

Improving Equality in Urban Immunization: Situational Analysis for the Development of a Roadmap in Karachi, Pakistan

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Introduction/Background/Context

- WHO and UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage* report revealed that Karachi City had the highest number of unvaccinated children, globally
- From December 2018 to March 2019, John Snow Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) supported the Government of Sindh's EPI unit, through support from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance to develop a Karachi-specific roadmap for improving Routine Immunization (RI)
- The goal of the urban roadmap was to work with partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries to identify key actions and recommendations to improve routine immunization systems in Karachi City
- JSI conducted a situational analysis in Karachi to determine factors associated with low RI coverage, high drop out rates, missed opportunities, to identify root causes and barriers to access and utilization of immunization services, weaknesses in the existing service structure and delivery, and demand-side issues to inform strategies for improving access and utilization of RI services

*WUENIC-2016

Methodology/Approach

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT RI SYSTEM IN KARACHI

A mixed method assessment used quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data to identify gaps in knowledge, resources, and challenges in the context of inequity within existing immunization services and coverage in governance, demand generation, and service delivery:

Qualitative Data:

- 115 in-depth interviews conducted and 27 Focus Group Discussions with:
 - Stakeholders – public- and private-sector administrators and medical officers, vaccinators, lady health worker's (LHW) and their supervisors, community health workers, parents, and religious leaders
- Literature review: Grey and peer-reviewed literatures and reports (from EPI, Emergency Operations Center, UNICEF, CHIP etc)

Quantitative Data:

- A rapid survey of 75 households in two randomly selected Union Councils (the lowest administrative level) of one town in each of the six districts of Karachi, for a total of 900 households, and observed vaccination at the fixed and outreach sites.
- Remote GIS mapping in Karachi city and with focused mapping in 18 towns to identify fixed EPI centers, vaccinators, and availability of cold chain equipment

Further Steps:

- Conducted a roadmap workshop with stakeholders to share the study findings
- Established Technical Working Groups to finalize the recommendations based on the study findings
- Costed activities
- Shared the document with stakeholders and finalized the roadmap after incorporating their inputs

Results

MAIN ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING RI SYSTEM ANALYSIS

Governance



- Multiple health stakeholders (public & private) are working in silos
- Health facilities under different governmental departments (health, local government, labor) and parastatal organizations

Monitoring



- Very weak monitoring & supervision of outreach and fixed EPI services
- Weak accountability at service delivery level
- Data quality & targets issues

Demand Generation



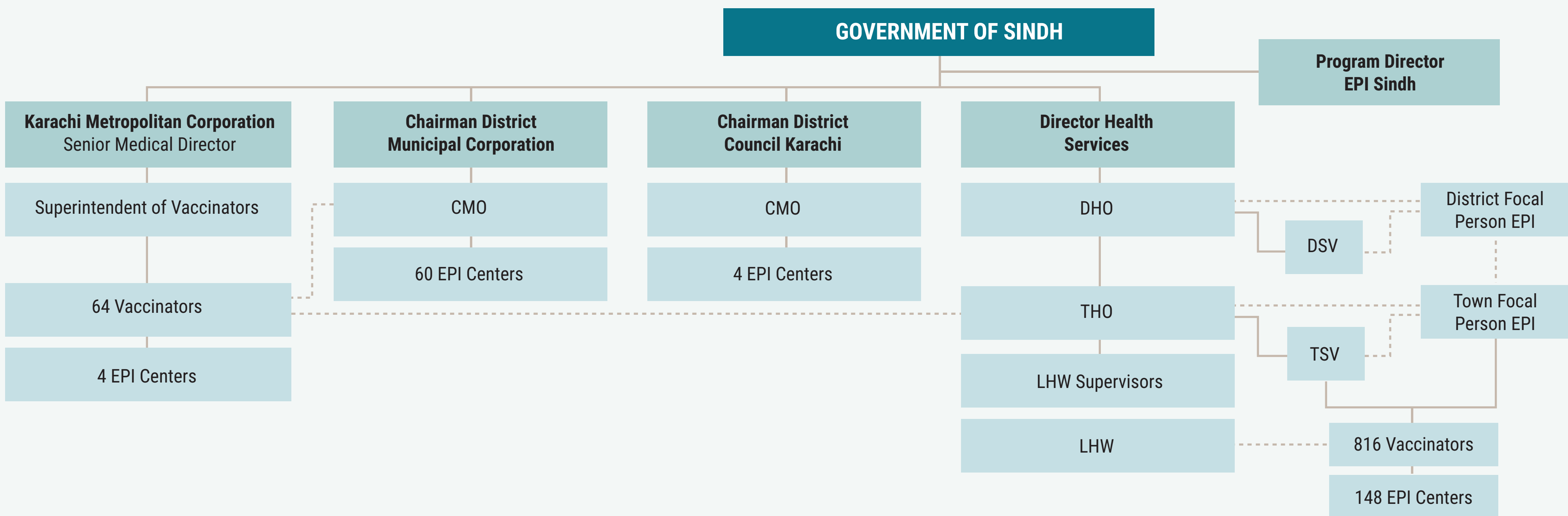
- Community mobilization, demand generation and inter-personal communications with parents is very weak
- Thousands of madrassas, schools and local general practitioners available in the city, but are not utilized for RI

