

Integrating COVID-19 into nutrition programs on National Radio

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread rapidly across the world, changing everyday life and significantly impacting healthcare systems. Different countries were sequentially affected by the pandemic situation, with a consequent confinement of the population during different periods. To fight this unexpected pandemic most of the healthcare systems have adapted their existing resources to try to meet the enormous need to test and track people with suspected infections and to provide care to patients with COVID-19.

Helvetas Pakistan had a very good experience with Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, where importance of Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture and balanced diet was promoted under on of the SUNSAI projects. Based on the same concept, the radio platform is being used to highlight the role of nutritious diet and how it can boost your immune system against COVID-19. A number of nutritionists, doctors, health practitioners, and agrarians have been involved in sensitizing the communities throughout the country. Key messages are recorded and broadcasted repeatedly on daily basis. These messages have received huge appreciation from the listeners.

Like many other countries, the global outbreak of COVID-19 poses an enormous challenge to health services in Pakistan. The polio eradication helpline "Sehat Tahaffuz 1166" has been converted into COVID-19 helpline. The Sehat Tahaffuz 1166 call centre is increasingly becoming an important platform to listen to the concerns of people, provide correct information, and connect them to a doctor when required.

We are planning on collaborating with the Sehat Tahaffuz centre in order to incorporate the same into their response to callers seeking advice on COVID-19.