

# Latest on COVID-19

GPEI's Situation Report & Donor Update

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Telegraph:** Pakistan to resume polio vaccination campaign months after it was halted by coronavirus
- **Science:** Polio vaccination campaigns restart after modelers warn about risk of 'explosive' outbreaks

## VACCINATION SUSPENSION IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- Preliminary quantitative analysis of the [Immunization Pulse Poll 2](#) has been shared through WHO, UNICEF, Boost, Gavi & TechNet networks. Highlights include the following:
  - Of 65 surveyed countries, 58% reported disruption in outreach vaccination activities in May 2020 as a result of COVID-19.
  - Of 62 surveyed countries 42% reported disruption to fixed-post vaccination activities in May 2020 as a result of COVID-19.
  - Of 62 countries surveyed, 69% reported disruption to demand for vaccination services in May 2020 as a result of COVID-19
- Designed to obtain a quick idea of the global impact of COVID-19 on immunization services in May 2020, the [Immunization Pulse Poll 2](#) was developed by WHO, UNICEF and Gavi, in collaboration with the Global Immunization Division/US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Boost Initiative at the Sabin Vaccine Institute and the International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC) at Johns Hopkins.

After initiating a pause on polio campaigns globally, the Polio Oversight Board has now recommended the earliest possible resumption of safe delivery of vaccination campaigns. It is imperative that those campaigns make extensive use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Infection Prevention and Control measures, thereby adhering to the principle of “doing no harm” to the frontline workers and communities they serve. Accordingly, all of the campaigns to date have, and will continue to adopt a coordinated approach with engagement of Emergency Operation Centres and appropriate national COVID committees and/or task forces.

The successful implementation of Supplementary Immunization Activities (SIA) will largely depend on the programme being thoroughly prepared. The GPEI has been working closely with the Ministries of Health in both endemic and outbreak countries to ensure adequate operational considerations necessary for the safe resumption of polio vaccination campaigns during the COVID19 pandemic by:

- Providing a framework to aid national decision-making for SIA resumption;
- Distributing updated operational guidelines and training curricula focusing on PPE

provision and safe vaccine delivery. The cost of PPE, sanitizer and single-use materials has financial implications on the programme: these costs were unanticipated in previous campaign plans and budgets, are subject to overall supply and demand dynamics, and freight and transport restrictions;

- Developing COVID-specific risk communication messaging and engaging communities effectively so that as far as possible, campaigns are demand driven;
- Providing country-specific advice from the Pakistani and Afghan Technical Advisory Groups, the mOPV2 Advisory Group, and the AFRO Rapid Response Team regarding revised SIA scheduling, sub-national geographical prioritization, and as appropriate, operational/communication adjustments; and
- Integrating other health services wherever possible. For example, in Afghanistan, 3500 polio community mobilizers in the South and Eastern regions continue promoting handwashing and hygiene, distributing soap, conducting health education session in health facilities, and providing health referral service to caregivers including immunization.



Area supervisor Nida Hussan checking the temperature of her workers before deployment in Karachi

## ENDEMIC COUNTRIES

### AFGHANISTAN

- Between 20 and 24 July, Afghanistan undertook a small scale mOPV2 campaign in three high risk provinces of the Eastern region: Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman. The campaign took place at the village level using a house-to-house approach, following strict COVID-19 guidance.
- Communities have been asking about the campaign resumption and for the most part, the campaign is demand driven.
- Vaccinators were trained on COVID-19 infection control and prevention measures, and provided COVID-fact sheets for them to be adequately equipped to answer parents' questions from parents and caregivers about the pandemic. During the campaign, vaccination teams distributed 500,000 posters and 380,000 flyers on COVID-19 prevention and care.

### PAKISTAN

- Pakistan resumed a limited scale polio vaccination campaign on 20 July after a four-month suspension of all polio vaccination activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign covered selected districts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Sindh, mainly Faisalabad, Karachi, South Waziristan and Quetta.
- Close to 800,000 children under the age of five were reached by vaccinators in districts currently facing outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus. Staff were trained on appropriate physical distancing inside homes and ensuring safe contact with children while vaccinating and finger marking.

## UPCOMING VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS

- Vaccination campaigns are expected to take place in August in the following countries: Ghana, DRC, Chad, Mali, and Cote d'Ivoire (AFRO)
- Vaccination campaigns are expected to take place in September in the following countries: Ethiopia, Cameroon, CAR, Chad (AFRO), Somalia (EMRO)

## OUTBREAK COUNTRIES

### ANGOLA

- Between 10 and 13 July in Angola, 1 287 717 children under five years of age were reached by over 4000 vaccinators observing COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures. All health workers were trained on infection risk, and 90 000 masks and 23 000 hand sanitizers were distributed by the Ministry of Health.

### BURKINA FASO

- Between 3 - 6 July in [Burkina Faso](#), 174 304 children under five years of age were vaccinated in two high-risk districts by 2000 frontline workers. Vaccinators and health care workers were trained on maintaining physical distancing while providing the vaccine.
- 41 250 masks and 200 litres of hand sanitizer were made available through the COVID-19 committee in the country to protect frontline workers and families during the campaign.

### WESTERN PACIFIC

- Starting 20 July the Philippines initiated mOPV2 and bOPV SIAs in different subnational areas. In July, Malaysia also started a targeted mOPV2 SIA.



Poster in Philippines of health worker and caregiver wearing protective gear while vaccinating a baby

