

Kabul, 10 January 2018

Toby Lanzer, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator released a statement today announcing that health authorities, with support from UNICEF and WHO, today completed the first of three polio vaccination campaigns in Shahwalikot (Kandahar province) and in the neighbouring districts of Miyanshin and Nesh, reaching 43,000 children.

"In 2017, the district of Shahwalikot in Kandahar province saw five cases of polio, the highest number in any district of the world. The wild polio virus spreads very quickly, and it is crucial for a series of at least three mass vaccination campaigns to take place to prevent the disease from reaching more children in the area."

Lanzer also thanked the authorities for supporting the case response campaign.

"I am grateful to the authorities and community leaders who enabled 503 frontline workers to conduct the first campaign this week. I look forward to continued collaboration on this issue as we move forward, together."

Afghanistan remains one of three countries in the world that is still polio-endemic. Eradicating the disease is one of the chief aims of the United Nations globally. Its agencies in Afghanistan will spare no effort to enable the authorities to tackle this challenge, once and for all. UNICEF plans on providing Afghanistan 100 million doses of polio vaccine in 2018, and together with WHO which supports disease surveillance and the vaccination campaigns themselves, the UN is working closely with the Afghan authorities to rid the country of this terrible disease for good."

The full statement can be read [here](#) .

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