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) section, with 50-kanal land allocated by the KP Government, the KP Prosecution Academy will train prosecutors, lawyers, and staff of other rule of law institutions on various criminal laws and procedures. Additional training topics will focus on women and juvenile protection laws and procedures, criminal trials, the right to a fair trial, anti-terrorism laws, anti-fraud laws, and cybercrimes, among others. Simultaneously, participants will also be trained on developing a work ethic, communication, and advocacy skills integral to their roles.

The KP Prosecution Academy will have a dedicated women’s wing with a hostel and a daycare facility to create an enabling environment for women prosecutors and encourage more women’s representation in the legal profession. Established in Peshawar District at Mira Kachori, the academy will have a training facility, administration block, and a residential compound. It will be fully functional by May 2021 with training and meeting halls, monitoring and
In addition to its construction, UNDP, with INL funding, is providing support to set up a structured training system, which includes developing a training policy and implementation plan, comprehensive training curriculum for the basic and specialized training, e-learning centre, and SOPs.

The two-day consultative workshop allowed senior prosecutors to learn about the functions of the KP Prosecution Academy, personnel roles and responsibilities, various communication protocols, and the criteria and mechanisms to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

Director- General of Prosecution Mr. Mukhtiar Ahmad, INL Pakistan Program Officer Ms. Cristian Martinez-LuSane, and UNDP Pakistan Resident Representative Knut Ostby delivered remarks on the first day of the workshop. Mr. Ahmad thanked INL and UNDP and said this initiative would play a monumental role in strengthening the criminal justice system in the region: “I am certain that this academy will build the capacity and skills of KP prosecutors and enable them to play their part in strengthening the rule of law in Pakistan.”

UNDP Pakistan Resident Representative Knut Ostby thanked INL Pakistan for being a consistent partner and the KP Government for its continued support: “With the right infrastructural support, enhanced capacity within the rule of law sector, and more gender-inclusive institutions, the rule of law sector in Pakistan is headed in the right direction.”

Acting INL Pakistan Director Ms. Erika Zielke appreciated UNDP Pakistan’s efforts to make this project a success: “INL is proud to partner with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prosecution Service and UNDP to strengthen the rule of law in the province. We are certain that the Prosecution Academy will play a significant role in building capacity and skills of prosecutors in the years ahead.”

Director of Administration Prosecution Directorate Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman, a participant in the workshop said that the experience has helped him understand how institutions are made and how they operate successfully. “This understanding and knowledge will be useful throughout the course of my career as I leave it with a better understanding of my line of work.”

For additional information, please contact

Email: unic.islamabad@unic.org, Web: pakistan.un.org
UNICEF PRESS RELEASE

COVID-19: Schools for more than 168 million children globally have been completely closed for almost a full year, says UNICEF

UNICEF unveils ‘Pandemic Classroom’ at United Nations Headquarters in New York to call attention to the need for governments to prioritise the reopening of schools

NEW YORK, 3 March 2021 – Schools for more than 168 million children globally have been completely closed for almost an entire year due to COVID-19 lockdowns, according to new data released today by UNICEF. Furthermore, around 214 million children globally – or 1 in 7 – have missed more than three-quarters of their in-person learning.

The analysis of school closure report notes that 14 countries worldwide have remained largely closed since March 2020 to February 2021. Two-thirds of those countries are in Latin America and the Caribbean, affecting nearly 98 million schoolchildren. Of the 14 countries, Panama has kept schools closed for the most days, followed by El Salvador, Bangladesh, and Bolivia.

“As we approach the one-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are again reminded of the catastrophic education emergency worldwide lockdowns have created. With every day that goes by, children unable to access in-person schooling fall further and further behind, with the most marginalized paying the heaviest price,” said Henrietta Fore UNICEF Executive Director. “We cannot afford to move into year two of limited or even no in-school learning for these children. No effort should be spared to keep schools open, or prioritise them in reopening plans.”

Table 1: Number of countries/children where schools have remained closed since March 2020*

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<th>Countries/Children</th>
<th>Schools have remained closed almost an entire</th>
<th>School children affected</th>
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<td>Number (in millions)</td>
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School closures have devastating consequences for children’s learning and wellbeing. The most vulnerable children and those unable to access remote learning are at an increased risk of never returning to the classroom, and even being forced into child marriage or child labor. According to latest data by UNESCO, more than 888 million children worldwide continue to face disruptions to their education due to full and partial school closures.

The majority of schoolchildren worldwide rely on their schools as a place where they can interact with their peers, seek support, access health and immunization services and a nutritious meal. The longer schools remain closed, the longer children are cut off from these critical elements of childhood.

