Report on short course offered jointly by Health Services Academy and World Health Organization

HEALTH DIPLOMACY

Health Services Academy
Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination
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Background

There is a growing realization in today’s globalized world that health issues cannot be solved by the health sector alone. Some health problems need political negotiations and solutions e.g. stopping hostilities towards immunization, involving non-health sector in addressing non-communicable diseases, access to medicines and technologies etc. Health Diplomacy brings stakeholders from economic, social and political sectors together. It engages all partners to jointly find solutions for the complex health problems in today’s world. Furthermore, it mobilizes parliamentarians and other community representatives to advocate for health in national policy forums which might lead to legislation, increased financial allocations, reforms, partnerships and other important policy decisions. Investment in health diplomacy thus has benefits for economic development, social justice and national security.

When countries are affected by man-made and natural crises, the right to health and social justice is compromised. Health diplomacy in such situations opens avenues for humanitarian assistance across borders. International Health Regulations endeavor to make the world a safer place by mobilizing commitments to prevent spread of diseases across borders. Framing of health diplomacy efforts by fostering partnerships across public health, representing health in foreign affairs and other policy forums, advocating for health causes, monitoring progress towards health targets and engaging diplomats in global health affairs are concrete steps towards ensuring long terms gains at global, regional and national level.

WHO realizing this need, organized first course for the executives of health ministries and foreign offices in 2012, and this continues on annual basis to date. Following the success of the seminars at EMRO, WHO Pakistan office and Health Services Academy, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation & Coordination, Islamabad offered a similar, and more contextualized short course which is envisaged to be offered on a regular basis.

Objectives of the Course

The objectives of the course were to:

- Present the field of global health diplomacy, its history, recent development and key challenges.
- Identify and define key concepts in global health, global health diplomacy and global health governance.
- Discuss key cross-cutting issues of global health in relation to foreign policy, trade, climate change, human rights and other related disciplines.
- Analyse case studies and negotiation processes at the national, regional and global levels.
- Review examples of national and global health strategies.
The envisaged outcomes of the course were:

- Sensitization on the importance of health diplomacy in the modern times
- Enhanced knowledge on the importance of foreign policy and diplomatic involvement in health issues
- Better understanding of the common health issues at regional and global level, and their implications on health system

**Proceedings**

The five-day training program commenced with the inaugural session. Welcome remarks were given by Dr. Assad Hafeez, the Executive Director, Health Services Academy/Director General Health, Ministry of NHSR&C. He expressed his gratitude to the Ministry and its officials for their support and the WHO for providing resources to organize the course. Referring to the course he recognized the input of the facilitators from the Country Office, EMRO and Headquarters of the WHO. This was followed by the introduction of the course by the WHO Country Representative Dr. Thieren, who was one of the facilitators for the course and an alumnus of the Executive course on Global Health Diplomacy in Geneva. Emphasizing the importance of the course, he said:

“I alone am not a health diplomat. I would like to challenge you all. We all negotiate for health all the time. We practice it all the time...... diplomacy in health is not a science.”

The key note speaker, the Federal Secretary, Mr. Tariq Bajwa addressed the audience and shared his own experience and the role of the Economic Affairs Division GoP, in advocating for health. He began by stating that he did not consider himself an expert but rather a practitioner of diplomacy. He urged the participants to make the most of the training and urged the HSA to make this course, a regular feature and invite more diplomats to the training. The inaugural ceremony concluded with remarks by the Federal Secretary Muhammad Ayub Shaikh, MoNHSR&C who appreciated the Academy in taking the initiative to offer a new course which would synergize efforts of the health and allied state actors in promoting health and well-being of the people. The inaugural was attended by the heads of other institutes and donor organizations.
The course began with the introduction of key principles of health diplomacy. Dr. Thieren introduced the Global Health Diplomacy Framework and defined its elements of ‘who, what, where, how and on which basis.’ Various dimensions of the Health Diplomacy were covered. Health Diplomacy at a global level refers to the conduct of negotiations between officials of different countries to achieve their foreign policy objectives without recourse to war. Power and influence are exercised by many different groups of state and non-state actors through different channels and institutions, including but not restricted to the UN system. Health is an issue that crosses many boundaries, both because diseases know no borders and because the determinants of health such as environmental threats and trade can both improve health by offering opportunities for economic development. The concepts were discussed in detail and discussions generated in the local context.

