

## Grant Awarding Ceremony

The **T**echnical **A**ssistance in **C**apacity Building in **M**idwifery, **I**nformation & **L**ogistics (TACMIL Health Project) grant orientation ceremony was held on January 20, 2009 in Islamabad. The TACMIL Health Project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Abt Associates Inc. The purpose of the grant program is to identify innovative ways for delivering good quality, family friendly preventive health care services through either public/private partnerships or through the private sector alone. It is expected that the grants program will address health systems' challenges in the public, private, or commercial sectors which can be resolved with modest grant assistance by concerted local effort of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Ms. Mary Cobb, Deputy Chief Office of Health, USAID and Technical Officer for the TACMIL Health Project; Dr. Zafarullah Gill, Chief of Party TACMIL Project, Mr. Jameel Hussain, Director of Administration and Financial Management; and Mr. Kevin Wiedmann from Abt Associates Inc. headquarters and Islamabad office were present at this occasion.

Five NGOs, having experience of work in the health sector, have been selected to receive grant awards in round two. Ms. Mary Cobb awarded the grant agreements to the grantees. The grantees were also given letter addressed to the Executive District Officer health, requesting to extend maximum support at all levels. These organizations are Youth Organization, Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD), Takhleeq Foundation, Swabi Women Welfare Society, and Gender and Reproductive Health Organization. The two organizations, LEAD and Takhleeq Foundation, are implementing system strengthening models. Whereas, the three other organizations, have been awarded for improving service delivery in their target districts. The NGOs will implement pilot programs in eleven districts of NWFP, Balochistan, and Sindh. These districts are Jaffarabad, Kech/Turba, Lasbela, Khuzdar, Zhob, Buner, Dir Upper, Swabi, Ghotki, and Sanghar.

With award of round two, award process of grants program is complete. In total twelve grants have been awarded to cover 18 districts. The grants orientation session provided grants recipients from *round two* with a general overview on TACMIL Health Project, followed by presentations on financial and programmatic reporting formats, monitoring and evaluation and US government mandatory requirement for family planning programs. This session provided the grantees an opportunity to present their proposed activities, which include:

- Strengthen health system through capacity building of Health Management Committees at district, tehsil and union council levels to improve referral mechanism and awareness. Also, formation of Community Support Groups and Health Watch Networks to increase accountability and improving service delivery.
- Strengthening public private partnership through; reactivation of CCBs, linkage development between communities and health service providers, developing capacity of stakeholders and mobilizing communities for improving referral mechanism to reduce first and third delay factors and malnourishment of child-bearing age women.
- Strengthen district health management system by addressing first delay (delay in decision) and third delay (emergency service delivery) in seeking care of a full term pregnancy also improving mother neonatal and child health service through awareness raising and sensitization, improving referral mechanism, and capacity building of health care providers of public health facilities.

- Strengthening district health management by establishing Community Support Groups (CSG) for awareness raising programs on health and hygiene, referral mechanism and capacitating public and private health care providers for overcoming three delays (delay in decision, non availability of transport and emergency service) delivery and hence reducing the chances of pregnancy related mortality and morbidity at grass-root level.
- Strengthen health management system through networks of public and private health facilities, capacity building of health care providers serving at public and private health facilities and advocacy to improve maternal and child health.

Dr. Zafarullah Gill gave an introduction of TACMIL Health Project and emphasized on accomplishment of objectives of the proposed pilot models. He particularly highlighted the capacity building needs of local NGO in terms of their skills, both in managerial and technical areas. Mr. Naseer Memon, Project Manager/Provincial Focal Person (Sindh), LEAD Pakistan, on behalf of all the partners thanked TACMIL Health Project for all its support. He states, with TACMIL Health Project technical assistance we were able to develop our own program for implementation. Mr. Naseer Memon, was thankful to all technical assistance provided by TACMIL right from the concept paper to the proposal development and its support for a synergistic program. Taking advantage of the occasion, he suggested that policy briefs and technical information regarding PDHS needs to be translated into local languages, and volunteered to translate essential PDHS data findings into Sindhi language.

Ms. Mary Cobb appreciated TACMILs efforts and NGOs for their work. She said that helping each other should be the primary goal of all NGOs. Furthermore, she discussed NGO's importance as most of them are working at grass-root levels to tackle problems. Ms. Mary Cobb affirmed, in exchange of technical knowledge USAID will build their capacity in finance and management.