

# Afghanistan Polio Update



## AT A GLANCE:

- 3 new wild poliovirus (WPV1) cases this quarter—9 cases in 2016
- A vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) has been detected in Paktika province
- Over 9.5 million children targeted during National Immunization Days (NIDs) campaign on 29 August - 2 September
- 1 additional case response campaign conducted in Paktika
- 2,137 AFP cases reported in 2016
- 42 environmental samples from 14 sites collected this quarter
- 281 permanent transit teams and 17 cross-border vaccination points vaccinating children on the move
- Afghanistan-Pakistan Cross-border meeting conducted in September in Islamabad
- Afghanistan's national cricket team supports the fight against polio

## VACCINE STOCK:

### Vaccines required in 2016

⇒ **94.7 million** doses

### Vaccines procured in 2016

⇒ **87.96 million** doses

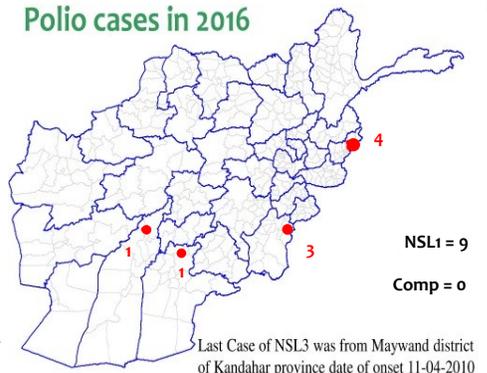
## POLIO CASES:

Afghanistan reported three wild poliovirus (WPV1) cases in the third quarter of 2016, all from the Bermel district of Paktika province in the South-eastern region. This brings the total number of WPV1 cases in Afghanistan to 9 this year as a WPV case reported in Kabul in August was confirmed negative upon further testing.

WPV1 transmission is localized in a small geographical area of Kunar province in the East, northern parts of Helmand and Kandahar in the South and Bermel district of Paktika in the South-east. The total number of AFP cases reported in 2016 is 2,137.

A vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) has been detected from a child with acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) from Bermel district in Paktika in September. Initial genetic sequencing of the isolated strain indicates that it is a new emergence. The global standard operating procedures for VDPV are being implemented.

### Polio cases in 2016



## IMMUNIZATION CAMPAIGNS:

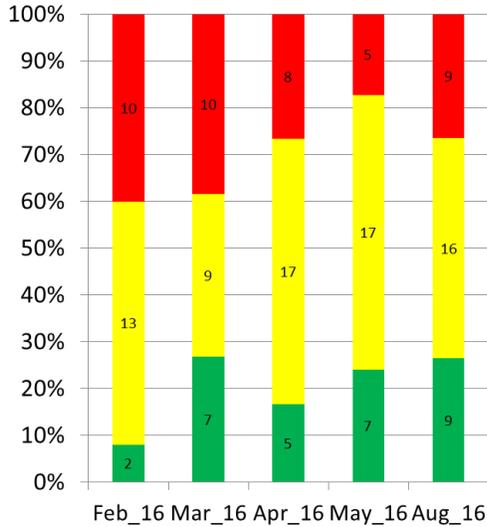
- ◆ Sub-national Immunization Days (SNIDs) were conducted in July-August in high-risk areas of the country, targeting 5.5 million children under 5 years of age.
- ◆ National Immunization Days (NIDs) were successfully completed from 29 August to 2 September, targeting over 9.5 million children under the age of 5.
- ◆ 1 additional case response campaign was conducted in Paktika province in September, targeting 171,142 children.
- ◆ IPV campaigns were conducted in four districts in Kandahar, targeting 59,236 children aged 4 months to 5 years.
- ◆ The number of permanent transit teams (PTTs) increased from 264 in May to 281 in September—PTTs vaccinated over 2.7 million children under the age of 5 during the quarter while cross-border teams vaccinated over 245,000 children under the age of 10.
- ◆ 30 special teams are vaccinating Afghan returnees at UNHCR and IOM centres with OPV and IPV: monthly coverage has increased from 66 children in January 2016 to nearly 25,000 children in September 2016. During the quarter, the teams vaccinated over 55,000 returnee children with OPV and 4,900 with IPV.



