

Media Update

25 January 2024

UNOPS

PRESS RELEASE

Over 50% of KP's Population to Benefit as KOICA and UNOPS Hand Over 8 Mobile Water Testing Vehicles To KP Government and 1 field training van to PCRWR

- In partnership with KOICA, UNOPS Pakistan is supporting the Ministry of Climate Change to strengthen the technical and coordination capacity of its WASH Cell to monitor drinking water quality in close collaboration with provincial governments. This project will benefit over 20,555,417 people in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Peshawar: In an event held at the Chief Minister House, Mr Yeon Je Ho, Country Director KOICA Pakistan and Ms Jennifer Ankhom-Khan, Country Manager UNOPS Pakistan, handed over 8 mobile water testing vehicles to Honourable Justice Retired Syed Arshad Hussain Shah, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one field training van to Dr. Hifza Rasheed, Director General of PCRWR (Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources) Islamabad.

In partnership with KOICA, UNOPS Pakistan procured, remodeled and fully equipped 8 vehicles. These mobile water testing laboratories will play a vital role in testing the quality of water in far-flung areas of the province to ensure clean drinking water is available to the public.

These vehicles will also be used to respond to public health emergencies during natural disasters or spread of waterborne diseases. UNOPS has procured and remodeled the 9 vehicles as per the international standards and equipped with latest technology to ensure quick, accurate and hassle free testing of contaminants such as arsenic, heavy metals and pathogenic bacteria through microbial testing in the drinking water.

The vehicles are delivered as part of 4.4 million USD project, funded by KOICA and implemented by UNOPS in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change Pakistan (MoCC), Public Health and Engineering Departments of KP and Punjab, PCRWR and Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA).

Interim Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (r) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah said: "The project underscores the effectiveness of collective efforts in addressing pressing development issues and the work towards achieving sustainable development goals"

The project is being implemented in 35 district laboratories in Punjab, 8 divisional labs in KP, PCRWR and Pak-EPA in Islamabad.

UNOPS has also developed a Management Information Software (MIS) to strengthen the water-quality data management at provincial level and enable the Ministry of Climate Change to coordinate and monitor the drinking water quality in close collaboration with provincial governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The MIS will also ensure smooth and paperless lab operations in the province of KP.

Mr. Yeon Je Ho, Country Director of KOICA Pakistan said: "The Korean Government will continue to support the Government of Pakistan in different sectors, especially in the water sector. I believe that this project will improve people's quality of life by enhancing water quality and will help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals."

UNOPS Pakistan is implementing this project in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change Pakistan (MoCC), Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) and Public Health and Engineering Departments of Punjab & KP.

The water-quality testing laboratories are being upgraded through:

1. procurement and installation of advanced laboratory equipment,
2. minor upgrade works in laboratory buildings to ensure safe and efficient working environment for operation of equipment,
3. training and capacity enhancement of the water-quality testing laboratories and the WASH Cell of the MoCC,

4. the rollout of a Management Information System (MIS) to strengthen coordination and water quality management and,
5. Provision of 8 vehicles remodeled as water-quality testing laboratories for the Government of KP

Miss Jennifer Ankrom-Khan, UNOPS Country Manager for Pakistan, said: “Access to adequate and safe drinking water is a basic human right and monitoring the quality of drinking water is a first step towards its management. In Pakistan, millions of people still live without access to clean and safe drinking water as it guarantees healthier and resilient communities. The absence of clean drinking water spreads waterborne diseases like cholera, typhoid, hepatitis A&E etc., and leads to malnutrition in children. With generous support from KOICA, we are delighted to support the Government of Pakistan and specifically the Ministry of Climate Change in providing the people of Pakistan with increased access to safe drinking water and improving their quality of life.”

Under the project, KOICA and UNOPS will help the government make progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: **3: Good Health and Wellbeing**; and **6: Clean Water and Sanitation** as it is aligned with the Pakistan Government’s Vision 2025 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Pakistan 2023-2027.

This project also supports achieving **SDG 13: Climate Action** as water is at the center of climate change; rising temperatures and climate related disasters are introducing deadly pathogens in the freshwater. Enhanced water-quality monitoring systems will identify the patterns of contamination, take mitigation measures accordingly and support the communities during climate change induced disasters.

ENDS

About KOICA

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is a leading development cooperation agency to achieve global social values. KOICA’s mandate is to contribute to the advancement of international cooperation through various projects that build friendly and collaborative relationships and mutual exchanges between Korea and partner countries and support the economic and social development in partner countries. Read more: www.koica.go.kr

About UNOPS

The United Nations Office for Project Services (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

Notes to the editors:

Press contact details:

Arooj Zahra

Communications Officer, UNOPS Pakistan

Email: aroojz@unops.org