

Heartfile

Pakistan's Population Emergency: Call to Action

*This **Call to Action** is a corollary to Heartfile's policy research broadcast, "Pakistan's Population Emergency" and should be read in conjunction with the documentary, which elaborates on the rationale of this public policy agenda.*

*The **Call to Action** urges stakeholders to realize Pakistan's five decade-long public policy goal of Universal Health Coverage for family planning*

We call upon

At the federal level:

- the Federal Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination (NHSRC) to play its constitutional role outlined in Federal Legislative Lists I and II. Enlist the support of the Ministry of Interprovincial Coordination (IPC) to help forge federal-provincial convergence around a national vision for population welfare in line with the FP 2020 goal, to which Pakistan is a signatory
- the Council of Common Interests (CCI) to convene the National Commission on Population Welfare under the leadership of the Prime Minister with participation of respective Chief Ministers to take stock of the challenges posed to Pakistan's development and security by its burgeoning population
- the CCI to fast track the conduct of the sixth population census so as to obtain reliable and accurate data to form the basis for sound planning in all development sectors, especially in health and education
- the Federal Ministry of NHSRC to take leadership and responsibility for commodity security in relation to supply chain management; step up its capacity to ensure Pakistan's compliance with international commitments; deliver family planning services in areas that have not been impacted by the 18th amendment¹; invest in its orphan research institutions² and its allied normative agencies³ so as to support reform plans; prioritize fertility and family planning metrics in all health information streams in the public system and bridge the private sector data gap
- the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics to institutionalize fertility and family planning metrics and measurements in regular existing population based surveys

At the provincial level the respective Chief Ministers to:

¹ Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Federally Administered Tribal Areas

² National Institute of Population Studies and the National Research Institute for Fertility Control

³ National Commission for Population Welfare and the National Trust for Population Welfare

- personally lead inter-sectorial taskforces with capacity to implement reform and spearhead reform plans in the provincial departments of Population and Health; address malpractices and corruption in both departments by strengthening monitoring and accountability through innovative means including the use of mobile phones and provide oversight of data integrity
- effectively integrate at a functional level, the health and population sectors by mandating joint PC-1s, synchronized communication strategies, integrated metrics and uniform contraceptive pricing in addition to utilizing population sector Regional Training Institutes for both the health and population sectors.
- ensure that provincial departments of health assume greater responsibility for family planning by fully upscaling post-partum family planning, by including family planning as a strategy for reducing Maternal Mortality Ratio and by according attention to Reproductive Health Centres-A in hospital reform plans
- recommence private sector institutional reimbursement for Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives in Reproductive Health Centres-B and upscale social marketing approaches through partnerships with NGOs and harness the potential of health entrepreneurs
- conduct a review of the male mobilizer and mobile services aspect of the population program to explore how best to tap their potential
- explore novel governance arrangements for Regional Training Institutes so as to bridge the link between family planning and women's empowerment and make sustainable investments in RTIs as part of the women's entrepreneurship agenda
- make adequate allocations for contraceptive security and seek help from the federal government to maintain the logistics and supply chain by invoking Article 147 of the Constitution to benefit from economies from scale;
- ensure that allocated funds meet both the recurrent and development costs

We also call upon

- the parliamentary committees on health and population to hold joint sessions to take stock of trends in family planning
- the family planning NGOs to share best practices and work collaboratively with government agencies to upscale best practices
- the private sector practitioners of health to support family planning

And last but not least, we call upon

- the donors to continue to support vital program activities level aimed at building institutional capacities to deliver a dynamic Family Planning program

The documentary can be accessed at <http://www.heartfile.org/pakistan-population-emergency-a-policy-research-broadcast/>