To call attention to the education emergency and raise awareness about the need for governments to keep schools open, or prioritise them in reopening plans, UNICEF today unveiled ‘Pandemic Classroom,’ a model classroom made up of 168 empty desks, each desk representing the million children living in countries where schools have been almost entirely closed – a solemn reminder of the classrooms in every corner of the world that remain empty.

“This classroom represents the millions of centers of learning that have sat empty—many for almost the entire year. Behind each empty chair hangs an empty backpack—a placeholder for a child’s deferred potential,” said Fore. “We do not want shuttered doors and closed buildings to obscure the fact that our children’s futures are being put on indefinite pause. This installation is a message to governments: we must prioritize reopening schools, and we must prioritize reopening them better than they were before.”

As students return to their classrooms, they will need support to readjust and catch up on their learning. School reopening plans must incorporate efforts to recover children’s lost education. UNICEF urges governments to prioritise the unique needs of every student, with comprehensive services covering remedial learning, health and nutrition, and mental health and protection measures in schools to nurture children and adolescents’ development and wellbeing. UNICEF’s Framework for Reopening Schools, issued jointly with UNESCO, UNHCR, WFP and the World Bank, offers practical advice for national and local authorities.

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Notes to editors

Download multimedia content [here](#).
COVAX PUBLISHES FIRST ROUND OF ALLOCATIONS

Geneva/Oslo/New York, 3 March 2021 – The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as co-leads of the COVAX initiative for equitable global access to COVID-19 vaccines, alongside key delivery partner UNICEF, are pleased to publish COVAX’s first round of allocations.

Following from the publication of an interim distribution forecast, and based on current knowledge of supply availability, this first round of allocations provides information on provision of doses of the AstraZeneca(AZ)/Oxford vaccine to COVAX Facility participants, through May 2021.

This first round of allocation outlines delivery of doses of the AZ/Oxford vaccine – manufactured by AstraZeneca (AZ) and COVISHIELD, licensed to and manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII/AZ) – to 142 Facility participants. Participants not listed have either exercised their rights to opt-out of this vaccine, wish to transfer allocated doses to AMC participants, are AMC-eligible but have not joined the AMC, have voluntarily delayed receipt of
doses and communicated this intent ahead of allocation, or have not met financial requirements.

This list will be updated by the end of the week to provide indicative timelines for the supply of these doses, split into Feb-March and April-May. These timelines are dependent on a variety of factors including national regulatory requirements, availability of supply, and fulfilment of other criteria such as validated national deployment and vaccination plans (NDVPs) from AMC participants, indemnification & liability agreements, and export and import authorisations.

Deliveries for this round of allocations has already begun, with India, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire receiving doses of the SII/AZ vaccine. Both Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire began vaccination campaigns utilising these doses on Monday. Further deliveries are underway for this week, and as readiness criteria are fulfilled and doses become available, will continue on a rolling basis over the coming months.

In addition to this first round of allocations, an exceptional distribution of 1.2 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, anticipated for delivery in Q1 2021, was announced in early February.

Further allocation rounds for vaccines in the COVAX portfolio will be announced in due course.

The list of first round allocations is available here.

Notes to editors

About COVAX

COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance Gavi) and the World Health Organization (WHO) – working in partnership with UNICEF as key implementing partner, developed and developing country vaccine manufacturers, the World Bank, and others. It is the only global initiative that is working with governments and manufacturers to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are available worldwide to both higher-income and lower-income countries.

CEPI is focused on the COVAX vaccine research and development portfolio; investing in R&D across a variety of promising candidates, with the goal to support development of three safe and effective vaccines which can be made available to countries participating in the COVAX Facility. As part of this work, CEPI has secured first right of refusal to potentially over one billion doses for the COVAX Facility to a number of candidates, and made strategic investments in vaccine manufacturing, which includes reserving capacity to manufacture doses of COVAX vaccines at a network of facilities, and securing glass vials to hold 2 billion doses of vaccine. CEPI is also investing in the ‘next generation’ of vaccine candidates, which will give the world additional options to control COVID-19 in the future.

