

Middle East polio outbreak response continues

Amman, 7 April 2014— Polio vaccination campaigns have commenced in Syria, Iraq and Egypt, aiming to reach more than 20 million children over five days.

For Iraq, this will be the first nationwide vaccination campaign since a case of polio was confirmed by the Ministry of Health on 30 March in a six-month-old boy from Rusafa, northern Baghdad.

“The recent detection of a polio case in Iraq after a 14-year absence is a reminder of the risk currently facing children throughout the region,” said Maria Calivis, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa. “It is now even more imperative to boost routine immunisations to reach every child multiple times and do whatever we can to vaccinate children we could not reach in previous rounds. That’s the only way we will prevent this outbreak from spreading further.”

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