

# Syria cVDPV2 outbreak Situation Report # 2

27 June 2017

## cVDPV2 isolates in Deir Ez-Zor and Raqqa governorates, Syria, 2017



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Source: Syrian Arab Republic, Administrative map, DFS, United Nations 2012

### Background

- Twenty-two (22) cases of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type-2 (cVDPV2) have been confirmed in Syria —21 cases are from Mayadeen (Al Mayadin) district, Deir Ez-Zor (Dayr Az Zawr) governorate, and 1 case from Raqqa (Ar Raqqah) district, Raqqa (Ar Raqqah) governorate. The most recent case had onset of paralysis on 25 May.
- In response to the outbreak, the Syrian Ministry of Health together with WHO, UNICEF and other health actors are planning to conduct two immunization rounds in Deir Ez-Zor with monovalent oral polio vaccine type-2 (mOPV2), targeting 328,000 children under five years of age. Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) will be used in the second round targeting 114,500 children aged between 2-24 months. The first round is expected to commence at latest by 8 July.
- The total number of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) cases detected in Deir Ez-Zor governorate since the beginning of 2017 is 66 (55 from Mayadeen; 6 from Deir Ez-Zor and 5 from Boukamal). Raqqa governorate has reported 10 AFP cases (5 each from Raqqa and Talabyad) since the beginning of the year.

### Response highlights

- The national response plan has been finalized and implementation has started. Response task forces in the Damascus and Gaziantep hubs have prepared vaccination campaign micro-plans.
- Arrangement of delivery of mOPV2 is finalized. Vaccines are expected to arrive

### Summary

New cVDPV cases this week: 5  
 Total number of cVDPV cases: 22  
 Outbreak grade: 3

### Index case

Onset of paralysis: 3 March 2017  
 Location: Mayadeen, Deir Ez-Zor  
 Age: 22 months  
 Vaccination status: 2 OPV doses  
 22 nt divergence from Sabin

### Most recent cases

#### Mayadeen

Onset of paralysis: 25 May 2017, age: 16 months, vaccination status: 4 OPV/ zero IPV, 27 nt divergence from Sabin

#### Raqqa

Onset of paralysis: 3 May 2017, age: 14 months, vaccination status: 4 OPV doses and one IPV

### Extent of outbreak

Mayadeen and Raqqa districts

### Immunization response

First round expected to commence at latest by 8 July 2017

### Characteristics of the cVDPV2 cases

Median age: 14 months  
 Gender ratio male-female: 1:1.2  
 Vaccination status of the cases:  
 · IPV: 4 cases (18%) received IPV  
 · OPV: 45% zero dose, 32% have received 1-2 doses

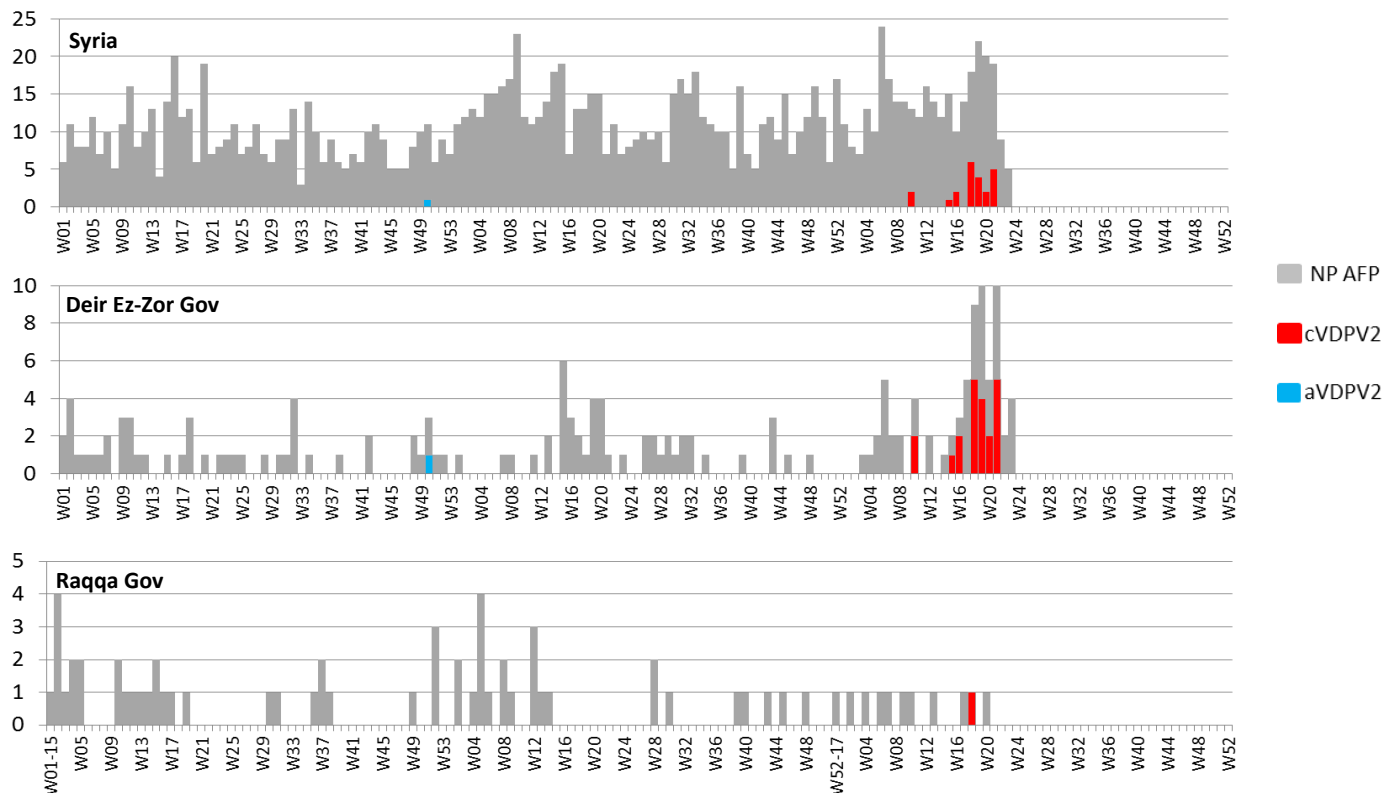
### Distribution of non-polio AFP (NPAFP) and vaccine-derived poliovirus type-2 (VDPV2), Deir Ez-Zor and Raqqa governorates, 2017

