

Kabul, March 24, 2018

One new polio case has been confirmed in Khakrez district of Kandahar province, bringing the total number of confirmed polio cases in Afghanistan to 6 during 2018.

The case occurred in a 12-month-old boy in an area difficult to access by vaccination teams. The area was inaccessible for nearly 9 months. The child had only been vaccinated once against polio. Multiple doses of oral polio vaccine are required for a child to be fully protected from polio, and every dose further strengthens a child's immunity against the virus.

This is an important reminder to all parents that polio is a serious health risk and that vaccination during every polio campaign is the only way to protect your child from paralysis.

A team at the national level has been deployed to conduct a detailed investigation and risk assessment of the case and the surrounding area to determine the risk of further spread of the virus.

The next polio campaign will take place in selected high-risk districts including Khakrez from 9-13 April. It is critical that all parents and caregivers across Afghanistan ensure they immunize all children under 5 in every polio campaign. Multiple vaccination is the only way to protect your child.

The polio virus is a crippling and potentially fatal infectious disease. There is no cure and the polio vaccine is the only safe and effective way to protect children. While there is a child anywhere with polio, all children are at risk of this crippling disease.

The Polio Eradication Initiative is a global public health intervention that aims to eradicate polio worldwide and protect all future generations of children from paralysis.

Currently, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria are the only three remaining polio-endemic countries in the world. Afghanistan is one of only two countries globally where poliovirus continues to circulate in 2018.

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