25 October, 2015 | Beirut – Despite continuing conflict, declining immunization rates in conflict-affected areas and mass population displacement, no new polio cases have been reported in the Middle East for over 18 months, and experts believe the extensive multi-country outbreak response has been effective in stopping the outbreak.

The outbreak, which was detected when a case of polio was confirmed in northern Syria, paralysed 36 children in Syria and 2 in Iraq between October 2013 and April 2014, prompting fears of a major epidemic. In what has become the largest ever immunization response in the history of the Middle East, more than 70 mass immunization campaigns were implemented in 8 countries, aimed at reaching 27 million children with vaccine multiple times, and more than 200 million doses of vaccine were given.

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