

Kabul, 18 December, 2017

The Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan, WHO and UNICEF will carry out a polio vaccination campaign in parts of Afghanistan between December 18-22.

The campaign will target 5.5 million children under the age of five in high risk areas, mostly in the south, southeast, east and Kabul.

The UN humanitarian coordinator Toby Lanzer released [a statement in support of the campaign](#) and expressing his concern over the high number of cases recently in Kandahar.

"The district of Shahwalikot in Afghanistan's Kandahar province has the highest number of polio cases of any district in the world, putting at risk hundreds of thousands of children. In the past days, yet another case of wild poliovirus was found. A polio vaccination campaign throughout the district is now more urgent than ever."

During the campaign polio workers will go from house to house in their communities to vaccinate children.

On Friday, polio teams will re-visit households where children were missed the first time, to ensure that all children are vaccinated and protected.

All parents and caregivers who miss having their children vaccinated should visit their local health centre where the vaccine is available free of charge. The polio vaccine is safe and it does not have any side effects, even for sleeping or sick children and newborns. Polio vaccines have also been strongly endorsed by national and global Islamic scholars, including the Ulama.

So far, 12 cases of polio have been reported in 2017.

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