

**HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, ISLAMABAD**

**MINUTES OF THE 4th MEETING OF
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE August 27, 2024**

The fourth meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of Health Research Institute (HRI) was held on August, 27, 2024 at 10:00 am in the *Conference Room, National Institutes of Health (NIH)*, Park Road, Islamabad. After the recitation of Holy Quran, the Chief Executive Officer *Dr. Muhammad Salman* welcomed the participants and convened the agenda session. Dr. *Nighat Murad*, the Executive Director, extended a warm welcome to all TAC members and emphasized that HRI plays a crucial role in promoting and coordinating health research nationwide. It acts as a custodian of public funds for developing research initiatives, setting priorities, and ensuring that research efforts align with national health goals.

1. List of all TAC members who attended the meeting (copy annexed as A).
2. Agenda of the meeting (copy annexed as B).

Agenda Item -1: Brief of proposals received in Round-4

Dr. Faiza Bashir, Research Director, HRI, briefed the TAC members about the funding policy and the research proposals received for Round 4 grants.

- She further shared that total 268 research grant applications were received with a breakup of 94 National Health Challenge Grants (NHCG) applications, 174 small grants (SG). After screening and desk review total 97 proposals (41 NHCG, 56 SG) were found to be eligible for the next phase of peer review.
- **Peer Review process:** All 97 research proposals were sent to two subject matter experts for evaluation on a pre-designed reviewer comments proforma, based on scoring criteria. Based on cumulative scores of external reviewers, total 47 (18 NHCG, 29 SG) applications which were accepted by reviewers and scored 50% or more were forwarded to TAC for review and decision.
- **Evaluation by Technical Advisory Committee:** All 47 research proposals along with both reviewer comments and budgetary comments were forwarded to TAC members before the meeting.



Agenda Item -2: Review of Research Proposals

Mr. Obaid ullah, Senior Scientific Officer, HRI, NIH presented the NHCG research proposals along with reviewer's assessment and budgetary comments.

Technical Evaluation of Research proposals received under NHCG

Decision: After the detailed deliberations and discussion by the TAC; out of 18 proposals, 08 applications were approved and 10 were not approved in present form.

Sr. No.	Proposal No.	Title	Status	Remarks, if any
1.	NHCG-23/R4-82	A Hot Time for Social Health Protection: SHP facing Climate Change. HoT- SHP	Approved with modifications	Study area need revision. Hot climate areas are not mentioned.
2.	NHCG-23/R4-51	Enhancing climate resilience for elderly health in Pakistan	Approved with modifications	
3.	NHCG -23/R4-52	Evaluating the impact of flood on maternal health gestational duration and pregnancy among women of lower socioeconomic status in flood affected areas of Sindh – a retrospective cohort study.	Approved with modifications	Budget of the project may reduced upto3 million.
4.	NHCG-23/R4-88	Evaluation of zero dose children, their socio-behavioural determents and co-designing strategies to improve routine immunization among highly marginalized population living in the peri urban settlements of Sindh, KPK and Balochistan, Pakistan.	Approved with modifications	
5.	NHCG-23/R4-41	Establishing national minimal data set- a tool for integrating the diseases reporting system across various programs in Pakistan	Approved with modifications	
6.	NHCG-23/R4-78	Antimicrobial Stewardship Efforts and Effect of national Initiative on Antimicrobial Surveillance and Reporting	Approved with modifications	Budget of the project may be reduced upto3 million

7.	NHCG-23/R4-73	Development cost effective antimicrobial stewardship intervention in primary care settings in Pakistan through data evidence pathways involving multidisciplinary approaches	Approved with modifications	Process evaluation standards need to be added
8.	NHCG-23/R4-80	Implementation and integration of notifiable disease data at the points of Entry in the National IDSR system in Pakistan.	Approved with modifications	

Agenda Item-3 National Health Data Sharing Guidelines

Miss.Tayaba Rahat, Statistical Officer, HRI, NIH presented the concept of the **National Health Data Sharing Guidelines** to the members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). A proposed subcommittee, comprising the listed TAC members was constituted.

1. Prof Dr. Nazeer Khan
2. Prof Dr. Zainab Samad
3. Prof Dr. Rameesh Kumar
4. Prof Dr. Abdul Mateen
5. Prof Dr. Ayesha Isani Majeed

The subcommittee has agreed to collaborate with Health Research Institute (HRI) officers on this crucial initiative. To advance this effort, it was suggested that the draft may be shared with TAC members.