Gavi is focused on procurement and delivery for COVAX: coordinating the design, implementation and administration of the COVAX Facility and the Gavi COVAX AMC and working with its Alliance partners UNICEF and WHO, along with
governments, on country readiness and delivery. The COVAX Facility is the global pooled procurement mechanism for COVID-19 vaccines through which COVAX will ensure fair and equitable access to vaccines for all 190 participating economies, using an allocation framework formulated by WHO. The COVAX Facility will do this by pooling buying power from participating economies and providing volume guarantees across a range of promising vaccine candidates. The Gavi COVAX AMC is the financing mechanism that will support the participation of 92 low- and middle-income countries in the Facility, enabling access to donor-funded doses of safe and effective vaccines. Gavi is coordinating and fundraising for the COVAX AMC and its no-fault compensation mechanism, and funding UNICEF procurement of vaccines as well as partners’ and governments work on readiness and delivery, including support cold chain equipment, technical assistance, syringes, vehicles, and other aspects of the vastly complex logistical operation for delivery. UNICEF and the Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) will be acting as procurement coordinators for the COVAX Facility, helping deliver vaccines to COVAX AMC participants and others.

WHO has multiple roles within COVAX: It provides normative guidance on vaccine policy, regulation, safety, R&D, allocation, and country readiness and delivery. Its Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization develops evidence-based immunization policy recommendations. Its Emergency Use Listing (EUL) / prequalification programmes ensure harmonized review and authorization across member states. It provides global coordination and member state support on vaccine safety monitoring. It developed the target product profiles for COVID-19 vaccines and provides R&D technical coordination. WHO leads, together with UNICEF, the Country Readiness and Delivery workstream, which provides support to countries as they prepare to receive and administer vaccines. Along with Gavi and numerous other partners working at the global, regional, and country-level, the CRD workstream provides tools, guidance, monitoring, and on the ground technical assistance for the planning and roll-out of the vaccines. Along with COVAX partners, WHO has developed a no-fault compensation scheme as part of the time-limited indemnification and liability commitments.

UNICEF is leveraging its experience as the largest single vaccine buyer in the world and working with manufacturers and partners on the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine doses, as well as freight, logistics and storage. UNICEF already procures more than 2 billion doses of vaccines annually for routine immunization and outbreak response on behalf of nearly 100 countries. In collaboration with the PAHO Revolving Fund, UNICEF is leading efforts to procure and supply doses of COVID-19 vaccines for COVAX. In addition, UNICEF, Gavi and WHO are working with governments around the clock to ensure that countries are ready to receive the vaccines, with appropriate cold chain equipment in place and health workers trained to dispense them. UNICEF is also playing a lead role in efforts to foster trust in vaccines, delivering vaccine confidence communications and tracking and addressing misinformation around the world.

About CEPI

CEPI is an innovative partnership between public, private, philanthropic, and civil organisations, launched at Davos in 2017, to develop vaccines to stop future epidemics. CEPI has moved with great urgency and in coordination with WHO in response to the emergence of COVID-19. CEPI has initiated ten partnerships to develop vaccines against the novel coronavirus. The programmes are leveraging rapid response platforms already supported by CEPI as well as new partnerships.

Before the emergence of COVID-19, CEPI's priority diseases included Ebola virus, Lassa virus, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus, Nipah virus, Rift Valley Fever and Chikungunya virus. CEPI also invested in platform technologies that can be used for rapid vaccine and immunoprophylactic development against unknown pathogens (Disease X).

About Gavi

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a public-private partnership that helps vaccinate half the world’s children against some of the world’s deadliest diseases. Since its inception in 2000, Gavi has helped to immunise a whole generation – over 822 million children – and prevented more than 14 million deaths, helping to halve child mortality in 73 developing countries. Gavi also plays a key role in improving global health security by supporting health systems as well as funding global stockpiles for Ebola, cholera, meningitis and yellow fever vaccines. After two decades of progress, Gavi is now focused on protecting the next generation and reaching the unvaccinated children still being left behind, employing innovative finance and the latest technology – from drones to biometrics – to save millions more lives, prevent outbreaks before they can spread and help countries on the road to self-sufficiency. Learn more at www.gavi.org and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

The Vaccine Alliance brings together developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry, technical agencies, civil society, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other private sector partners. View the full list of donor governments and other leading organizations that fund Gavi’s work here.
About WHO

The World Health Organization provides global leadership in public health within the United Nations system. Founded in 1948, WHO works with 194 Member States, across six regions and from more than 150 offices, to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable. Our goal for 2019-2023 is to ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and wellbeing.

For updates on COVID-19 and public health advice to protect yourself from coronavirus, visit www.who.int and follow WHO on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Pinterest, Snapchat, YouTube.

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit www.unicef.org. For more information about COVID-19, visit www.unicef.org/coronavirus. Find out more about UNICEF’s work on the COVID-19 vaccines here, or about UNICEF’s work on immunization here.

Follow UNICEF on Twitter and Facebook.

About the ACT-Accelerator

The Access to COVID-19 Tools ACT-Accelerator, is a new, ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. It was set up in response to a call from G20 leaders in March and launched by the WHO, European Commission, France and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in April 2020.

