

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination

PRESS RELEASE

UNAIDS welcomes the new Government's unwavering commitment to address key implementation challenges in scaling up the HIV response in the country

ISLAMABAD, 09 October 2018- Aamer Mehmood Kiani Federal Minister for National Health Services held a meeting with the Dr. Maria Elena F. Borromeo, UNAIDS Country Director for Pakistan & Afghanistan today.

Minister Health highlighted the new Government's commitment to change the course of the HIV epidemic in the country by ensuring that, inter alia, critical barriers and challenges in implementing high-impact prevention program for key population and increasing treatment coverage for those in need, will be addressed. This is fully aligned with the new Government's 100-day agenda particularly in improving the country's health system and setting up a national health insurance program that will enable every Pakistani below poverty line to effectively access the needed package of essential services, A national health policy is yet to be developed and MNRHC invited UNAIDS to be part of the team for suggesting the much needed Endeavour's. One of the program areas that needs further strengthening and harmonization, is the national monitoring and evaluation system.

UNAIDS country Director shared that according to the newly released 2018 Global AIDS Report, Pakistan is one of the first countries to codify the protection of the rights of transgender persons thru the Transgender Persons Act of May 2018. Transgender persons in Pakistan, as in other countries, experience routine discrimination and has difficulty accessing HIV services. The report likewise mentioned some very worrying concerns, including the continued increase in new infection in the last 7 years (45% increase from 2010-2017) and the very low treatment coverage (7%) among Pakistanis in need of anti-retroviral therapy.

UNAIDS committed to support MNRCH in this endeavor as this is fundamental in formulating sound policies, designing an evidence-informed intervention and in prioritizing resource allocation and investments.

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