Dr Zafar Mirza alluded to the international dynamics of the trade agreements and how they are affecting health matters around the world, especially in developing countries. Mr Hijazi from the Planning Commission stressed upon the need for broad based reforms for improving the governance in the social sector. Dr Safi and Mr Liban highlighted the importance of international health regulations and global health security issues and where Pakistan is positioned in this regard. Dr Safdar presented the case study of polio for Pakistan and the need for efforts to be done at local, regional and global level for its earliest eradication. Dr Sathar deliberated on population matters amidst the social, economic and political scenario in Pakistan and appreciated the need for negotiating better programs and more investments in the field of birth spacing. Mr Sethi marked his observations on the donor programs in Pakistan and subsequent investments. Dr Babar Shaikh’s session was to link the macroeconomics at the global, regional and local level with health diplomacy, and alluded to a question, “how to make health central in the country’s macroeconomic framework and increase domestic allocation of resources to health?”. Dr Siddiqui explained the WHO’s position in taking the health diplomacy agenda forward. Issues affecting health and its determinants negotiated at the WHO, UN, EU, other economic groups’ meetings and summit meetings between Heads of States, officials and representatives of civil society including G8 and G20 meetings, and at WTO negotiating rounds were discussed by Dr. Ilona Kickbusch, Director-Global Health Program, Graduate Institute of International Development Studies, Geneva, in her lecture over Skype. The broader engagement to include academics, business interests, civil society organizations and public sector in governance for global health was stressed. She stated that high level international diplomacy is underpinned by the engagement of civil society through public diplomacy and the national coordination of strategies and actions for global health. Dr. Kickbusch while referring to the complexity around global governance stated: “Network governance is the way we
do global health governance in the 21st century..... the exact role WHO plays on the governance is through standard and goals setting and accountability.”

The multi-level negotiation processes and how they shape and manage the global policy environment for health for better health security and population health outcomes for each of the countries involved, as well as improving relationships between states and strengthening the commitment of a wide range of actors to work towards a common endeavor to ensure health as a human right and a public good were covered by Director, MoNHSR&C, the Deputy Director CDC and Dr. Thieren.

The course content through discussions and interactive sessions covered the following domains during the five days:

- Introduction to Health Diplomacy: Key concepts and definitions
- Health, Diplomacy and Multilateralism
- Intersections of WTO Agreements and Public Health: role of health diplomacy
- Global Health Agenda and Priorities
- Health, Governance & Reforms
- Global Perspectives on Human Rights & Health
- International Health Regulations
- Global Health Security
- Humanitarian Affairs
- Polio: A case study for Health Diplomacy
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Diplomacy for population matters
- Negotiating with Donors
- Negotiating Health beyond Health
- Macro Economics & Health Diplomacy
- WHO as a key venue for Global Health Diplomacy
- Governance in Global Health organizations
- Health diplomacy: Local context-A Panel Discussion with Multilateral/bilateral stakeholders [World Bank, UN, USAID, Foreign office, Planning Commission, EAD]

The resource material for the course included the following:
2. General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) from a Health Policy Perspective.
5. Giesecke J. International Health Regulations and Epidemic Control.
7. WTO agreements and Public health. A joint study by WHO & WTO.


National and international experts were invited as facilitators for the course. They came from diverse backgrounds and had been involved in diplomacy at national and international forums. The list of the facilitators is as under:

- Dr. Assad Hafeez, Executive Director, HSA/DG Health MoNHSR&C
- Dr. Michel Thieren, WR WHO Pak
- Dr. Zafar Mirza, Director HSD, WHO EMRO
- Dr. Syed Tahir Hijazi, Member Governance, Planning Commission GoP
- Dr. Asad Majeed, Director General, MoFA
- Barrister Zafarullah Khan, SA PM on Human Rights
- Dr. Mohammad Safi, Director Programs, MoNHSRC
- Mr. Ahmed Liban –CDC Pak
- Dr. Rana M Safdar, National Manager PEI
- Dr. Zeba Sathar, Country Rep Population Council
- Mr. Saleem Sethi, Former Secretary EAD, Senior Advisor Middle East Constituency IMF
- Mr. Ejaz Rahim, Former Sr Bureaucrat
- Dr. Babar Shaikh, Sr Technical Advisor, MoNHSRC
- Dr. Sameen Siddiqi, WR WHO Iran
- Dr. Ilona Kickbusch, Director-Global Health Prog, Grad. Institute of Int’l & Development Studies, Geneva
- Dr. Maryam Mallick, WHO Pak
- Dr. Saima Hamid, Associate Professor, HSA

The panel discussion towards the conclusion of the course provided an opportunity to the representatives from the government and donor organizations to discuss at length the dynamics and level of competence of stakeholders involved in diplomacy forums. The key challenges in the local context were brought out in the discussions. The session was moderated by Dr. Hafeez.

