



Hussein Awami, a disease surveillance officer in Benghazi, holds a form used when specimens are sent to laboratories to be tested for polio. 22 August 2019 – “I feel like I’m a health policeman, protecting people,” says Hussein Awami, a health worker in Benghazi, eastern Libya. “I want to protect my country from polio and all infectious diseases.”

A disease surveillance officer in Libya, Awami responds to calls and texts from health centres. If a type of paralysis that can indicate polio is suspected, “I go to see the child and do an examination, like having the child pull a pen to test the strength of their arm,” he says.

If Awami sees signs of acute flaccid paralysis, he collects stool samples and sends them on for testing. Thankfully, Libya has been polio free for years and remains so, but the health community knows it must be vigilant.

In summer 2019, WHO, in collaboration with the Libya’s National Centre for Disease Control, held workshops for more than 80 health specialists in Libya who monitor cases in order to prevent and control disease outbreaks. The workshops provided refresher training on how to accurately report on cases of measles, acute flaccid paralysis, and other diseases, so that WHO, health authorities and partners could quickly respond.



**Factsheets**

[Polio](#)

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