

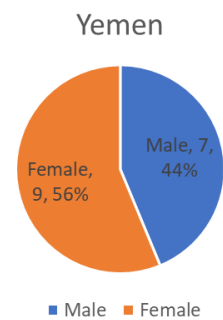
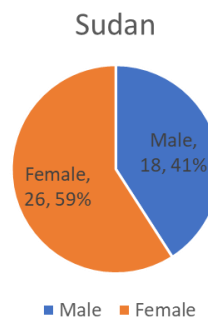


SITUATION UPDATE

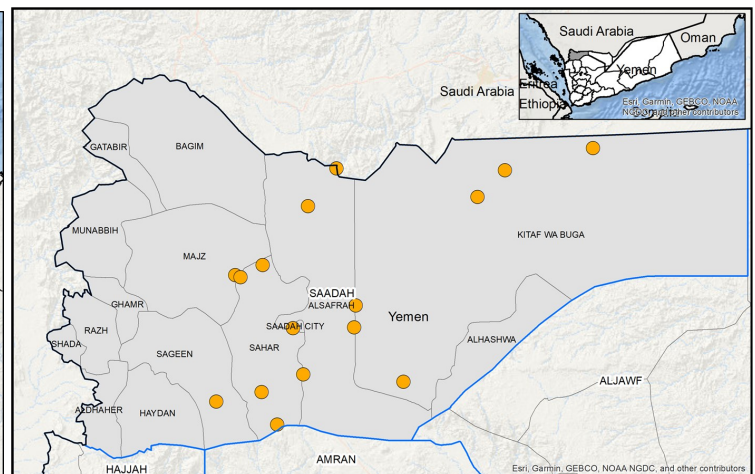
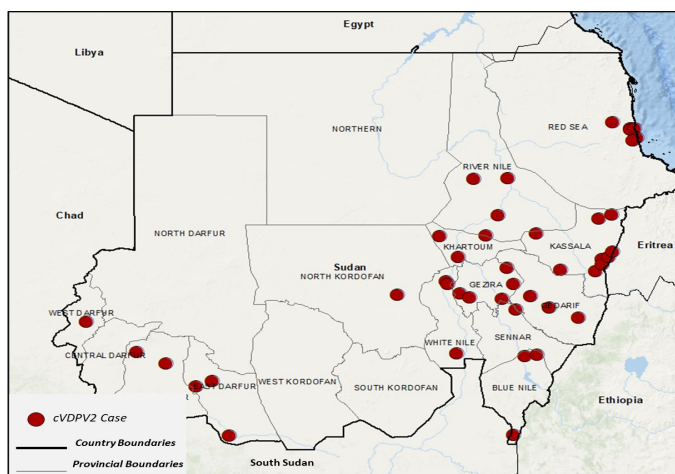
- The WHO’s Eastern Mediterranean Region and UNICEF’s Middle East North Africa region are affected by multiple outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPV).
- Five new cases of cVDPV2 have been confirmed in **Sudan**, taking the total number of children paralysed to 44 from 13 states. cVDPV2 has also been confirmed in 11 environmental samples from sites in Khartoum State collected up to September 2020.
- **Yemen** is responding to a cVDPV1 outbreak. The total number of children paralysed remains 17 (including one case from 2019), all from Sa’adah governorate. Specimen of 274 AFP cases are pending results in labs in Kenya and Oman, including specimen from an AFP case which has poliovirus type-1 isolation.
- The detection of VDPV2 in environmental sampling in **Egypt** and **Iran**, in both cases genetically linked to distinct outbreaks in neighbouring countries (Sudan and Afghanistan respectively) indicates the heightened risk of spread of VDPV2 in the region. Field investigations and risk analysis have been carried out in both countries. There is no evidence of localized transmission yet in either country. Enhanced surveillance activities are ongoing.