Photo: WHO/S.Rambo

## QUALITY OF SUPPLEMENTARY IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITIES

### LQAS—Very High-Risk Districts



Lot Quality Assessment Sampling (LQAS) data shows improvements in the quality of supplementary immunization activities in very high-risk districts (VHRDs) over the past 6 months.



Photos: WHO/J.Jalali

National Immunization Days campaign in Kunar province

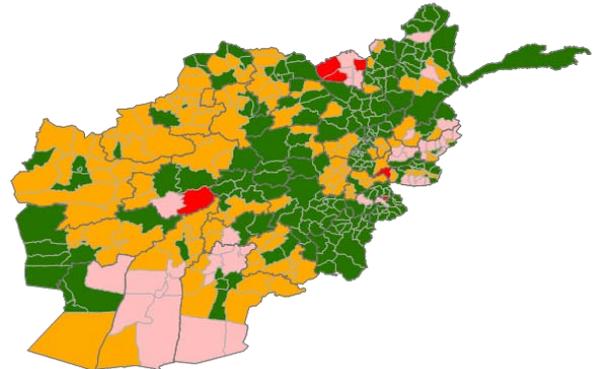
■ Accept at 90%    ■ Accept at 80%    ■ Rejected at 80%

## ACCESSIBILITY

### Inaccessible Children: January-August 2016

Region	Jan LPDs	Feb SNID	Mar NID	Apr SNID	May NID	Aug VHR D	Aug NID
East	41,744	22,938	25,869	30,555	131,781	73,355	71,085
North	0	0	0	0	3,376	0	0
NE	65,584	97,998	146,810	106,281	165,333	101,434	197,192
South	12,335	7,079	11,684	56,662	22,811	49,403	28,798
SE	0	380	0	380	400	1,215	12,101
West	0	0	0	0	0	132,806	38,260
Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>119,663</b>	<b>128,395</b>	<b>184,363</b>	<b>193,878</b>	<b>323,701</b>	<b>358,213</b>	<b>347,507</b>

### SIA Implementation/Accessibility: August NIDs (29 August - 2 September)



Legend: Campaign not planned (White), Not accessible (Red), Partially accessible (Pink), Implemented with limitations (Yellow), Implemented with no limitations (Green)



Photo: WHO/J.Jalali

Vaccinators in Kandahar during NIDs in September

The number of inaccessible children varies from campaign to campaign due to the changing security situation on the ground.

The security and access situation has deteriorated over the past year. Overall 347,507 children were not reached during the August NID campaign due to lack of access, mainly in the Eastern and North-eastern regions. The number of inaccessible children increased by over 30,000 from May NIDs to August NIDs in the North-eastern region. Over 12,000 children were missed in the South-eastern region during August NIDs, compared to 400 in May. There has been an improvement in the access situation in the East with around 71,000 children being inaccessible in August NIDs, compared to over 131,000 in May NIDs.

## POLIO SURVEILLANCE

- ◆ 42 environmental samples from 14 sites located in five provinces of Southern, Eastern and Central Regions have been collected and sent to the laboratory in good condition during this quarter.
- ◆ A total of 126 samples have been collected in 2016 and laboratory results have been received for 112 samples—none of the samples are positive for WPV/VPV.
- ◆ Afghanistan is maintaining very high levels of surveillance with a non-polio AFP (NPAFP) rate of over 10, stool adequacy above 80%, and non-polio enterovirus (NPEV) rate above 10% in all regions. The quality of surveillance capability is comparable across access categories.