Agenda Item- 4 Technical Evaluation of research proposals received under SG

Decision: Dr. Farhan Ahmad, Senior Research Officer, HRI, NIH presented the SG research proposals along with reviewer's assessment and budgetary comments. Overall, 29 applications were presented to the TAC members. Out of those 15 grant applications were conditionally approved after modifications and 14 were rejected.

Detail of SG proposals recommended for funding by TAC is as follows (Table 2).

Sr. No.	Proposal No.	Title	Status	Remarks, if any
1.	SG-23/R4-	An Urban Community Engagement Program for Screening, Management, and Monitoring of Hypertension	Approved with modifications	Need revision and aligning. Methodology

	143			needs improvement.
2.	SG-23/R4-138	Mobile Health Intervention Impact on Self-Care Ability and Quality of Life among Heart Failure Patients	Approved with modifications	Sample size is not mentioned. Methodology needs revision.
3.	SG-23/R4-64	A Qualitative Exploration of Barriers, Facilitators, and Stakeholder Perceptions in Developing a User-Centered School-based eHealth NCD Prevention Program for Pakistani Adolescent	Approved with modifications	The project budget should be under 1 million. Needs revision. Approved with a condition to send to the third reviewer.
4.	SG-23/R4-17	Empowering Adolescent Health: A School-Based Intervention with Youth Health Guides in Rawalpindi	Approved with modifications	Methodology needs revision.
5.	SG-23/R4-128	Technology based rehabilitation to improve communication and depression in Aphasic patients	Approved with modifications	Remove Objective 1. Stick to objective 2.
6.	SG-23/R4-83	Empowering Children with CP: A Goal-Oriented GMFM-based Program on Enhancing Gross Motor Function, Balance and Quality of Life.	Approved with modification	
7.	SG-23/R4-156	Behavioral interventions for the treatment adherence among diabetes patients in tertiary care hospitals of Lahore (An action participatory research)	Approved with modifications	
8.	SG-23/R4-10	Evaluation of combined carcinogenicity of welding fumes, wood dust, ambient air pollution and extremely low frequency magnetic field among welders and wood workers of district Quetta	Approved with modifications	
9.	SG-23/R4-25	Community model of cardiometabolic health care and surveillance in a municipal town of Landhi in Karachi Pakistan	Approved with modifications	Analysis plan not robust. Need revision.
10.	SG-23/R4-170	Effectiveness and Digitilization of WHO - Package of Essential Non-Communicable Diseases (DIPEND)for Primary Care Setting	Approved with modifications	
11.	SG-	Perceptions and Preferences for	Approved with	

	23/R4-09	Cardiovascular Disease Prevention: A Study on the Development of an mHealth Application for High-Risk Urban Sedentary Workers in Pakistan	modifications	
12.	SG-23/R4-34	Workplace Health Education Intervention for the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus	Approved with modifications	
13.	SG-23/R4-150	Investigating Psychological Interventions for Depression in Type 1 Diabetes and their Impact on Oxidative Stress Level	Approved with modifications	Remove Objective 2.
14.	SG-23/R4-104	The Effect of TreatNet Family Intervention on Family Function, Coping Strategies, and Short-term Relapse Rate among Individuals with Substance Use Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Trial	Approved with modifications	
15.	SG-23/R4-168	Mental Health and Transgender (MenTra II); Integrating mental health services at primary care setting, a mixed method study of mHGAP intervention	Approved with modifications	

Suggestions/Recommendations of TAC regarding research proposals:

- i. Considering the huge work load on the HRI desk review team the TAC recommended automation of application submission via a software.
- ii. TAC members suggested to revise the peer review proforma to ensure a more critical review. Regarding the quality of review, the members had concerns on reviewer's technical insight and efforts towards a quality review. Hence, it was suggested to orient them to the objectivity of the process so that quality of review is enhanced.
- iii. It was suggested that the amount still remaining from the total 100 Million for research purposes may be allocated to HRI to conduct a survey on the most important public health issue similar to the one conducted (National Neonatal Survey) in 2022. For this HRI was directed to submit the concept note with financial proposal for the review of TAC.
- iv. It was also proposed in the meeting that TAC member will suggest research priority areas for next funding call. In view of this, it was decided that since three years have been passed a research prioritization exercise at national level needs to be conducted

in 2024; using latest technique (CHNRI). In this regard Prof Zainab suggested a collaboration with the author of the technique through AKU towards the end of this year.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the Chairperson.



Dr. Nighat Murad

Chairperson TAC/Executive Director