

Child recieves oral polio vaccine in BaghdadBaghdad, 26 November 2019 – Health authorities in Iraq, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, have launched a campaign to reach more than 3.1 million children under-5 years of age with lifesaving polio vaccine.

The 5-day campaign aims to target children in 65 districts in the governorates of Baghdad, Babylon, Diwaniya, Diyala, Muthanna, Thi-Qar, Missan and Basra.

"Over the years, WHO, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF have worked hard to improve immunization coverage in the country. Therefore, it is important that we keep building on our work by making sure that children are vaccinated against childhood preventable diseases like polio and we keep Iraq polio free," said Dr Adham Ismail, WHO Representative for Iraq. "During this second phase of the campaign, we want to reach all the children under 5 regardless of their previous vaccination status with oral polio vaccine leaving no one out no matter where they are," added Dr Adham.

WHO supported the development of microplans to guide the vaccination team day by day, mobilized and trained 1300 supervisors and more than 13 000 vaccinators to carry out the campaign. In addition, it is also paying all the vaccination costs, including transportation and other incentives, to ensure that all children are reached going door-to-door and at fixed centres stationed in health facilities as our strategy.

"These vaccines act as a shield, protecting children and babies from diseases, saving thousands of lives in Iraq each year. UNICEF continues to work hard with our partners to ensure that vaccines reach as many children as possible," said Hamida Lasseko, UNICEF Representative in Iraq.



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National polio immunization days campaign in Iraq

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