



MEETING BRIEF

Pakistan's Health Policy Forum

Debut Meet

August 6, 2005

Islamabad Club, Islamabad

Heartfile

Host and secretariat

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Pakistan's Health Policy Forum

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Pakistan's Health Policy Forum

Debut Meet: Logistic details

Date

August 6, 2005

Timing

12.30-14:30

Venue

Islamabad Club, Islamabad

Objective of the meeting

To introduce the rationale, scope and purpose of the Forum as articulated in the "Statement of the Forum" to its key members (Appendix A) and to outline its envisaged operational course of action with a view to deliberating on stipulated parameters. We envision achieving a consensus on the aforementioned as an output of the meeting.

Meeting Configuration

Round table

Agenda

12:30-12:45	Participant's personal overviews
12:45-13:00	Scoping the objectives of the meeting (Forum Host)
13:00-13:30	Invited comments (<i>a list will be circulated shortly</i>)
13:30-14:15	Open house moderated discussion
14:15-14:30	Consensus opting
14:30	Lunch

List of invitees to the Forum

Please note that all names appear in alphabetical order

Public Health

Abdul Ghaffar; Dr.**	Global Forum for Health Research
Arjumand Faisal; Dr.**	Public Health Consultant
Franklin White; Dr.**	International Public Health Consultant
Ghazala Rafiq; Dr.*	Instructor, Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University
Gregory Pappas; Dr.*	Chair, Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University
Simeen Siddiqui; Dr.*	Regional Advisor, Health Policy and Planning, WHO EMRO
Tasleem Akhtar; Dr.*	Public Health Specialist
Zafar Mirza; Dr. **	Regional Advisor, WHO EMRO
Zulfiqar Bhutta; Prof.*	Professor of Pediatrics; Aga Khan University

Private sector academia and health service delivery

A J Khan; Prof.*	Principal, Frontier Medical College
Faisal Sultan; Dr.*	CEO, Shaukat Khanum Hospital
Farid-ud-Din Baqai; Prof*	Chancellor; Baqai University
Zaheer Ahmed; Dr.	CEO and President, Shifa International Hospital, Islamabad

Health and related areas

Agha Nasir; Mr.*	Electronic Media Specialist
Anees Jillani; Mr.*	Advocate Supreme Court
A. R. Kamal; Mr.*	Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics
Farooq Baig; Dr.*	Programs Director; Serendip Productions
Kausar Khan; Ms.*	Social Sector expert; Aga Khan University
M. Suleman; Mr.	Former Member Central Board of Revenue
Sajjad Akhtar; Mr.	Director; Center for Poverty Reduction, Planning Commission
Shaheena Maqbool; Ms.	Freelance reporter
Parvaiz Shaukat/Mazhar Abbas; Mr.	Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUG)
Representative	Council of Newspaper Editors of Pakistan (CPNE)
Representative	All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS)

Development partners

Aldo Landi*/Samia Hashim*	UNAIDS
Rafah Salam Aziz*	UNICEF
Emma Hooper**	ADB
Jane Edmonson/Inayat Thaver*	DFID
Fareed Midhat*	Asia Foundation
Inam ul Haq; Dr *	World Bank
Khalif Bile Mohamud*	WHO
Nabila Ali**	JSI
Paul Rukert *	GTZ
Shahida Fazil **	UNFPA
Sherry F. Carlin **/Samia Altaf**	USAID
Sohail Ahmed**	JICA
Yasmin Qazi; Dr**	Packard Foundation
Bernd Appelt*	GTZ

Government representatives

Anwar Mehmmod; Mr.*	Secretary Health
Ashfaq Ahmed; Dr.*	Deputy Director General, International Health
Athar Saeed Dil; Dr.	Chief Health; Ministry of Health
Ejaz Rahim; Mr.**	Cabinet Secretary
Huma Qureshi; Dr.** (Rep)	Director; PMRC
Mohammad Zafar; Dr.*	Health Policy Unit; NWFP
M Shafiquddin; Dr.	Chief Health, Planning Commission
Majid Rajput; Dr.	Director General Health
Mushtaq Khan; Dr.*	Chief; Health Policy Unit

Rehan Hafeez; Dr**	Program Manager; MOH
Sohail Ahmed; Mr.**	Former Secretary Health Punjab
Asma Bokhari; Dr*	Program Manager; MOH
Haroon Jehangir. Dr.*	Program Manager; MOH
Lt Gen (Rtd) K.A. Karamat; Prof.**	Director NIH
Zahid Larik; Dr.	DDG PHC
Fazale Hadi; Dr.*	Executive Director; PIMS

