

Expanding Access to COVID-19 Vaccines to Remote Areas in PAKISTAN

Providing COVID-19 vaccines is a priority of the Government of Pakistan, however ensuring equitable access to the vaccines is a challenge because nearly 63% of Pakistan's population lives in remote areas where access to healthcare is limited and large health disparities remain (World Bank, 2021). USAID, through the Integrated Health Systems Strengthening and Service Delivery Activity (IHSS-SD), is supporting the Department of Health (DOH), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines and health information. The activity is repurposing mobile health service units (MHSUs) to provide outreach services to all eligible populations in the districts of Swat, Charsadda, and Lakki Marwat. **Since June 2021, three MHSUs have provided essential health information and administered life-saving COVID-19 vaccines to 70,220 people.**

How IHSS-SD collaborates with the Department of Health, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

1



PLANNING

The IHSS-SD district team plans with the district health officer/ COVID-19 focal person to identify areas for MHSU deployment

2



SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

Lady health workers and mosques inform communities about when the MHSU will arrive and what services it will provide

3



VACCINATION

MHSU staff provide vaccinations in accordance with national COVID-19 SOPs. Staff update client medical records in the National Information Management System

4



LEARNING

The IHSS-SD team works with DOH, KP to review data and adapt implementation as needed



Women were initially reluctant to visit health facilities to get vaccinated because of cultural and travel limitations. To encourage women to visit MHSUs, the Department of Health, KP deploys lady health technicians and ensures that MHSU camps are located in areas that women can easily access. These measures have resulted in a large number of women getting vaccinated.

Technical lead for female vaccination on duty in MHSU van September 16, 2021.



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COVID-19 vaccination at MHSU at Toot Kallay, Charsadda, on August 31, 2021

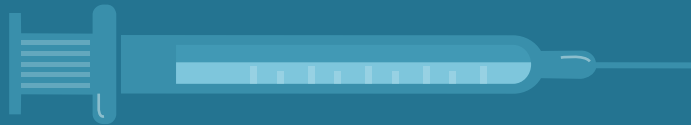


My COVID-19 vaccination experience was great; the MHSU camped near my home and a lady health technician vaccinated me free of cost. I will definitely come again for my second dose and will strongly encourage other women of my community to get vaccinated in time.

Maryam Bibi, a beneficiary from Charsadda



Since June 2021:



33,827

women have been vaccinated through MHSU outreach services.



MHSU Vaccination Data, October 2021

