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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The senior government health officers especially those, who are appointed at the level of district management, are trained primarily in clinical skills. Some of them receive formal training in Public Health following their medical graduation. However, they learn organizational management with experience, interacting with people and occasional participation in short-term health management courses.

The Ministry of Health, Islamabad identified the need for professional management and organization skills development for senior health officers. The Federal office of the National Program for Primary Health Care (PHC) and Family Planning (FP), requested the department of Community Health Sciences (CHS) at the Aga Khan University (AKU) to conduct a training project. The training project was funded by UNICEF. The project was designed to provide training for district government health officers from all over the country in the emerging areas of management and also to develop a core group of master trainers for sustaining the capacity for health systems management training. There were three major strategies for project implementation.

- Quick Appraisal
- Training (2 workshops)
- Master Trainer Development

The MoH in Islamabad identified and appointed twelve master trainers (MTs) for the project from all over the country. The project conducted a quick appraisal with the help of MTs to determine the existing situation of health systems management training in the country. The outcome of the appraisal helped to design a pertinent and appropriate training course and avoid the likelihood of repeating a similar training course offered earlier. Based on the information collected from QA, the MTs suggested a curriculum for the training course.

Forty-three district health managers participated in the two training workshops. Efforts were made to link and discuss the issues of each training session in the light of concepts of equity and participation. Each training workshop was evaluated for knowledge-gain by testing the participants at the beginning and end of the session (pre- and post-test). The test results showed that the participants had varying levels of knowledge and understanding before the workshop, which became uniform (reducing Standard Deviation) towards the end of the workshop; and there was an overall increase in the knowledge-gain during the workshop.

During the first workshop, the master trainers directly interacted with the workshop participants for 30% (22 hours) of the total curriculum time (72 hours). In the second workshop, they directly communicated with the workshop participants either in small group discussions or plenary presentations for 49% (35 hours) of the total curriculum time (72 hours). They also took responsibilities in 3 other areas: organizational session evaluations, keeping review meeting notes; and conducting discussion seminars.

In conclusion, the report recommends immediate planning to develop national projects for the training of DHOs and ADHOs about the operational existing health MIS (HMIS, LHW-MIS and Logistics). This suggestion is based on the apparent lack of training of DHOs and ADHOs in Management Information Systems. The report also identifies a gap of a national forum for district health officers to communicate and share their experiences. It strongly recommends that the MoH plan and design mechanism for a national forum for DHOs. The forum would serve the critical purpose of networking among the districts and promoting and improving better health-service delivery mechanism identified through interaction and information sharing.