Representatives of Pharmaceutical Associations

Ahmed Atif Mirza; Dr.*	President; Pakistan Pharmaceuticals Medical Directors Association
Juergen Koenig; Mr.*	Chairman; Pharma Bureau
Saeed Allawalla; Mr.*	President; Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association

Health professionals and/or representatives of professional societies

Afzal Ahmed; Lt. Gen, Dr.*	Surgeon General; Pakistan Army
Azhar Faruqui; Prof**	Prof of Cardiology
Fareed Aslam Minhas; Prof *	Prof. of Psychiatry
Malik Mubashir; Prof*	Prof. of Psychiatry
Mowadat Rana; Brig.	Advisor in Psychiatry
Nasir ud din Azam; Prof.	Prof of Medicine
Representative	Nursing Federation
Representative	Paramedic Federation
Samad Shera; Prof *	Diabetic Association of Pakistan
Sher Shah; Prof**	Pakistan Medical Association
Umar Ayub/ Arshad Rana Dr.*	Pakistan Medical Association

NGOs

Ali Qadir; Mr *	The Network for Consumer Protection
Ayyaz Kiani; Mr.*	The Network for Consumer Protection
Brause Rasmvseen; Dr	Save the Children, USA
Ghaffar Billo; Dr *	HANDS
Kamyla Marvi Tappal; Dr**	Ahung
Khawar Mumtaj; Dr	Shirkat Gah
Madeline Wright; Ms	Save the Children, UK
Mohsina Bilgrami; Dr* (rep)	Marie Stopes
Sania Nishtar; Dr *	Heartfile
Sono Khangrani; Dr**	Thardeep
Talib Lashari; Dr.*	Network
Tanveer Ahmed; Mr *	HANDS

Host of the Forum and meeting convener

Sania Nishtar; Dr*	Heartfile
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* Confirmed participation to the August 6 Meeting

** Have agreed to join the Health Policy Forum, but are unable to attend the meeting on the 6th

Reponses to questions about the forum during the last 3 weeks

Question 1

Zulfiqar Bhutta: The concept is timely and I believe will meet with considerable support provided that the forum truly lives up to its premise i.e. it can raise the voice of reason and science without fear or favour. That is the reason why I feel that although members from the public sector are welcome, they should come to the Forum as individuals and not representatives of their constituencies. That is also the reason why we should not insist on institutional buy-in as I have witnessed even the most robust NGOs wilt at the mere thought of losing donor support.

Answer- Sania Nishtar: The credibility of this forum will indeed come from its intellectual independence and the extent to which it will uphold evidence in articulating its Viewpoints and Statements – its key deliverables. I suppose in a way, it is also a matter of personal professional credibility when people like us get closely associated with an effort such as this; it is for this particular reason, also, that I share the same concern with you and hope to have likeminded colleagues on board so as to be able to safeguard the integrity of our outputs. The issue of institutional buy-in and its possible negative implications, particularly from an NGO donor interface in the manner you highlighted, given the *bilaterals-GoP* relationship is something against which safeguards must be factored in. One way to address this would be to revisit the rationale of ‘institutional memberships’ within this framework. However, the other way to get around this – without radical changes in the structure – would be to articulate ethics and norms, which is what I will factor into the Statement to obviate such concerns. (the revised version of the Statement will be circulated prior to the meeting)

Question 2

Zulfiqar Bhutta: I do feel that a mere health focus may not suffice. Although the concept document talks about social determinants and equity, in my opinion health and development are intertwined. From a position that health and development must occur concurrently, I am now impressed by evidence from elsewhere that in the wake of grinding poverty and inequity, it is economic subsistence and purchasing power that makes a difference to care seeking in health systems. Thus my plea to bring in first rate health and development economists on board from the very beginning.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: I agree completely. It is envisaged that the Forum will view and treat ‘health’ in its inter-sectoral scope and I am making sure that it has the right blend of experts on board so as to allow this. Indeed many factors which determine health status range much broader than those that are within the realm of the health sector and therefore allied issues in relation to economic and social welfare, economic development, social justice, politics, trade and environment will be appropriately featured.

