

## **Dr. Zafar Mirza chairs a strategic planning meeting on “dignified & safer pregnancy care” to the flood affected**

Sep 13, 2022

Dr. Zafar Mirza (former Federal Minister Health / Advisor WHO Headquarters) chaired a strategic planning meeting at Peshawar Medical College jointly organized by Alkhidmat Health Foundation and Prime Foundation. Prof. Hafeez-ur-Rahman (Dean Health Sciences, PMC / Chairman Alkhidmat Health Foundation) moderated the deliberation. The meeting was heavily attended by various national and international delegates physically and online via the zoom link. The participants apart from Dr. Tariq Cheema (USA), Dr. Sadia Malick (AAPS Europe), Dr. Fozia Alvi (Canada) and Dr. Ahmed (Turkey) and Dr. Amatullah Zarrin (PIMA) included the professors and senior faculty members of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Public Health and Mental Health from Peshawar Medical College, Lahore and Islamabad.

Purpose of the meeting was to deliberate in detail about the problems faced by the flood affected throughout Pakistan in general and specifically by the pregnant ladies . Dr. Zafar Mirza guided and led the consultation process and prompted the delegates to develop a comprehensive inventory of such ladies through involvement of the LHWs, LHVs, midwives, skilled and traditional birth attendants. He stressed the need to identify ways and means for building, refreshing and enhancing the capacity of all tier birth care providers in dignified and safe birthing practices throughout the cycle of pregnancy right from antenatal through natal to postnatal care. It was of paramount importance to carefully document all the steps of care in local languages to act as pregnancy care SOPs in accord with the WHO and UN guidelines. Dr. Mirza further said that the services need to be provided in a complementary and cooperative than competitive manner in synergy with the health system partners in the public and private health sector. It is only this way that the duplication and waste of resources can be avoided and an efficiency can be achieved. He also urged the delegates to think for out of box, innovative and technological solutions, for instance establishing a Helpline as mobile phone was in use by most of the flood victims to date. Last but not the least he informed the delegates that psychological support must not be lost sight of in serving these people and the need for providing them with psychological first aid. He concluded with the the adversity needs to be transformed into a systems, services and community development opportunity; assured that he will try his level best to further reinforce the strategic planning by involving the field experts and engaging the international development partners.

Prior to this Dr. Zafar Mirza visited the Prime Institute of Public Health where he was briefed by the Director and Program Officer of the PIPH about their health and development projects in collaboration with the UN, international agencies and the department of health. He appreciated the public health services profile and efforts of Prime Foundation as managed by PIPH.