

In Pakistan, internally displaced persons leaving North Waziristan are able to protect their children against polio for the first time in two years.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which marks its 25th anniversary on 20 November, defines the right of each child to survive and develop to their full potential.

In North Waziristan, Pakistan, bans on immunization have meant that children have not had access to polio vaccine since July 2012. North Waziristan is one of the last reservoirs of the virus.

“The militants banned vaccination in their strongholds and would punish anyone in public if they were found vaccinating children,” said Salman Shah, a teenage boy, whose studies in political science were interrupted by the unrest.

This summer, military campaigns in North Waziristan caused over a million people to leave the area to protect their families. As unvaccinated people moved out of the area, the fear grew that this would offer the virus a chance to regain a hold in other areas of the country.

However, the Government of Pakistan and the partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, including WHO, have taken steps to reach displaced families at permanent vaccination points as they leave North Waziristan and in the host communities in which they settle.

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