

WHO Afghanistan joins the national immunization programme to launch a second nationwide measles vaccination campaign in November.

This campaign will target 18 provinces and reach approximately 5 million children (nine months–10 years); thus ensuring a country-wide outreach: last July, more than 6 million received measles vaccine in the other 16 provinces.

Measles outbreaks sharply increased last year, with 300 reported deaths among children. This was due to the accumulation of multiple factors: progressive decreasing vaccination coverage due to rising insecurity, harsh winters that leave communities isolated and the 2011 droughts.

With the coming winter, WHO will roll-out a preparedness plan with the national health authorities: reinforcing the capacity-building of national immunization officers; pre-positioning medicines in areas likely to be inaccessible during winter; and setting temporary sub-health centres among communities living in remote areas throughout winter.

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Saturday 17th of May 2025 10:03:21 PM