

World Meningitis Day: Pakistan 5th October 2023



“Knock to end meningitis”: multifaceted community awareness-raising in Pakistan

For World Meningitis Day 2023, the Helping Hands Foundation (HHF) organised a wide range of community engagement initiatives, notably pioneering a doorstep awareness-raising campaign in their local community. This is how they implemented their plan to join the race to defeat meningitis:

1. Planning meeting

A staff meeting on the HHF action plan for meningitis awareness was held on 18 September.

2. Refresher training of field and facility staff

A staff refresher training session on meningitis was held at the HHF head office. The training agenda was to refresh the staff's previous knowledge and convey up-to-date facts about the disease to the target community. Both community health workers and head office staff participated.

3. Door-to-door awareness campaign (4 Sep to 5 Oct)

The message was delivered to 1,761 women in households, including an introduction to the disease covering the key signs and symptoms.

4. Community awareness session (school)

A community awareness session was held at the FAMS School System in Multan. 120 students and 7 faculty staff attended the session, whose key message was “speak up to save a life”.

Organisation:
Helping Hands
Foundation (HHF)

Location:
Multan, Pakistan

Background:
HHF strive to serve humanity as a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing sustainable healthcare, education and community empowerment programs, through culturally sensitive initiatives.

Contact:
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Organisational objective:
To be a leading model in
the race to defeat
meningitis

This case study is part of the Race to 2030 – supporting you to get involved in the WHO Global Road Map to Defeat Meningitis by 2030.





5. Community awareness walk

The community health workers of HHF organised a street walk with the collaboration of community activists. Informational material was distributed to passers-by and shopkeepers at a market.

6. Light the road ahead

As part of the “global chain of light” organised by CoMO for World Meningitis Day, HHF arranged for ten community spaces to be lit up at exactly 20:30, and posted photos on social media.

7. Stories from meningitis-affected families

The HHF team interviewed two families affected by meningitis and wrote up their stories to help spread awareness and understanding of the experience of survivors.

Impact

This is the eighth year in a row that HHF has participated in World Meningitis Day. Over the course of those eight years, they have observed how the local community in Multan have become more and more familiar with the name of the disease in their local language (*gardan tour bukhaar*). But this year HHF focused on taking the message directly to people's doorsteps, as well as marketplaces, schools and hard-to-access areas, reaching an estimated total of 2,500 people. They are aware that there is still some way to go in their mission to make everyone in the community aware of the threat of the disease and how to tackle it.

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