

Pakistan and Health Care: Projects being offered by Ministry of Health, Government of Pakistan

Provision of health facilities to a society is essential to improve the efficiency and productivity of the population. The importance of health is also reflected in specific measurable targets declared at UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) represent a vision based on an internationally agreed set of time bound goals for reducing extreme poverty, extending gender equality, and advancing opportunities for health and education.

The Health Policy 2001 identifies ten specific areas for reform ranging from control of communicable diseases especially T.B, Malaria, HIV/AIDS and the EPI cluster. The reforms also address inadequacies in primary and secondary health services and propose improvements in district health system, including removal of professional and managerial gaps and distortions.

In Pakistan, the coverage of health facilities has improved over the years and is comparable with other countries of the region with similar socio-economic conditions. However, health coverage still suffers from considerable inadequacies and deficiencies, namely, unhealthy environment, insufficient resources, ignorance, lack of awareness and inaccessibility to health services. Improving health requires addressing poverty, illiteracy, lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and limited access to health care

A high burden of communicable and non-communicable disease is evident from the fact that current incidence of tuberculosis is 177 per 100,000 populations, prevalence of Hepatitis C in general population is 5.3%; more than 24.3 % of the population over the age of 18 years has high blood pressure, 10 % of the adult population suffers from diabetes; 1 % of population is blind; and 34 % suffers from depressive disorders. The large burden of infectious diseases in Pakistan is known to be closely related to the lack of sanitation facilities and safe sources of potable water. Water –borne diseases constitute nearly 12.5 percent of the diseases burden in Pakistan.

The analysis of the burden of diseases shows a very close relationship between the dimensions of health and poverty. Impaired physical capacity resulting from unhealthy environments, malnutrition etc. limits the earning potential of laborers. Most pre-mature deaths among the poor segments of society and vulnerable groups are because of poverty related communicable diseases such as childhood illness and malnutrition.

Opportunities: JV between a foreign partner & Pakistan for production of In vitro Diagnostics (IVD)

There are opportunities for investments in all segments of the health care delivery system. One of the major areas is the In vitro Diagnostics Testing Devices and Reagents production. The total IVD market is over US\$ 80 million. The main segments on population based to have an opportunity for public private JV manufacturing facility are ELISA and Molecular based testing of communicable diseases (Viral Hepatitis, HIV, T.B and Typhoid) and some other markers. The current market size of these at present is close to fourty million Euro which is growing at a rate of 35%.

The following is the proposed mode of shared manufacturing for these;

1. The import of ready to fill concentrate for reagents
2. Some formulation step to increase the value addition
3. Total manufacturing locally

The Government of Pakistan will offer the followings,

1. Physical space at NIH for manufacturing with civil works
2. Quality assurance lab. Facilities
3. Assurance of guaranteed access to the public sector market