During the third day of the training the participants attended one-day seminar on the Sustainable Development Goals. International commitment to report on SDGs was discussed at length by the stakeholders (politicians, technocrats, bureaucrats, bilateral and multilateral organizations, provincial Health Department & Planning & Development Department representatives). Reporting mechanisms from district to national level were discussed and a declaration to commit to the SDGs was signed.
**Way Forward**

At the end of the course, reflections from the facilitators and participants provided insights to improve the course. It was proposed that an article on health negotiations and diplomacy be written based on the deliberations during the course. It was suggested that the name of the course be changed to bring out the local context more. Many participants shared that in order to ensure participation of the relevant and senior officials, the duration of the course needed to be reduced and offered as an executive course. The importance of participation of the Foreign Office was emphasized. It was shared that the course would be reviewed by the Ministry, WHO and HSA before it was offered again. The possibility of offering a 3 credit hour module in the MSPH program of HSA was proposed. Exploring the possibility of offering the course jointly with other countries of the region such as Iran was also proposed. Participants expressed that the same cohort be invited again to upcoming health negotiation meetings so that they may be given an opportunity to exercise their skills. The course concluded with award of certificates to the participants.

The course will be revised in light of the experience of the first course and will be offered routinely by the HSA.
# Annexures

## Agenda

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<tr>
<th>Day 1 – Monday 5th September, 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 – 10:00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INAUGURAL SESSION</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tea Break &amp; Group photo (10:45-11:15)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prayer &amp; Lunch Break (13:30 – 14:15)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Working Tea &amp; Video Health Diplomacy WHO</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 2 – Tuesday 6th September, 2016</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tea Break (11:00 – 11:30)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Working Tea</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 4 – Thursday 8th September, 2016</strong></td>
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Mr. Mudasser Abbassi, HSA
Prof. Dr. Assad Hafeez, Executive Director, HSA
Dr. Michel Thieren, WR WHO Pak
Mr. Tariq Bajwa, Secretary EAD
Mr. Mohammad Ayub Shaikh, Secretary MoNHSR&C
Dr. Michel Thieren, WR WHO Pak
Dr. Zafar Mirza, Director HSD, WHO EMRO
Mr. Asad Majeed, Director General, MoFA
Barrister Zafarullah Khan, SA PM on Human Rights
Dr. Mohammad Safi, Director Programs, MoNHSRC
Mr. Ahmed Liban – CDC Pak
Dr. Michel Thieren, WR WHO Pak
Dr. Rana M Safdar, PEI
Mr. Saleem Sethi, Former Secretary EAD,
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-11:00</td>
<td>WHO as a key venue for Global Health Diplomacy</td>
<td>Dr. Sameen Siddiqi, WR WHO Iran</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Feedback from Participants</td>
<td>Dr. Saima Hamid/Dr. Babar Shaikh</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Skype Lecture : Governance in Global Health Organizations</td>
<td>Dr. Ilona Kickbusch, Director-Global Health Prog, Grad. Institute of Int’l &amp; Development Studies, Geneva.</td>
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<td>12:15-12:20</td>
<td>Award of Certificates</td>
<td>Dr. Michel Thieren, WR WHO Pak</td>
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**Tea Break & Video interview Mr Masood Khan former Permanent UN for Pak (11:00 – 11:30)**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 – 13:00</td>
<td>Health diplomacy: Local context-Panel Discussion Panel discussion with Multilateral/bilateral stakeholders [World Bank, UN, DFID, USAID, Foreign office, Planning Commission, EAD]</td>
<td>Dr. Assad Hafeez, ED HSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00-13:30</td>
<td>Interactive session</td>
<td>Participants</td>
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**Lunch Break (13:30 – 14:30)**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>14:30 – 15:15</td>
<td>Negotiating Health beyond Health</td>
<td>Mr. Ejaz Rahim, Former Sr Bureaucrat</td>
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<td>15:15 – 16:00</td>
<td>Macro Economics &amp; Health Diplomacy</td>
<td>Dr. Babar Shaikh, Sr Technical Advisor, MoNHSRC</td>
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**Dr. Assad Hafeez, ED HSA**

Day – Friday 9th September, 2016