

Highlights

 **2.8 million**

doses of bivalent oral polio vaccine to be delivered to Yemen in September 2021

 **14**

environmental surveillance (ES) sites are operating in seven states in Sudan.

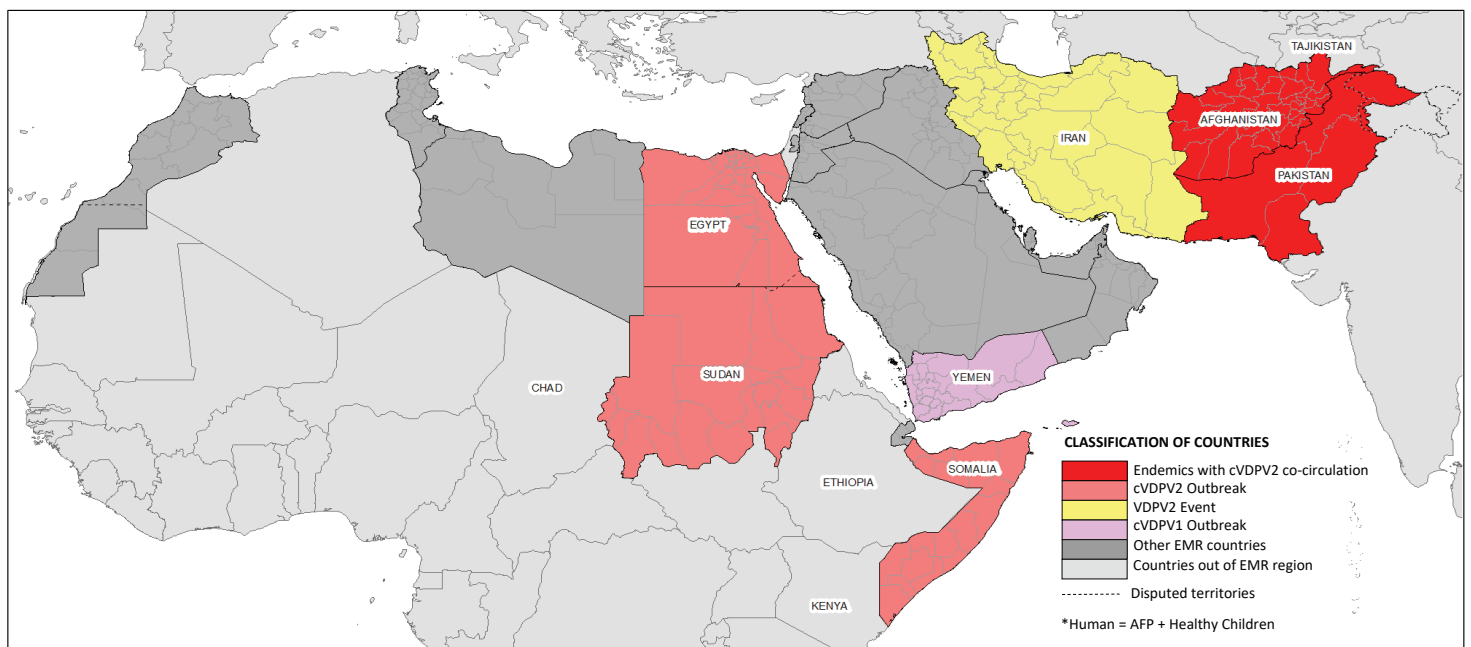
 **Eight**

countries in the EMR-MENA regions are actively involved in nOPV2 preparations: Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan.

Situation Update

- The Regional Incident Management Support Team (IMST) continues to support and coordinate country-led efforts to prepare for, respond to, and close polio outbreaks and events in countries within the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa and WHO Eastern Mediterranean regions.
- The GPEI is working with eight EMR-MENA countries to prepare for the regional first use of novel Oral Polio Vaccine type 2 (nOPV2), expected in 2021. To date, countries have submitted 73% of all nOPV2 readiness requirements, and two have completed and verified all nOPV2 readiness requirements: **Afghanistan** and **Egypt**.
- No cVDPV2 positive environmental samples have been detected in **Egypt** since the most recent detection on 8 June 2021. To date, 10 cVDPV2 samples have been isolated across six governorates. However, 56 environmental samples collected from 24 of the country's 27 governorates since 28 April 2021 have confirmed separate emergences of VDPV2.
- No cVDPV2 positive environmental samples have been reported in **Iran** since the most recent detection on 20 February 2021. To date, four cVDPV2 samples have been isolated, all from Sistan and Balochistan (S&B) province.
- No new cases of cVDPV2 have been detected in **Sudan** since the most recent detection on 18 December 2020. Fifty-eight cases were reported in 2020.
- No new cases of cVDPV1 have been detected in **Yemen** since the most recent detection on 25 March 2021. In 2021, Yemen has reported three cVDPV1 cases, all from Sa'adah governorate.