### AFP Surveillance: Quality Key Indicators

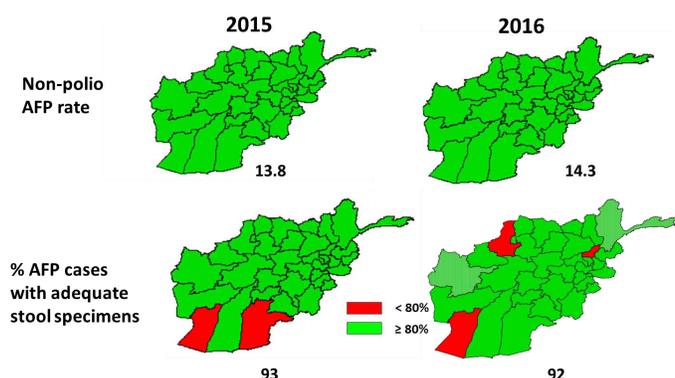


Photo: WHO/ A. Baidar

## TAG Commends Afghanistan's Progress in Polio Eradication



“Afghanistan has seen significant progress in polio eradication. We acknowledge the extremely challenging situation in Afghanistan and appreciate the hard work done by all involved in the polio programme”

(TAG Chairman Jean-Marc Olive)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on polio eradication convened in Kabul in July to review Afghanistan's progress in polio eradication, provide recommendations for intensifying efforts to stop the circulation of wild poliovirus and endorse the National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) for Polio for 2016–2017.

The TAG noted that Afghanistan has witnessed significant progress in its polio eradication programme as demonstrated by polio epidemiology, improvements in population immunity and the quality of supplementary immunization activities and vaccination campaigns. The TAG highlighted that if the programme can continue consolidating the key interventions and fully implementing the NEAP 2016-17, the target to stop transmission within the current year seems possible. Read more about the TAG meeting [here](#).

## Afghanistan-Pakistan Cross-border Meeting

The polio teams of Afghanistan and Pakistan met in Islamabad on 21 September 2016 to discuss common challenges and issues faced by both countries in efforts to eradicate polio. During the meeting, the teams reviewed the status in the common polio reservoirs and carried out joint planning to address outbreaks. Operational discussions among regional and district teams led to an agreement on further strengthening of common strategies during upcoming campaigns as well as the optimal vaccination of high-risk mobile populations, including returnees, refugees and internally displaced persons. Both country teams re-committed to timely and effective information sharing at all the levels, especially related to cross-notification of AFP cases.



## Afghanistan's Cricket Team Supports the Fight against Polio

Photo: WHO/S.Ramo



In Afghanistan information about polio vaccination is usually delivered to families at their front door by thousands of local vaccination teams. This August polio information was also shared by the country's most popular athletes directly into the homes of millions through TV and radio. That's because the Afghan Cricket Board (ACB) chose to make polio eradication the theme of their annual two-week "Spageeza" tournament, Afghanistan's premiere sporting event which had a daily viewership of about ten million, most viewers living in the east and southeast of the country.

Before each game, in the center of the pitch, captains would each vaccinate a child and speak briefly about the importance of vaccination. Throughout matches sports commentary was peppered with information on vaccination and brief interviews with health workers. In the past year the ACB, the group that oversees professional cricket in the country, has made polio education a central part of their outreach activities.

## Harnessing the Power of Radio to Combat Polio and Childhood Diseases

For the past six months Afghanistan's polio programme has partnered with BBC Media Action to create [a weekly Pashto-language variety show](#) about polio and children's health. Aired three times a week in primetime, and re-circulated numerous times on other Afghan local radio channels, the show has been earning praise and a growing listenership. The show blends hard news, information about public health issues, and lighter fare such as short dramas, original music, and interviews with celebrities, all with an emphasis on polio and polio plus. The BBC show joins a growing list of radio programming in Pashto dedicated to raising awareness about polio and issues related to children's health, including weekly reporting by the VOA, and a daily radio soap opera called "Da Pulay Poray".



Photos: BBC Media Action

### Shafiullah Helps to Battle Refusals to Save Children from Polio Paralysis in Kandahar

Photo: WHO/Y.Khan



"I will never forgive myself or any people in my district if they allow the suffering I went through to happen to other children here," says 25-year-old Shafiullah, leaning on his blue crutches in a remote village in Kandahar province. Shafiullah works as an active volunteer advocate for polio vaccination in villages around his community. Through his persistent interaction with communities, Shafiullah has convinced 30 households to give two drops of the oral polio vaccine to their children in the past four months. This means that over 150 children have been immunized against polio because of his tireless efforts. [Read more](#)

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