Service Delivery

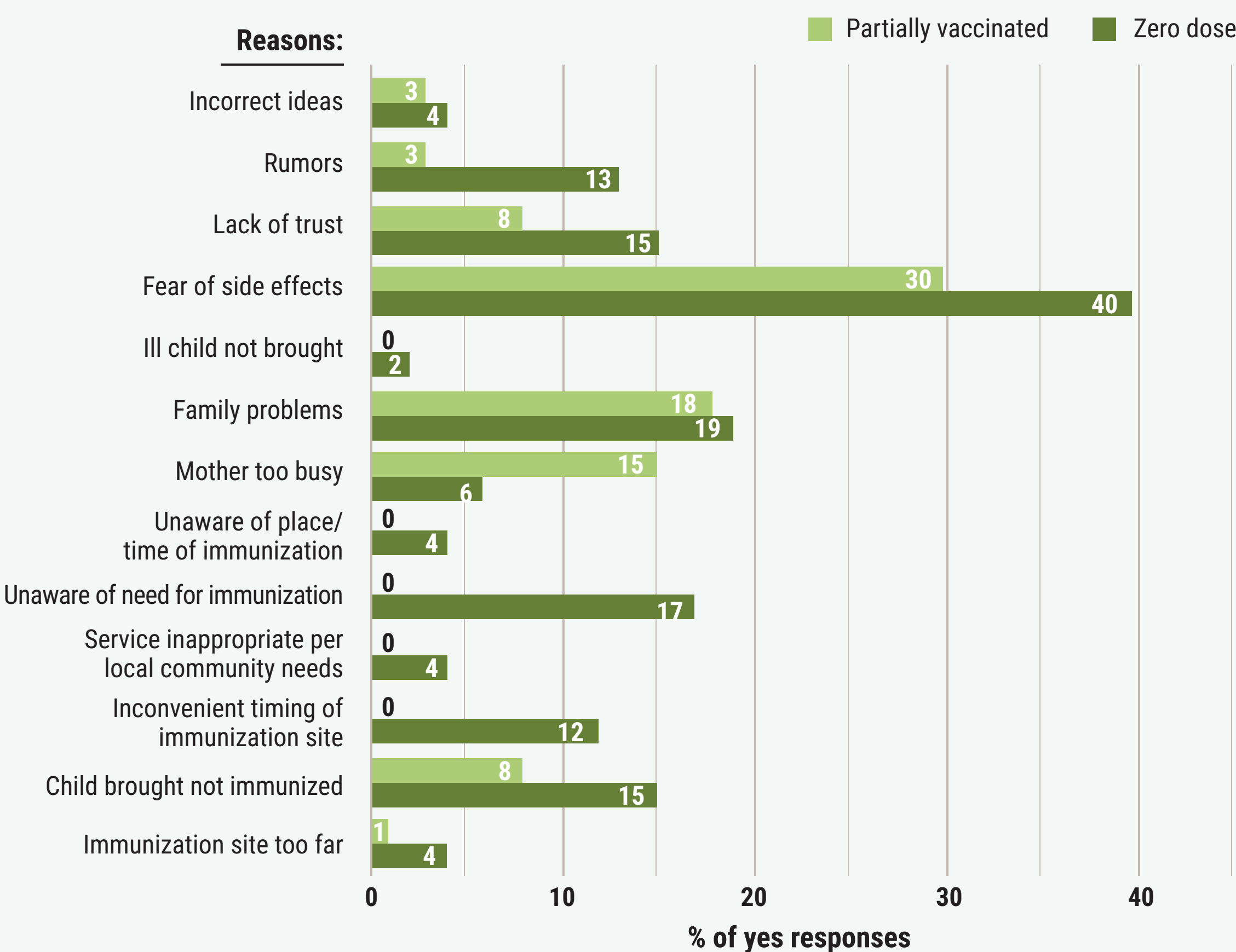


- Low participation and reporting from private sector (only 135 EPI centers in private sector report out of >5,000 private health facilities (HF) present in Karachi)
- Poor coordination among service delivery staff - vaccinator, CHW, LHW
- The majority of Union Councils (166 out of 188) do not meet the national guidance of one vaccinator being available for every 10,000 people living in an urban setting
- 936 vaccinators are working in Karachi (Health Dept: 816; Local Govt.: 64; and Private sector: 56) Inadequate EPI centers & vaccinators to population ratio (especially in slums across city and, in districts West & Malir)
- Per National EPI Policy will, based on Roadmap study findings, recruit 669 more vaccinators
- Outreach services – not implemented as per city's needs

