

**Research report on management of wasting, gaps in existing system of wasting management and recommendations for increase in acute malnutrition/wasting management coverage in health system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of South Asian country Pakistan for under 5 years of children(6<sup>th</sup> May 2020)**

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**Abstract**

This report study is conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of South Asian Country Pakistan. Report study is about wasting/acute malnutrition management in under five years of children in health systems of the province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Gaps and issues in existing management of acute malnutrition in health systems at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Levels. Based on those gaps, sound recommendations are being formulated for specific stakeholders in context of South Asian Country Pakistan. This report findings may be used for other under developed countries where wasting rates are high.

**Background**

In Pakistan 17.8 % Under 5 children are wasted while in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province 15% and in Merged Tribal Districts 23% Under 5 Children are wasted as per NNS 2018. Wasting or Acute Malnutrition effect growth, development, immunity, productivity and capacity of under 5 children. Acute Malnutrition increase disease severity, disease susceptibility and disease duration in children. Acute Malnutrition is reversible if identified and treated on time. Its onset comes in 6 to 8 days and causes can be immediate or underlying primary secondary or tertiary. Health system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have acute malnutrition

management programs under Integrated Health Project, Nutrition Support Program and Integrated Nutrition Program. But there are gaps in coverage of acute malnutrition management in health systems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. To identify gaps and increase acute malnutrition management in existing health system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this study was being conducted in order to formulate sound recommendations for different stakeholders which can be easily followed.

**Introduction**

Under Nutrition in children are categorized as Wasting or Acute Malnutrition, Stunting or Chronic Malnutrition, Underweight and Micronutrient Deficiencies. In Pakistan 17 % of children are wasted while 15 out of 100 children are wasted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as per NNS 2018 findings. Similarly 23 out of 100 children are wasted in Tribal Merged District of KP. Number of Health facilities total in both Kp and Merged tribal districts in comparison with wasting management sites under different Nutrition programs like IHP, INP and NSP needed integration in a single report. Similarly district wise wasting figures in relation to available wasting management sites, clearly specify the gap and limitation of health system to cover wasting in children. Wasted children have higher chances of morbidities and mortalities, thus effecting household economy, increasing health system

burden and GDP of the country. Current study clearly identifies the issues in existing wasting management programs under umbrella of health systems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Merged districts were specifically quoted in this study report because they do also need special focus from all stakeholders. This report highlighted the gaps of current service delivery of wasting management and possible way out for the solutions of the gaps. Proper recommendations were formulated for relevant stakeholders in order to strengthen wasting management in health system of KP and Merged tribal districts of Pakistan.

### Objectives of the Report Study

- To Highlight Acute Malnutrition in Under 5 Years Children at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan
- To Prepare Sound and Easy Recommendations of Acute Malnutrition Management in Children for District Administrations, Health Workers, Civil Society, Volunteer Networks, Political Actors, Food Department, DONORS, SUN Focal Points, Social Workers, General Communities and Health Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- To Increase Access and Coverage of Acute Malnutrition Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Merged Tribal Districts
- To Support Health System of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Management of Acute Malnutrition and Effective Utilization of Available Resources
- To Formulate a Report which can be base for Policy Brief about Increase in

Acute Malnutrition Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and may be copied in other provinces also

### Methods

Total number of health facilities with acute malnutrition management sites at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were collected through systematic research and confirmation with currently ongoing projects i.e. Integrated Health Project IHP data, Nutrition Support program and Integrated Nutrition programs. Nutrition sites structure for Acute Malnutrition Management in children at merged tribal districts and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were thoroughly observed through field visits and specialized questionnaires'. Problems & Gaps in access and coverage of acute malnourish children identification, treatment and in program stay were studied. Limitations of existing structure of acute malnutrition management coverage was linked with district wise wasting rates and number of health facilities with wasting management along with health facilities having no wasting management facilities.

### Results

As per information collected through systematic reports, field visits and responses of different linked acute malnutrition management teams. Only 34 % of health facilities at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are having wasting management sites while only 8 % health facilities in merged tribal districts are having wasting management sites. Still these existing wasting management sites services are weak and challenging for equal and equitable access and coverage to wasted children in both Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Merged Tribal Districts. Based on findings of programmatic gaps and comparison of districts wise wasting with number of wasting

management sites. On base of identified gaps and existing structure of wasting management, this study report gives recommendations for different relevant stakeholders that how they can play role in increasing management of acute malnutrition and how they can support management of acute malnutrition in health systems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

### **Conclusion**

This report study gives information about district wise prevalence of wasted children along with health facilities information with wasting management facilities. Gaps regarding proper on time identification, proper treatment and cure protocols for wasted children properly highlighted. Brief recommendation for multiple stakeholder published in study report. Gaps which were identified in existing acute malnutrition management coverage in health of children.

### **Biography**

Dr. Darya Khan is doing her Master's in Public Health Nutrition IPH&SS at

system of KP and Merged tribal districts and recommendations formulated as solution for those gaps were highly appreciated by technical community nutrition experts. This study will be a key to policy makers, civil society, academics & researchers, district administrations, health department and relevant stakeholder for increasing management of acute malnutrition coverage to strengthen health system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After going through this study report, from high to grass root levels one can easily play its role in identification and increase in effective management of acute malnutrition in children. Which will ultimately decrease the prevalence of wasted children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Tribal Districts. These study findings are almost similar to under developed countries and can be used in any part of the world for understanding the gaps and possible solutions for acute malnutrition management in under five years

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