



Kabul, 1 April, 2019 – The first round of polio national immunization days began on 1 April 2019 in Afghanistan. The 5-day campaign will target over 9.3 million children under-5 years of age in all of Afghanistan’s provinces, except Bamiyan, Daikundi and Ghor provinces due to bad weather.

During the campaign about 8.4 million children aged between 6 months to 5 years will also be given vitamin A capsules. Vitamin A helps to build a child’s immunity and reduces the risk of diarrhoea, respiratory infections and measles.

The most recent case of polio was reported from the Shahid-e-Hassas district of Uruzgan province, which permanently paralysed a 26-month-old male child. This is third case in Afghanistan in 2019; 2 other cases were reported from Kandahar province.

Dr Feroz emphasized the importance of the campaign and called on all people to work together to eradicate polio. “This is the first national campaign this year and we couldn’t stress this enough, but please open your doors when the vaccinators come knocking, bring out your children, protect them against this incurable disease.”

Dr Peeperkorn highlighted the effort to eradicate polio globally, calling on all partners to “keep the eyes on the prize, as humanity is on the verge of one of the greatest public health achievement in history – eradicating polio. Afghanistan can end polio for the world, so let us work together, keep our neutrality, work with all layers of society and achieve our goal together.”

Polio is incurable and can paralyse children for life. The only way to prevent polio is to vaccinate all children with 2 drops of polio vaccine, every time it is offered, until they are 5 years of age. Children are protected more with every additional dose of oral polio vaccine. Repeated vaccines help to build strong immunity of the child and the whole community.

In addition to highlighting the importance of eradicating polio, all parties reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen routine immunization, stressing that expanding access to immunization is vital for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, poverty reduction and universal health coverage.

The polio vaccine is safe and effective and has no side-effects. It has been strongly endorsed by prominent local and international Islamic scholars. It is critical to vaccinate all children under 5 across the country to stop the virus, including all sick children and newborns, whose immunity is weak against this disease.

Related link

[Polio Eradication Initiative](#)

For more information, please contact:

Merjan Rasekh
Emergency Operation Centre Spokesperson
rasekh2009@gmail.com
0702825101

Saturday 26th of April 2025 04:48:55 AM