Countries in WHO's EM Region with WPV, cVDPV1 and cVDPV2 circulation 2021



Egypt:

- ES is yielding an increasing number of VDPV2 isolates. In August, the National Polio Lab reported 22 new VDPV2 isolates from 16 (previously infected) governorates. The new isolates are not genetically linked to each other or any previous VDPV2 isolates.
- A total of 865 AFP cases were reported up to week 36. The non-polio acute flaccid paralysis (NPAFP) rate is three, while the stool adequacy rate is 87.2%. This reflects a well-functioning AFP surveillance system, which is supplemented by an extensive ES network.

Iran:

- Preparation for the introduction of nOPV2 has been initiated and surveillance documents submitted for verification. The country's nOPV2 data is reflected in the regional nOPV2 dashboard.
- During August, poliovirus type 2 (PV2) was isolated from the Chabahar ES site in Chabahar city, which was included in the mOPV2 campaigns conducted in February and March 2021. Final results await sequencing in Egypt's VACSERA lab.
- A total of 451 AFP cases were reported up to week 36. The NPAFP rate is 3.2, while the stool adequacy rate is 96.2%, reflecting a well-functioning AFP surveillance system. Five sites in S&B province continue to conduct ES amid extensive population movement to and from Afghanistan.

Sudan:

- In August, the National Polio Lab team completed the ES expansion plan in White Nile, East Darfur and Gezira states, bringing the country's total ES sites to 14 in seven states. Samples will be taken from all sites on a monthly basis.
- The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), WHO and UNICEF conducted a joint mission to White Nile state to review AFP surveillance and cold chain systems and explore initiating ES at the MSF hospital in Kashafa. The mission also visited Jouri refugee camp to investigate the link between an isolate in Uganda's ES system and a case in Sudan.
- A total of 396 AFP cases were reported up to week 36. The NPAFP rate is 2.9 and stool adequacy rate is 94.9%, reflecting a well-functioning AFP surveillance system.

Yemen:

- 132 AFP samples are being tested at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) lab, while another 76 AFP samples are en route to KEMRI.
- Yemen's first environmental sample, from sewage water in Sana'a, was sent to KEMRI in early September to be tested for poliovirus.
- ES training for the southern governorates was conducted in Aden from 28-30 August 2021, with pilot specimens collected during training and set to move to KEMRI on 9 September 2021.
- A total of 522 AFP cases were reported up to week 36. The NPAFP rate is 4.8 and stool adequacy rate is 90.6%, reflecting a well-functioning AFP surveillance system.



Pilot specimens collected during environmental surveillance training for the southern governorates in Aden from 28-30 August 2021. Photo: WHO/Yemen



Egypt:

- The Outbreak Preparedness and Response Task Team (OPRTT) has approved the use of nOPV2 in Egypt in response to the cVDPV2 transmission breakthrough and wide spread of VDPV2 positive environmental samples. The WHO Director General approved the release of 20.7 million doses to conduct two rounds of national vaccination campaign, targeting 16.5 million children under age five. The two rounds are being planned in Q4 2021.
- As part of campaign preparedness for the use of nOPV2, a campaign quality workshop was conducted from 12-24 September in Cairo, Egypt. Fifty-four focal points from across all 27 governorates participated. Three WHO staff attended the workshop to provide technical support.
- UNICEF conducted a meeting with UNHCR to discuss polio NIDs and coordinate efforts to reach all non-Egyptian children under age five, including refugees and asylum seekers.



Fifty-four focal points from across all 27 governorates participated in a campaign quality workshop in Cairo as part of campaign preparedness for the use of nOPV2.

Sudan:

- The FMOH and the designated nOPV2 focal point have initiated a weekly review to follow technical teams' progress and track the status of nOPV2 readiness requirements.
- The regional office in coordination with HQ and partner agencies is conducting a virtual outbreak response assessment of the Sudan cVDPV2 outbreak. The assessment, which will commence on September 20, is aimed at reviewing surveillance, response activities, quality of SIAs and communication aspects of the outbreak response. The assessment will also include interactions with national and subnational personnel from the states' ministries of health and partner agencies.