Details of the most recent cVDPV cases and gender distribution of cases

	Sudan: cVDPV2	Yemen: cVDPV1
Date of onset of paralysis	30 September	5 June 2020
Location	Red Sea state	Sa’adah governorate
Child age	156 months	8 months
Gender	Male	Female
Known immunization status	5 doses of OPV/ Zero IPV	Zero doses of both OPV and IPV



Distribution of cVDPV2 in Sudan and cVDPV1 in Yemen, 2020



Surveillance:

Sudan:

- Of the new cVDPV2 cases, two were reported from Kassala state and one case each from Gezira state, River Nile state and Red Sea state. Dates of onset vary between 17-30 September 2020.
- Three new positive environmental samples were reported from Khartoum state.
- An additional seven (7) AFP cases, five (5) contacts and three (3) environmental samples, all of which have detected poliovirus type 2 are pending in the lab.

Yemen:

- Specimen of 274 AFP cases are pending for testing in KEMRI and Oman national polio lab. These include specimen from an AFP case which has poliovirus type-1 isolation and is pending for final results.
- Despite the challenging context, the surveillance system in **Yemen** remains highly sensitive. In 2020, both indicators are meeting global standards required for certification. In Sa'adah governorate, the non-polio AFP rate target is being met with 3 per 100,000 children less than 15 years reported, and 80% of cases reported have 2 stool samples collected, both reaching the lab in a good condition.
- WHO continues to work towards equipping **Yemen** with a direct poliovirus detection unit to be stationed at CPHL in **Yemen**, which would avoid shipping specimens abroad.
- Additionally, WHO is working towards expansion of the environmental surveillance system in four governorates (initially) in 2020.

Egypt:

- Since the detection of VDPV2 in the environment, the **Egypt** MOH has increased surveillance for polioviruses including active search for AFP cases, healthy children sampling and increased collection from several environmental surveillance sites. *To date there has been no further evidence of circulation.*
- The MOH has also expanded the target of a fractional IPV (fIPV) campaign, which began in July and August of this year. All children under five years of age of any nationality are eligible to receive the vaccination. In addition, with the support of UNHCR and other NGOs, children of any nationality can access polio vaccines at all EPI centres in **Egypt**, free of charge and without documentation.
- The national surveillance cell has intensified active surveillance visits AFP active search in all districts of greater Cairo. To date, no missed cases have been reported by the field staff.
- Orientation sessions for physicians are underway in all major hospitals. Briefings include a regional update on VDPV2 outbreaks in the region and focus on awareness of AFP detection and early reporting.
- Both the **Sudan** and **Egypt** Ministries of Health started direct communication on response to VDPV2 in both countries including population movement and vaccination response.

Iran:

- Enhanced surveillance activities are being implemented following the detection of VDPV2 from an environmental sample from Sistan and Balochistan province, bordering **Afghanistan**. Activities include healthy children sampling and additional environmental surveillance.
 - Stool specimens were collected from a survey of 21 healthy children in Zabol district. The lab results of all healthy children stool samples were negative for VDPV2
 - An additional environmental sample from Zabol was collected on 30 October. Results were also negative for VDPV2.
 - Active surveillance and household visits to check immunization status and travel history have been heightened as part of field investigations. More than 6000 (Iranian and non-Iranian) households have been visited in Sistan and Balochistan province, with less than 50 children found to have missed their last vaccination. Teams provided catch-up vaccinations on site.
- The National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) met on 7 November, concluding that response efforts should focus on strengthening surveillance in all provinces and a catch-up IPV campaign.

Health and Humanitarian Context:

- The programme is working to procure enough fuel for the upcoming vaccination campaign in **Sudan**, amidst rising costs and shortages.

