Somalia continues to respond to concurrent outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 and type 3.

No new cVDPV type 2 or type 3 cases have been confirmed this week. The last confirmed case was of type 3 in a five month old child who had never previously been vaccinated against polio.

The total number of cVDPV cases remains 12: five cVDPV2, six cVDPV3 and one case of a child with a coinfection of cVDPV2 and cVDPV3 virus.

There are nine poliovirus isolates awaiting sequencing in the lab: five from environmental samples, one from an AFP case and three from AFP contact samples.

**World Polio Day** was commemorated with events including television and radio roundtables on polio and the benefits of childhood immunization, and initiatives to encourage parents, government and health authorities as well as frontline workers, social mobilizers and technical experts to take ‘bold steps’ to eradicate polio.
Immunization Response

- Efforts continue to refine strategies for strengthening immunization activities to reach populations in and around inaccessible areas and those high risk groups such as internally displaced and nomadic populations.
- The World Health Organization and UNICEF continue to work with the Ministry of Health and local partners to improve outbreak responsiveness and timely sharing of data sharing at the District, Regional and National levels.

**cVDPV2**

- Results from UNICEF community and household risk assessment surveys conducted around the cVDPV2 cases in Faanole and Calanleey IDP camps indicate high community acceptance of routine and polio immunization efforts and is consistently accessible for polio teams. Surveys also revealed that medical doctors, nurses, health service providers and community mobilizers were main sources of information, while they also inspired the greatest trust (based on responses of 34 households surveyed).
- An additional round of mOPV2 is planned to commence on 19 November 2018 in accessible areas of South and Central zones in response to the ongoing circulation of cVDPV2. Results from the community and household risk assessment will inform the upcoming campaign.

**cVDPV3**

- Analysis of the post-campaign monitoring of the second bOPV round indicate that household awareness of the campaign was high (95% of those surveyed).
- A third round of the bOPV campaign will be conducted at the end of the October (29-1) targeting all accessible areas of the country. Regional vaccination teams have shifted from district-based microplans to settlement-based microplans, to improve the reach of the upcoming campaigns and identify every child for vaccination. The next campaign will give high priority to the High risk group such IDPs and nomadic groups.
- High potency Vitamin A capsules will be included in the upcoming bOPV round.

**Vaccine Management**

- Automatic Voltage Regulators have been purchased for the second backup generator in Mogadishu, to ensure safe vaccine storage for both supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) of the outbreak response and regular routine immunization (RI).
- Monitoring of cold chain functionality is happening weekly at the facility level and bi-weekly through AFP surveillance activities.
- All three zonal cold chain hubs have received sufficient bOPV ahead of the third nationwide campaign in response to ongoing detection of cVDPV3.
- Somaliland and all zonal cold chain hubs have sufficient capacity to store and freeze the ice packs for upcoming campaigns.
- mOPV2 disposal guidelines are being translated into local languages to ensure strict adherence to global guidelines.

**Communication for Development**

- Updated polio C4D strategy is under development, to be ready by mid-November, taking into account challenges and gaps identified in recent review meeting in Hargeisa.
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials are ready and available ahead of the upcoming bOPV round planned to commence on 29 October.
- World Polio Day (24 October) saw awareness-raising initiatives including a joint letter from UNICEF and WHO thanking government and health authorities, frontline workers, social mobilizers and technical experts for their work and encouraging all to take ‘bold steps’ to end polio. Messaging in support of immunization included a TV/radio roundtable discussion dubbed “Shai with Polio Experts”, broadcasted in Somaliland and Mogadishu.
Surveillance

- A total of 283 acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) cases have been detected in Somalia since the beginning of 2018. A breakdown of where cases have been reported from show a split between urban (45%) and rural populations (38%), while nomadic communities account for only 17%.

- Somalia continues to carry out supplementary surveillance activities to enhance the programme’s ability to detect virus circulation, including weekly environmental sampling from five sites and community sampling from healthy children and contacts of AFP cases.

- In the last week no new environmental positive samples have been reported. A total of 23 positive samples have been collected since the beginning of 2018.

- Of the total 426 community samples collected from healthy children in 2018, 55% were collected from accessible and the rest 45% were from access-compromised areas.

- All regions except for one are reaching both key indicators for AFP surveillance: 3* or more NPAFP cases per 100,000 children below 15 years of age, and 80 percent or above AFP cases with adequate specimens. Banadir region (2.6) is not meeting the non-polio AFP (NPAFP) rate, which helps to measure the incidence of AFP caused by diseases other than poliomyelitis and is an indicator for surveillance sensitivity.

- Field surveillance teams are now field testing and using new enhanced surveillance tools developed during a program review meeting in Hargeisa last week.

- State Surveillance Officers have been added to the programme’s field surveillance capacity in Somalia and are now in place working at state level.

*NPAFP target in an outbreak setting is 3 per 100,000 children below 15 years of age

Relevant Links

- Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) website, updated weekly.
- Vaccine-derived polioviruses video
- Responding to an outbreak of VDPV video
- What is vaccine-derived polio?
- GPEI factsheet—VDPV

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