Gov.	Deir Ez-Zor		Raqqa	
	NPAFP	VDPV2	NPAFP	VDPV2
Jan	2		2	
Feb	11		3	
Mar	6	2	1	
Apr	13	3	2	
May	29	16	2	1
Jun	5			
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>

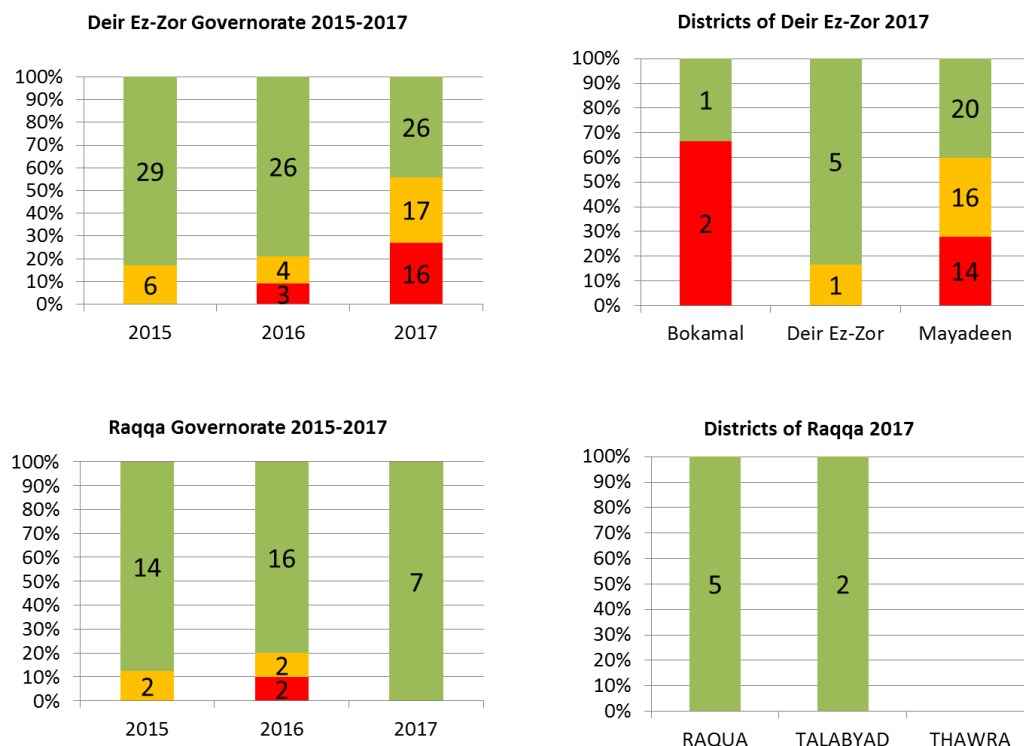
in Beirut on 28 June for transport by road to Damascus. It is expected that the vaccines will reach Deir Ez-Zor by the middle of the first week of July. UNICEF has initiated procurement of IPV which will be used in the second immunization round together with mOPV2.

