

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda item 4/a

REPORT OF THE HEALTH COVERAGE WORKSHOP

Islamabad, 26 May - 2 June 1982

In the light of the recommendations of the 6th Meeting of the EM/ACMR, regarding promotion of Health Coverage Studies in Member States, a Health Coverage Workshop was held at the National Institute of Health, Islamabad, Pakistan, from 26 May to 2 June 1982, under the auspices of the Pakistan Medical Research Council (PMRC). WHO provided the advisory services of Dr W A Hassouna, Head of the Social and Cultural Planning Centre, Institute of National Planning (INP), Cairo, to assist in conducting this Workshop.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Professor Basharat Jazbi, Adviser to the President of Pakistan on Health and Social Welfare. Dr Jazbi stressed the importance of Health Services Research in making optimum use of resources allocated to health for meeting the health needs of the community.

### Objectives

The objectives of the Workshop were

- to sensitize participants to (a) the aim, (b) the methods, and (c) the challenges of Health Services Research with a coverage problem focus,
- to develop a research proposal for conducting a Health Coverage Study in Pakistan.

### Participants

The Workshop was attended by 12 participants of whom 9 were Senior Public Health Physicians and 3 were Biostatisticians with experience in the health field. 3 of the participating Physicians and 2 Statisticians had substantial experience in health research in Pakistan.

### Format

The Workshop consisted of presentations, both individual and panel, round table discussions, small working group sessions and individual activities to complete the task at hand. Some of the participants themselves made presentations.

Dr Mushtaq Chaudhry, Deputy Director-General Health, Ministry of Health, gave presentation on Primary Health Care in Pakistan and actively participated in the development of the coverage proposal. Mr Muhammed Shafiq Ahmed, Biostatistician, Assistant Chief/Co-Investigator, Health Services Research Study, PMRC, gave an account of the Health Services Research Study undertaken by the PMRC. Mr Muhammad Abid Siddiqi, Senior Statistician, PMRC, presented data from the PMRC research project on "Availability and utilization of Health Services in a semi-urban area".

The participants had been supplied with the following documents

- Instructional Manual for Implementing Health Coverage Projects in Developing Countries, this document, which was in a draft form, served as the main learning resource for the Workshop

- Health Services Researcher, Vol 2, No 1 & 2
- Health Services Research An Introductory Booklet
- Issues in Health Service Research Design and Research Management
- Methodological Perspectives for Health Services Research.

Some of the subjects covered through individual presentations and which made use of the Instructional Manual included

- sampling strategies and panel statistical testing
- generation of hypotheses and hypothesis formulation
- advantages and types of data yielded by sociological, epidemiological and ethnographic research strategies
- issues in instrument design, pilot testing and implementation
- training and managerial requirements for doing a Coverage Study

During the Workshop it was apparent that the Draft "Instructional Manual for Implementing Health Coverage Projects in Developing Countries", developed as a result of the experience gained during the earlier completed Three-Country Health Coverage Study, would need to be revised in order to render it more suitable for being utilized in workshops such as this. Tentatively, the revisions would include a simplification of some concepts presented in the Manual, modification

of the various exercises, and inclusion of more graphic illustrations

### Workshop output

A major output of the Workshop was the formulation by the participants of a draft proposal for a Health Coverage Study in rural areas of Pakistan

The objective of the proposed study is to assess the good and weak areas of the integrated rural health complex system being developed, with a view to suggest measures for improving its effectiveness in meeting the health needs and aspirations of the people. With this in view, the study will aim at eliciting

- Adequacy of the physical infrastructure of the Integrated Rural Health Complexes (IRHC)
- Attitude of the providers, i.e. all categories of staff deployed at IRHC
- Public opinion about the usefulness of the health facility
- Interface with other health facilities both in the public and private sector
- Role of local bodies

The participants also developed and tested four research instruments (questionnaires) designed to collect information about households, clients of Health Services, providers of Health Services and health facilities

### Workshop evaluation

This was carried out by requesting the participants to fill in a post-workshop evaluation form. Their responses indicated that most of them had felt that they

- had gained new knowledge in HSR, as well as skills in development of research proposals
- liked the informal nature of the course, as well as the instructional methods used
- would like to be given a chance to participate in advanced training courses and/or workshops which deal with methodologies and techniques of HSR

- would like to have health coverage workshops at provincial level
- would like to receive relevant articles about health coverage
- less than half (4) of the participants did not like the time schedule

and only one did not like the methods of expressing the opinions and exchange of experience

#### Factors which contributed to the successful outcome of the Workshop

The clearly defined objectives of the Workshop and the expected output (product), i.e. a research proposal to study health coverage in Pakistan, contributed greatly to the success of the Workshop.

The participants, including Senior Health Administrators, together with experienced research workers, provided a complementary rather than competitive mix. The participants easily grasped the presented ideas and concepts and were able to respond by citing relevant experiences and examples from within Pakistan. The management leadership responsible for the Workshop was able to sustain the motivation and interest of the participants throughout the Workshop and provided necessary inputs and excellent support services to encourage the participants in developing the research proposal.

It is worthwhile mentioning that a positive relationship seem to exist between the Ministry of Health and the PMRC, - there was no conflict of interest, but rather appreciation and respect for the role of each other in the development of Health Services. This augurs very well the future development of Health Services Research in Pakistan.

#### Follow-up

The draft proposal prepared during the Workshop is being finalized by the PMRC and is soon expected to be submitted to WHO for possible funding from the Regional Research Budget.