Yemen:

- The first of three combined bOPV and measles vaccination campaigns in Sa'adah governorate will start on 15 October. The first campaign, which will be conducted through health centres, aims to reach 206,482 children under age five with bOPV and 189,244 children aged between 6 months and 5 years with measles and rubella (MR) vaccine.



Yemen:

- A new shipment of 2.8 million doses of bivalent oral polio vaccine will be delivered in September 2021, bringing the total doses in country to 4.8 million.
- Yemen has adequate vaccine capacity to implement the planned measles and polio SIAs and integrated outreach activities Sa'adah governorate.



Risk communication and community engagement

- UNICEF is working with EPI colleagues in **Egypt** to provide information, education and communication materials and personal protective equipment for the planned NIDs. UNICEF comms and C4D colleagues are also preparing social mobilization and social media plans.



Health and humanitarian situation

- To date, more than 15 million COVID-19 cases and 275,000 deaths have been reported from 22 countries across WHO's EMR since the first registered case on 29 January 2020, with **Iran's** total cases exceeding five million in early September.
- The government of **Iran** established three refugee camps in response to the movement of hundreds of people from **Afghanistan** following the shift in government. The three camps, between the Afghan cities of Herat and Zaranj and Iran's Zahidan district, each include a health post to search for AFP cases and provide polio and measles, mumps and rubella vaccination.



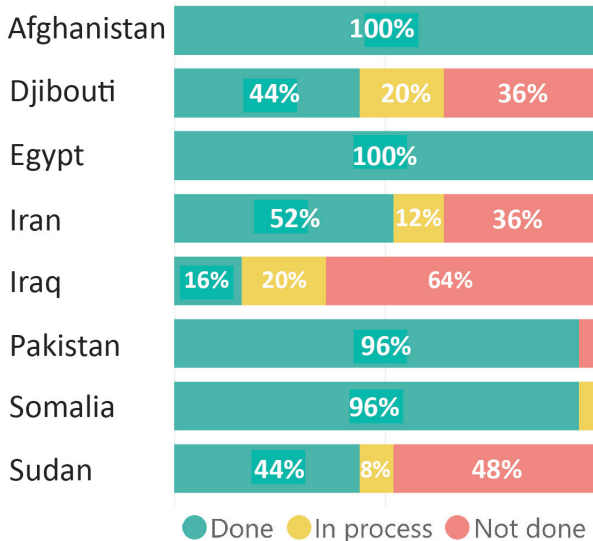
Global developments

- The twenty-ninth meeting of the Emergency Committee under International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005) was convened on 4 August 2021. The Committee highlighted significant ongoing challenges and threats to front-line polio workers, including deaths of immunization staff in Afghanistan.
- G20 health ministers reaffirmed their commitment to eradicating polio during their meeting in Rome on 5-6 September 2021. They also noted the GPEI's value in supporting COVID-19 response efforts.

nOPV2 progress update - up to week 36, 2021

The polio partnership is working with countries to prepare for the regional first use of nOPV2, expected in 2021.

Update on country-level progress



Eight

countries are preparing for nOPV2 use in the region.

67%

of all nOPV2 readiness requirements have been verified by the global verification team.