- Communication for Development (C4D) activities commenced this week.

### EPI Curve NPAFP & VDPV2 Cases, 2015-2017



### Vaccination status (OPV+IPV) AFP cases\* aged 6-59 months



\* VDPV2 cases are included

## Immunization response activities

- Two immunization rounds are planned for early July and August targeting children <5 years in Deir Ez-Zor governorate and in the southern part of Shadadi district in Hasaka governorate. A response in Raqqa is still under discussion due to ongoing military operations.
- Emergency operation centers (EOCs) in both Damascus and Gaziantep hubs, and WHO and UNICEF regional offices in Amman continue to monitor the outbreak situation.

### *First round*

- Vaccine: mOPV2, total target: 328,000 (196,000 resident children and 110,000 refugee and IDP children in Deir Ez-Zor governorate, and 22,000 children in Shadadi).
- A total of 355 vaccination teams and 61 supervisors are on standby for this activity. Campaign strategy is house to house in the affected villages and fixed posts in other areas. There are 5 vaccine distribution centers with adequate cold chain in Bokamal, Hajien, Husienieh, Mayadeen, and Sor. These centers will distribute vaccine to all supervisors and collect empty vials on a daily basis. A special monitoring format has been developed to record vials distributed, used and empty vials returned. Forms will be completed at all levels on a daily basis and WHO will provide a daily summary to Damascus.
- Qatar Red Crescent (QRC) is negotiating for permission to implement intra-campaign and post-campaign monitoring.

## Coordination and surge support

- Syria's Vice Minister for Health recently met with WHO and UNICEF teams to discuss the situation in Raqqa. Coordination among national authority and partners to complete preparations for the response in Deir Ez-Zor is ongoing.
- Close coordination between WHO and UNICEF is in place, with daily information exchange between regional offices in Amman, and Damascus and Gaziantep hubs.
- Both WHO and UNICEF teams have deployed additional human resources (surge support) to both hubs since the start of the outbreak.

*WHO EMRO:* Two senior polio staff were deployed to Damascus to support the finalization of the national outbreak response plan. Staff have facilitated two training workshops for all governorates, reviewed micro-plans and are working to improve national polio lab data management. One regional polio consultant has been deployed to support the Gaziantep office for a period of two months.

*UNICEF MENARO:* A senior level mission was sent to Damascus to support outbreak response activities and a STOP consultant and C4D specialist recently completed surge missions in Gaziantep to support C4D planning. An immunization specialist from Jordan country office has been deployed to support the Gaziantep team for one month, and a senior C4D consultant will be deployed to Damascus to analyze lessons learnt in the first round and to monitor and address communications issues in the second round. UNICEF plans to send a mission to Gaziantep in first week of July to support Raqqa response planning (TBC).

## C4D and social mobilization activities

- Recruitment of 250 social mobilisers and 55 influencers/campaign leaders is underway. Detailed plans for social mobilizer deployment have been developed for each target area. Authorities on the ground have provided approval for house to house social mobilization visits in Mayadeen district. Community visits, public meetings and health center visits will be conducted in other areas.
- 80,000 brochures, 12,000 posters, 55 guides on interpersonal communication skills and 300 campaign uniforms reached Deir Ez-Zor on 22 June, following security clearances. Campaign materials are being distributed to key Department of Health facilities, in areas of campaign implementation.
- Vehicles are being rented for C4D activities. Approval has been granted by authorities on the ground for mosque and car-loudspeaker announcements.
- Six local medical doctors in Deir Ez-Zor are lending their support to C4D interventions. An interview with one of these doctors,

which encourages community uptake of polio vaccination, has been approved to air locally via radio. Negotiations are taking place regarding the development of additional radio announcements in the local dialect.

## Media

- On 18 June, the Syrian Government announced the polio outbreak in Rural Deir Ez-Zor. The statement published on SANA Government News Agency announced preparations for two rounds of immunization campaigns in July.
- A national media workshop for Damascus-based media was held by MoH on 20 June to explain campaign key messages, campaign preparations and the media's supporting role through accurate information dissemination. [More information](#).

## Challenges

Potential escalation in active conflict/s and shifts in power on the ground could result in:

- inability to dispatch the vaccine to health facilities
- inability to conduct house to house vaccination
- compromised safety of vaccinators and/or vaccinators becoming unreachable
- loss of mOPV2 vials and damage to cold chain
- inability to conduct necessary vaccinator training, e.g. social mobilization

Vaccine refusal has been a considerable challenge in Deir Ez-Zor in the past. Some families are very reluctant to have their children vaccinated with IPV. C4D is working to address this issue.

## Relevant links

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

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For more information:

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