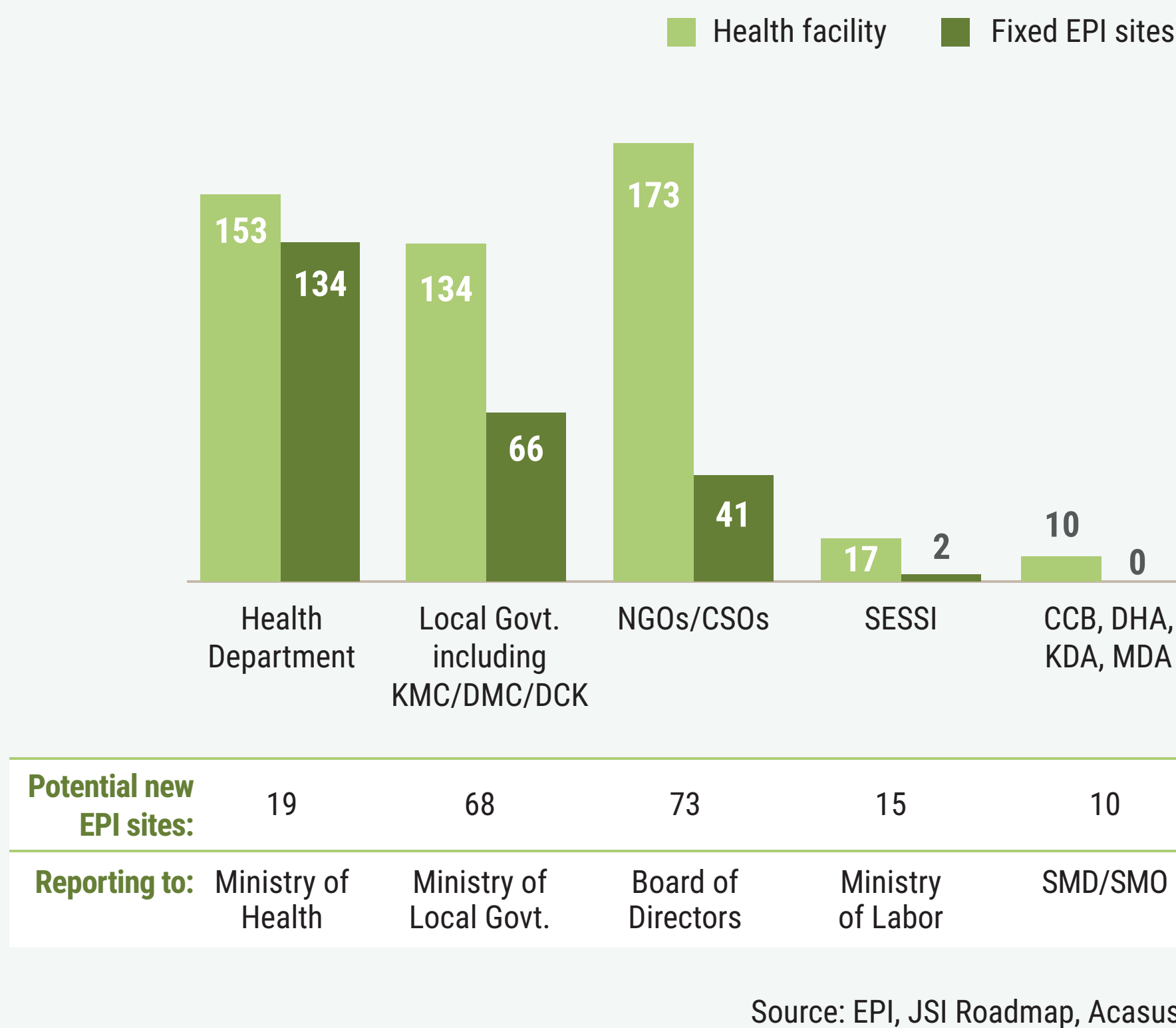
COMPLEX GOVERNANCE AND HEALTH SYSTEM MANAGEMENT



REASONS GIVEN BY CAREGIVERS OF ZERO DOSE AND PARTIALLY VACCINATED CHILDREN (MULTIPLE REASON ACCEPTED)



AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES AND FIXED EPI CENTERS IN KARACHI



Source: EPI, JSI Roadmap, Acasus

Actions and Recommendation

EPI SYSTEM BUILDING BLOCKS

Three main strategies were identified for the Roadmap:

- Strengthen governance, leadership, and accountability
- Address gaps in service delivery and logistics
- Increase demand, knowledge and trust in vaccines and health services



Conclusions/Lessons Learned

ROADMAP FOR ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL IMMUNIZATION COVERAGE IN KARACHI

- A detailed, comprehensive EPI plan for Karachi i.e. Roadmap for "Achieving Universal Immunization Coverage" in Karachi was finalized and submitted to the Department of Health
- Although the process of roadmap approval and endorsement by the government is in process there are many activities where work has already begun by different partners and donors including:
 - Private sector engagement (opening of new vaccination sites)
 - Establishment of Monitoring & Evaluation Cells at the Provincial EPI Office and at the district level in 6 districts
 - Intensified monitoring of vaccination sites
 - Monitoring & Supervision of vaccination sites through mobile apps
 - Establishing evening vaccination services
 - Enhanced outreach activities
 - Mobile van vaccination services in hard to reach areas
- Engagement of Civil Society Organization's to increase demand generation
- Improve synergies between EPI – Polio Eradication Initiatives