- WHO and UNICEF are responding to multiple emergencies in **Sudan**, including risks presented by malaria, flooding and COVID-19.
- UN OCHA has released the latest [Yemen Humanitarian Update](#) for October 2020, which outlines key humanitarian emergencies affecting the country.
- **Sudan** has seen a fivefold increase in COVID-19 cases since the beginning of November, up from around ten cases per day to around 50 cases a day. **Yemen** continues to report low numbers of COVID-19 cases, however, this is likely to reflect under-reporting.
- Clashes in **Ethiopia's** Tigray region have forced thousands of people to flee to **Sudan**. The programme has initially estimated around 20,000 children of vaccination age to be among the refugees, however more are expected to cross over into the country in the coming weeks. **Sudan's** EPI is planning to provide polio vaccinations alongside other routine vaccinations. All new arrivals under the age of five years are being included in the operational plan for the upcoming campaign.

REGIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

- Falling immunity to type 2 polioviruses, weak routine immunization, disruptions to health services due to the COVID-19 pandemic, access challenges and population movement are named as key contributing factors for the rising risk of cVDPV spread in the region.
- Vaccination response activities are being discussed in **Iran** and **Egypt** following detection of VDPV2 in the environment (however, without evidence of local transmission, both are still considered Events).
- **Djibouti** will carry out a bOPV campaign in November and is considering vaccination response options with an OPV2 containing vaccine given the geographical proximity to existing outbreaks of cVDPV2 in areas of **Somalia** and **Ethiopia**, of which share borders with **Djibouti**.

Regional coordination:

- The regional polio IMST (WHO/UNICEF) continues to convene coordination calls with the GPEI Outbreak Preparedness and Response Task Team (OPRTT) and with country counterparts from GPEI agencies and the Ministries of Health to provide technical support and guidance.
- WHO is supporting efforts to enhance cross border coordination among countries affected by the expanding cVDPV2 outbreaks in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and African Region. A coordination meeting between the **Chad**, **South Sudan** and **Sudan** Ministries of Health was convened on 9 November where countries agreed to meet monthly and boost efforts to strengthen surveillance and immunization coverage.

Case Response Preparedness and Implementation update:

- Around 8.6 million children under five will be reached in **Sudan's** first nationwide vaccination campaign using mOPV2, which will now take place between 21-24 November.
 - State-level Training of Trainers (TOTs) sessions have been completed in all states and cascaded trainings will commence after funds are received by the state this week.
 - The availability of fuel and increased cost of transportation remains a key operational challenge for the campaign. Efforts continue at national and state levels for additional support from humanitarian partners and agencies for transportation during the campaign.
- **Yemen** continues to prepare for the first of several vaccination rounds in response to the outbreak. A nationwide campaign, excluding Sa'adah governorate, will begin on 21 November.
 - Children in Sa'adah governorate will be reached through integrated outreach activities that will provide vaccines (OPV, MR, Diphtheria and routine EPI antigens) as well nutrition and WASH interventions, Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) services and medical camps.
 - Non-vaccine supplies (finger markers and personal protective equipment) has arrived and distribution to district level is ongoing.
 - Around 350 participants have completed the national and governorate level monitoring training. Governorate level operational training will commence this week.
 - A microplanning desk review exercise is underway. All issues to arise from the review will be addressed during in team level trainings in the coming weeks.

Vaccine logistics:

Sudan:

- Vaccine (mOPV) and other campaign supplies have been released to all states ahead of the campaign. Supply distribution from states to localities began on 9 November and will reach all service points before the campaign begins.

Yemen:

- Additional vaccines required for the first vaccination round arrived in Aden on 16 November, and a shipment is scheduled to arrive in Sana'a on 17 November.
- The vaccine distribution plan from the national level is in place. UNICEF will support the distribution of vaccines and other cold chain logistics using refrigerated trucks. UNICEF is supporting governorates with proper receipt of vaccine, storage and distribution to districts and health facilities.
- UNICEF has distributed hand sanitizer to all governorates for the campaign to ensure strict COVID-19 prevention measures are adhered to.
- The UNICEF country office taskforce, chaired by the Representative, continues to meet weekly to monitor the polio outbreak response.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement:

Sudan:

- UNICEF is supporting enhanced coordination between Health Promotion and EPI at the state level through coordination meetings held as part of the polio outbreak response. The meetings are important engagement activities, emphasizing the essential role of health promoters in sensitizing the community and religious leaders, women, and youth groups on the upcoming polio vaccination campaign.
- UNICEF continues to build partnerships for community engagement with the **Sudan** Ministry of Health and Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS). 3000 SRCS volunteer community mobilizers will support health promotion activities for the first round.
- UNICEF is also partnering with *Internews* on community rumour management and media monitoring during the campaign.
- The development of an online database that hosts EPI communication materials and will be made available to EPI units across Sudan is underway. The site will include materials to support development of Interpersonal Communication (IPC), advocacy and social behavior change for polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.



Training of Trainers sessions for social mobilization continued this week. Teams pictured are from Blue Nile state. Photo: UNICEF Sudan.

Yemen:

- Social Mobilization microplans for 14 northern governorates have been developed in partnership with national health authorities. Almost 13,000 social mobilizers (community volunteers, religious leaders and school facilitators) will be deployed for 10 days to mobilize communities around the vaccination round.
- Messages in support of polio vaccination and informing communities about the upcoming campaign have been highlighted through ongoing community engagement activities, including during mosque sessions, community meetings, Mother-to-Mother club sessions and through mass media.
- A rapid assessment will be conducted in four governorates (Sa'adah, Amran, Al Jawf and Hajjah) to support the development of tools for training of health workers, community volunteers and media for the planned outreach activities in response to the outbreak.
- Social mobilization and community engagement activities, focused on polio, are ongoing. Local radio is broadcasting community service messages on polio and vaccination in coordination with the Sa'adah Government Health Office (GHO), while Community Volunteers engage the community on the ground.
- Field offices in Sana'a and Hodieda are finalizing all GHO and Ministry of Endowment social mobilization and communication plans.
- UNICEF's Aden field office is supporting the implementation of activities for the campaign in the south, coordinating through Health Education Centre and with 10 Communication for Development (C4D) partners.

Other cVDPV2 outbreaks in the EMR:

