A child under five years old receives polio drops. WHO/R. Almosoukar 4 December 2014 | Efforts to vaccinate more than 1 million children under-five in Jordan and 2.9 million children under-five across the Syrian Arab Republic against polio wrap up today.

The synchronized vaccination campaigns in November were part of a crucial multicountry effort to eliminate polio in the Middle East, after the incurable disease made a return to the region in 2013.

During 2013, 35 cases of polio were confirmed in Syria, and in 2014, one case was confirmed in Syria and two cases in Iraq.

Multiple synchronized vaccination rounds across the region have prevented a major epidemic of polio, but there is more work to be done to ensure that all children at risk are reached with repeated doses of the polio vaccine.

Ongoing efforts are focused on the need to reach children who have been displaced by the violence in Iraq and Syria, and who may have missed out on previous vaccination campaigns because of heavy fighting.

The year-long response to the outbreak has been characterized by coordinated and sustained partnerships between governments of infected and at-risk countries, United Nations organizations, and local and international nongovernmental organizations, focused on

protecting children from this crippling disease.

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