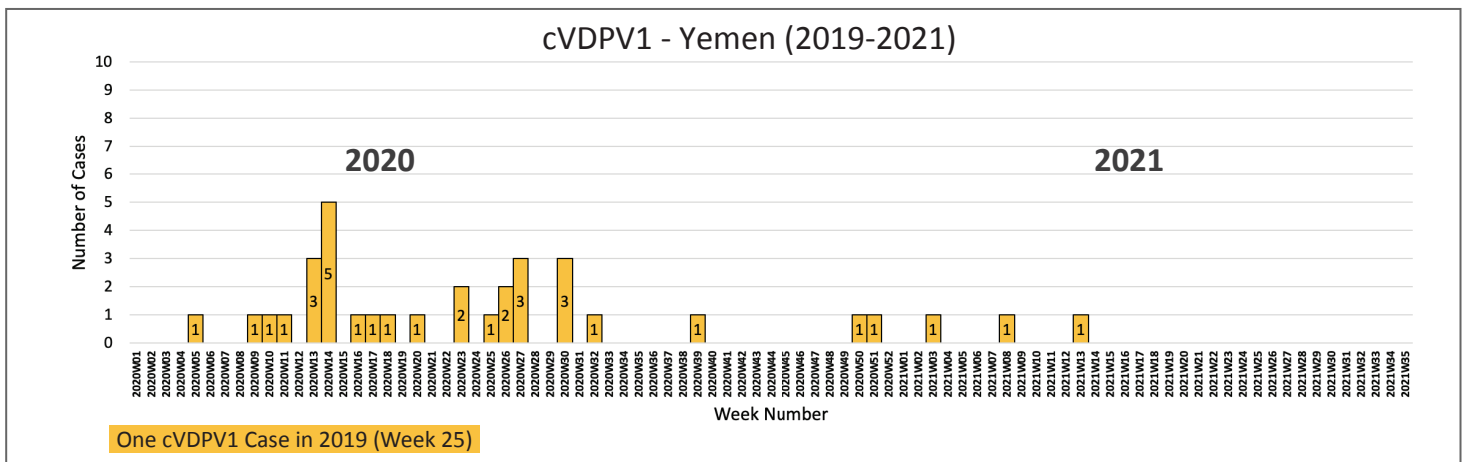
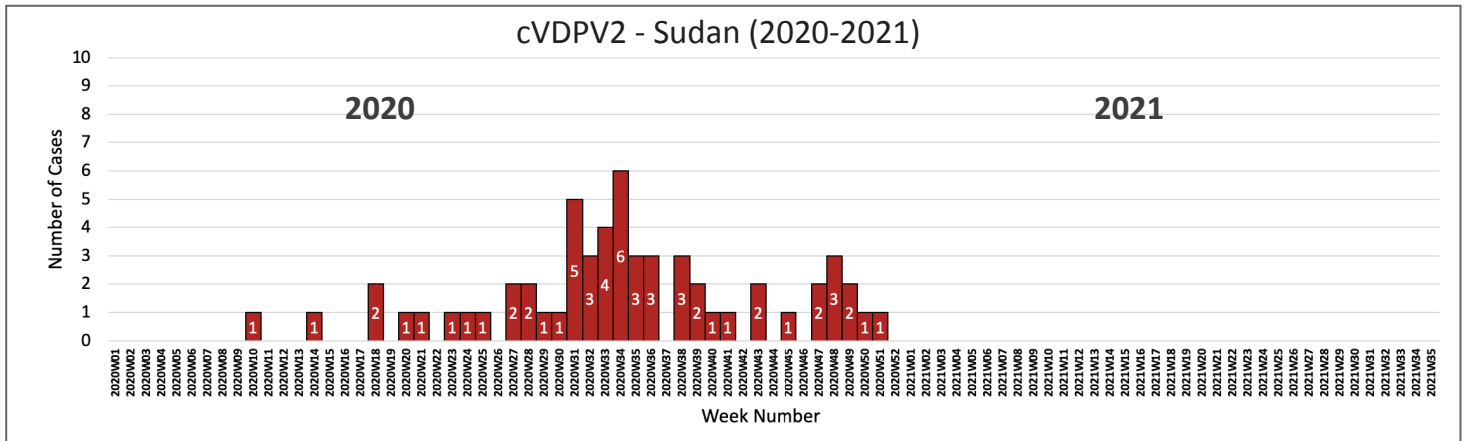
75.5%

of all nOPV2 readiness requirements have been submitted by countries.

The Regional nOPV2 Dashboard, a tool to monitor countries' progress towards nOPV2 readiness, is live.



Outbreak EPI curves



Other cVDPV2 Outbreaks in the EMR

2020

Regional cVDPV2 outbreaks				Environmental surveillance			
	Afghanistan	Pakistan	Somalia		Afghanistan	Pakistan	Somalia
	305	135	14		174	135	26
Most recent onset of paralysis	30 December 2020	24 December 2020	25 October 2020	Most recent collection	27 December 2020	28 December 2020	24 October 2020

2021

Regional cVDPV2 outbreaks			Environmental surveillance		
	Afghanistan	Pakistan		Afghanistan	Pakistan
	43	8		40	32
Most recent onset of paralysis	9 July 2021	23 April 2021	Most recent collection	23 June 2021	18 May 2021

Send questions to:

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Relevant links:

- Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) website
- Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026
- IMST outbreak dashboard
- Regional Subcommittee on Polio Eradication
- GPEI factsheet—VDPV
- Vaccine-derived polioviruses animation