Regional
cVDPV2
outbreaks
Most recent
onset of paralysis

AFGHANISTAN
 **136**
23 September 2020

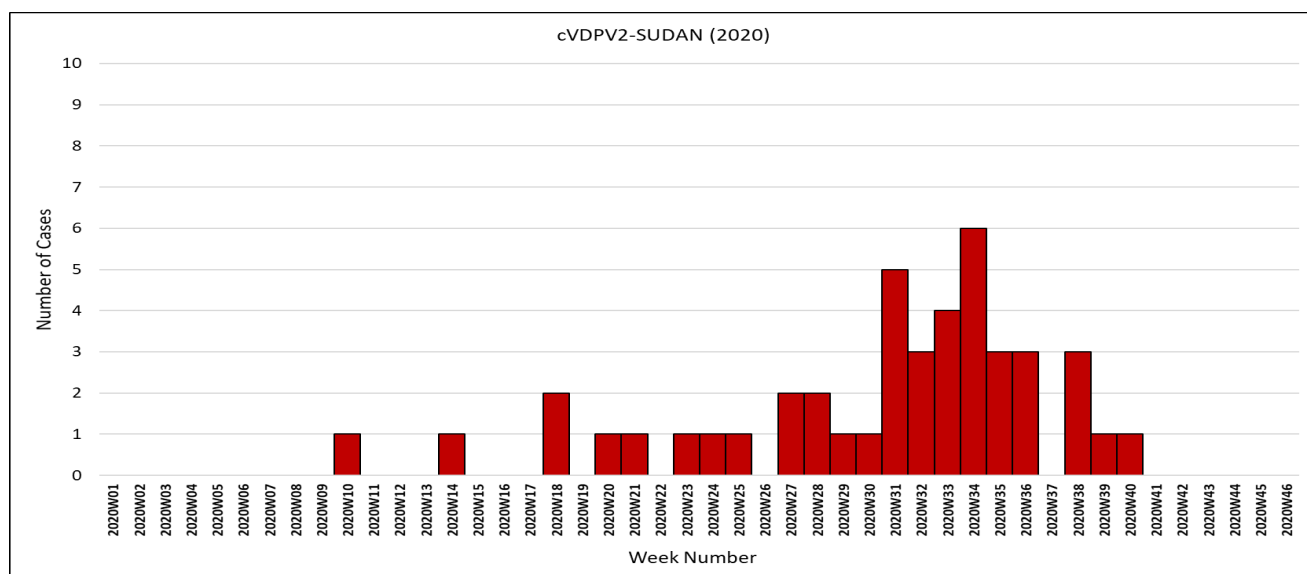
PAKISTAN
 **83**
23 September 2020

SOMALIA
 **11**
30 September 2020

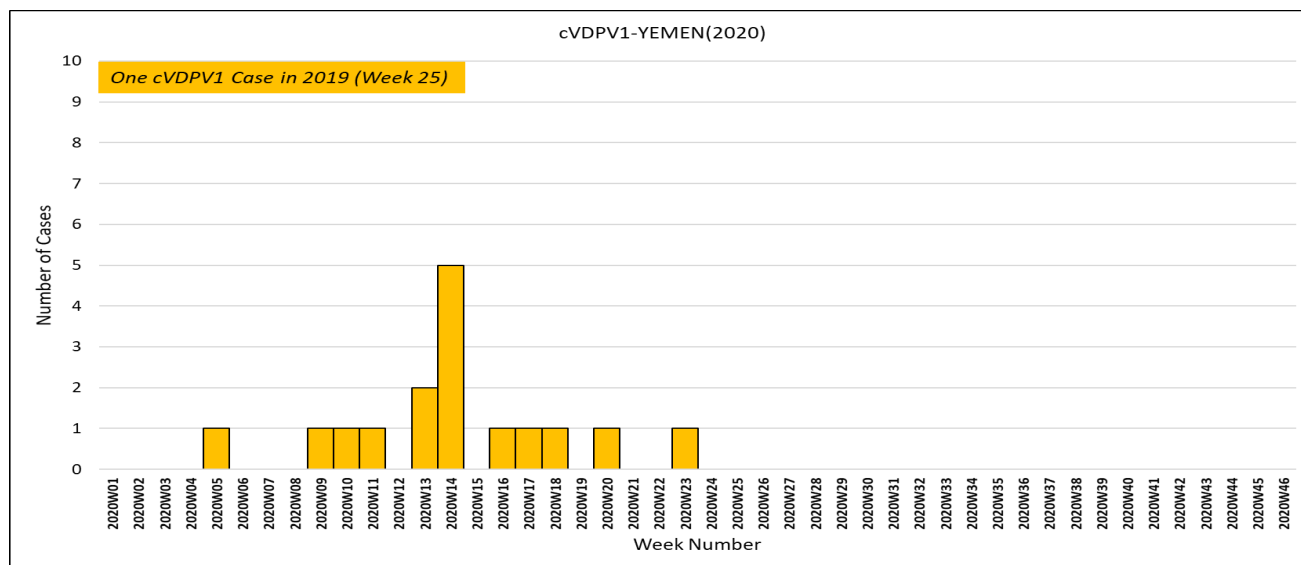


AFG: 104 **PAK: 71** **SOM: 25**
6 September 28 September 26 September

OUTBREAK EPI CURVES



For more detail, the Sudan country level situation report is available [here](#).



Send questions to:

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UNICEF:

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Relevant links:

- [Global Polio Eradication Initiative \(GPEI\) website](#), updated weekly
- **WATCH:**
- [Vaccine-derived polioviruses animation](#)
- [Responding to an outbreak of VDPV video](#)
- [GPEI factsheet—VDPV](#)
- [What is vaccine-derived polio?](#)