

Role of Lady Health Workers in Eliminating Trachoma from District Kamber Shahdadkot

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Received: February 11, 2022

Published: April 21, 2022

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District Kamber Shahdadkot has one of the largest number of lady health visitors/supervisors/workers owing to its deteriorated health conditions and poverty-ridden status. There are almost 900 lady health workers and more than 30 lady health supervisors reaching every corner of the 7 talukas of the district. They serve as the pillar of the existing health system of the district.

- **Identification and referral process:** They have been playing key role in the Trachoma identification and referral process. If given proper motivation, they can continue the process religiously in long run making the project aims perpetuated. Theoretical speaking, they would serve as strong impediment upon the revival of trachoma, if needed.
 - **Promoters of Tele-trachoma:** As tele trachoma service has kicked off in the district. They are promoting the service in every corner of the district. It is manifest of the fact that they have potential, approach and reach to populate any or every Trachoma Elimination activity to the right person.
 - **Strategic stakeholders in Trachoma Transitional Plan:** Transitional Plan is considered as ultimate reward of long fought trachoma elimination battle in the district. They, holding the critical position in the horizontal and vertical setup of the district health units, can be strategic stakeholders in the plan.
 - **Easy connectors between the most vulnerable members from Trachoma i.e. Mothers and children:** WHO says that mothers and children are the most vulnerable community members in Trachoma. They are approximately 75% of the total district population. Reaching, advocating and training every mother and child would be considered as
- grave triumph. Lady health workers can be the source of earning that milestone as they have built the healthy reach and easy connections with the mothers and children of the district Kamber Shahdadkot. This networking can be used in disseminating F&E component among the community members.
- **They form deep rooted and well integrated web in the district:** Owing to rigorous polio exercise every month, they are well aware with all the geographies and demographics of the district. This primary and authentic information can be utilized to figure out the red, yellow and green zones with reference of Trachoma.
 - **Eloquent mobilizers:** They enjoy great interpersonal skills fit for the regional, ethnic and language diversions of the district. They are and can playing/play significant role in leading and convincing Trachoma prevention awareness sessions in the community. They can be our indirect and unofficial social mobilizers.
 - **Behavior Change Agents:** Changing and sustaining the changed behavior is one of the toughest and slow task of the world. For controlling and preventing Trachoma, it is important that people must adopt health and hygiene practices. As Lady Health Workers work continuously in the field with the people. Their consistency, perseverance and engagements can be cashed for changing the behavior of the community members of the district.
 - **Can provide road map in future strategic planning:** As mentioned above, they are living map of the district. Their information of geographies, demographics, cultural

acceptances, people psychologies and triggering factors would be helpful in drawing a road map in future strategic plans regarding Trachoma elimination and transitional plan.

- **Integrative connectors among district health units:** They serve as the heartbeat of every health unit of the district. Winning heartbeat means concurring the Health systems of the district.
- **Can be projects Umbrella Team:** As proven from aforementioned points, they can serve as Pakistan Trachoma Elimination Project's Umbrella team in district Kamber Shahdadkot delivering every component of SAFE Strategy. They have potential to water the seeds planted by SIOVS and CBM International to make a healthy plant so that people of the district can never be suffered from irreversible blindness in the future.