The ACT-Accelerator is not a decision-making body or a new organisation, but works to speed up collaborative efforts among existing organisations to end the pandemic. It is a framework for collaboration that has been designed to bring key players around the table with the goal of ending the pandemic as quickly as possible through the accelerated development, equitable allocation, and scaled up delivery of tests, treatments and vaccines, thereby protecting health systems and restoring societies and economies in the near term. It draws on the experience of leading global health organisations which are tackling the world’s toughest health challenges, and who, by working together, are able to unlock new and more ambitious results against COVID-19. Its members share a commitment to ensure all people have access to all the tools needed to defeat COVID-19 and to work with unprecedented levels of partnership to achieve it.

The ACT-Accelerator has four areas of work: diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines and the health system connector. Cross-cutting all of these is the workstream on Access & Allocation.

Media Contacts

Meg Sharafudeen, Gavi
+41 79 711 5554
msharafudeen@gavi.org

Iryna Mazur, Gavi
+41 79 429 3671
imazur@gavi.org

Evan O’Connell, Gavi
+33 6 17 57 21 26
eoconnell@gavi.org

Laura Shevlin, Gavi
lshevlin@gavi.org
UNOPS PRESS RELEASE

ECHO, Aga Khan Development Network and UNOPS partner to provide critical medical equipment to support the COVID-19 response in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral

Urgently needed medical and laboratory equipment will be provided for patients and medical staff.

- Funded by the European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), The Aga Khan Foundation, Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan and UNOPS are working on the emergency procurement of medical supplies to provide critical medical supplies and equipment to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Vital medical supplies, including laboratory equipment, consumables, personal protective equipment (PPEs) and oxygen
generators, are being provided through UNOPS' efficient emergency procurement procedures to ensure that hospitals can provide life-saving treatment to patients.

Funded by ECHO, the *Critical Preparedness and Response Actions for Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral* project is being implemented by AKDN agencies, with a focus on health system strengthening and awareness raising. Through a partnership agreed in February 2021 by The Aga Khan Foundation and UNOPS, the Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan agreed to deliver approximately $600,000 worth of essential equipment and medical supplies for six months. The quick and safe delivery of these items will be done through UNOPS' emergency procurement procedures, which have been utilized to effectively support countries across the globe in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this project, laboratory equipment, consumables, PPEs and oxygen generators will be supplied to hospitals for the treatment and management of patients and PPEs will be provided to doctors and medical staff to reduce their risk of infection.

**Marysia Zapasnik, Country Manager, UNOPS Pakistan said:**
“Through our emergency procurement procedures, UNOPS is procuring essential medical supplies and PPEs so that patients can receive critical medical care and medical staff at the frontline of this pandemic can safely provide care to patients. We are committed to working with our partners to support the COVID-19 response and safeguard the health and well-being of the women, men, girls and boys of Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral.”

**Akhtar Iqbal, Chief Executive Officer, AKF(Pakistan) remarked:**
“AKDN is complimenting Government efforts to contain the transmission of COVID-19 pandemic and provide optimized care for all patients, especially for the severely and critically ill. To this end, AKDN is working to equip health care facilities with essential medical supplies and equipment and this partnership with UNOPS will enable us to procure critical medical equipment and supplies. AKDN appreciates the support of UNOPS at this critical time.”

**Syed Nadeem Husain Abbas, Chief Executive Officer of AKHS,P said:**
“Although the number of COVID-19 cases have decreased as of late, which is a good sign, we must keep in mind that the pandemic is far from over and we could see another surge. It is essential to be always prepared so that we can
offer the best possible care to our patients and communities we serve. This is why we see this partnership as particularly well-timed.”

ENDS

Notes to the editors:

Press contact details:

Rabail Habib
Communications Focal Point, UNOPS Pakistan
rabailh@unops.org

About UNOPS

UNOPS mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. We help the United Nations, governments, and other partners to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement in an efficient way. Read more: www.unops.org

About Aga Khan Foundation (Pakistan)

The Aga Khan Foundation (Pakistan) [AKF(P)] an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), is a private, non-denominational, international development agency established in 1967. It brings together human, financial and technical resources to address the challenges faced by the poorest and most marginalised communities in the world. Special emphasis is placed on investing in human potential, expanding opportunity and improving the overall quality of life).


About Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan

Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan (AKHS,P), an ISO 9001:2015 certified organisation, provides equitable, service oriented, innovative and community-based health services through four strategic objectives: supporting government health policies and plans; supporting health needs of catchment and target populations; increasing sustainability of operations; and contributing to global standards in health and health care. For more information visit: https://www.akdn.org/our-agencies/aga-khan-health-services