Question 3

Zulfiqar Bhutta: I hope that Forum members will be willing to debate openly the pros and cons of many government policies that influence health spending and health. However, if certain members of the Forum will stifle debate on issues of defence spending, nuclear armaments and delivery systems and health system corruption, then

the Forum would go the way of several past endeavors.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: Yes I am indeed cognizant of such a potential risk and have therefore attempted to mitigate this concern by organizing the ‘structure’ and its mechanisms in a manner which are geared, both to preempting this and getting around it. I am referring in particular to the “Membership’s support of deliverables” as articulated in the Forum Statement. As you will notice, the Consensus statements need a two third majority whereas View points need to be cleared only by moderators. This will mean that some of us, as moderators, will have the flexibility to put online or publish viewpoints which might not have the clearance of the entire Forum. This would be significant as it would allow us to have a Forum Deliverable even though it might not have explicit endorsement at large, which you do not expect in any case.

Question 4

Zulfiqar-Bhutta: next steps?

Answer - Sania Nishtar: The priority is to get the invited membership endorse the Forum Statement; I will be circulating a revised version early next week. The next – as outlined in the medium term plan – is for some of the key members to get together in Islamabad early next month. We can deliberate on the timing, structure and the rationale of the of the larger meeting then; it would be important for us to have a deliverable by then or conversely use the meeting as a process towards developing a deliverable.

Question 5

Zulfiqar Bhutta: I also feel that public health research and working towards evidence-based policy making must receive greater prominence in the objectives and work plan of the forum

Answer - Sania Nishtar: though it is implicit that the Forum has been constituted with the objective of supporting and assisting with the upholding of evidence in the decision making process, thanks for pointing out that it does not come through clearly in the Statement as it is presently articulated; I will rephrase sections in light of this observation. On the issue of public health research, the Medium Term Operational Plans’ point 3 alludes to its importance and highlights the specific operational areas where it will be scoped, but as in the former case, I will see where else it can be highlighted as it is clearly a priority area and one that the Forum is likely to engage in actively.

Question 6

Simeen Siddiqui: How will the independence of this Forum be ensured

Answer - Sania Nishtar: The statement of the Forum has had inputs from international legal experts particularly with regard to ensuring its independence. You would notice that we say it upfront in the statement’s anchor piece even before articulating its mission. This intent is reflected in the manner in which the structure has been developed which is strongly aligned on democratic principles and will obviate dominance of an organization or individual. You would notice that there is also a justification for why we are the host organization for the

initial 3 year duration. We will not have office bearers and meetings would be convened in a round table configuration.

Question 7

Inayat Thaver: Do you want to restrict to health or include in it the population and/or reproductive health, also.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: The Gateway Paper,¹ which the statement refers to and which is envisaged to set the tone for the Forum, views health in its intersectoral scope from a health systems rather than a programmatic dimension. However, the annual consultative mechanism and the other deliverables of the Forum will take up programmatic issues and cross cutting issues.

Question 8

Inayat Thaver: It appears that the Forum would be addressing the MDGs and PRSP. Spelling this out would give it more credibility.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: Yes it will amongst other things; however I think that the credibility of the Forum will come from its constitution, its intellectual independence, the ingenuity of its indigenous response and the robustness of its scientific processes and deliverables rather than the absolute 'buy into' specific themes, which it will, of course pay due attention to

Question 9

Inayat Thaver: There are other forums or association which are addressing more or less same issue. How do you see this forum something different or having an added value.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: amongst other things, this forum is focused on mainstreaming the role of the civil society organizations and the people into the health policy process and providing a platform for stakeholders to interface with national policy makers; in addition it will review and analyze issues and generate policy positions and other deliverables from a completely independent standpoint. Moreover, this is meant to be an ongoing activity with an outcome orientation. Such a forum does not exist. The other forum, which you may be referring to – the Public Health Forum – as you know has a distinct programmatic focus in the area of maternal and child health

Question 10

Inayat Thaver: How are you going to address the issue of duplication of efforts. There is already a NHPU at federal level and similar units in NWFP and Punjab.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: There is going to be no duplication of efforts; I stress again on independence and the civil society perspective. The initiatives you refer to are public sector owned/housed, which we will be happy to work with. If you read the statement, we clearly articulate in the section on 'what it will provide' that *we will be supportive to the role of public-sector initiated policy and planning initiatives*. I was referring in particularly to the initiatives you referred to.

¹ Forum Statement - Medium Term Operational Plan – point 2

I have had meetings with Dr Mushtaq who is on board and happy to be part of the Apex group and seems very supportive; I have assured him of our intent to work closely and collaboratively and there is a great deal of synergy at both ends. The Unit in NWFP is also in the loop and well aware.

Question 11

Inayat Thaver: I am sure you are aware that DFID is already supporting "The Network", which is focusing voices and accountability for the poor. Perhaps one might to look for some further linkages.

Answer - Sania Nishtar: The Network is closely involved in this initiative and is already an organizational member.

[Appendix A:](#) See Forum Statement