

# Afghanistan Polio Update



## AT A GLANCE:

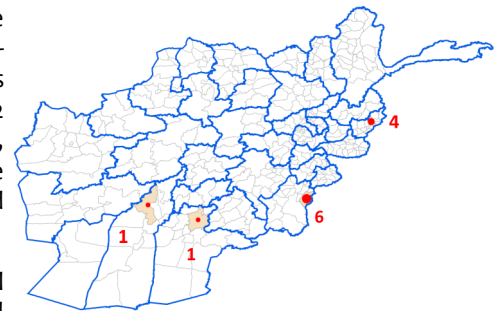
- 4 new wild poliovirus (WPV1) cases reported by RRL this quarter—12 cases in 2016
- Over 9.5 million children targeted during National Immunization Days (NIDs) campaign on 17-21 October
- Over 5.6 million children targeted during Sub-National Immunization Days (SNIDs) in November and December
- A case response campaign conducted in Bermel district in October
- 58 environmental samples from 15 sites collected this quarter
- A new environmental sampling site added in Kandahar City in December
- 294 permanent transit teams and 49 cross-border teams at 18 cross-border vaccination points vaccinating children on the move
- 59,773 children were vaccinated this quarter with OPV and 24,104 with IPV by teams at UNHCR and IOM sites receiving returnees from Pakistan and Iran

## POLIO TRANSMISSION:

Four wild poliovirus (WPV1) cases were reported by the Regional Reference Laboratory (RRL) in the fourth quarter of 2016, all from Bermel district of Paktika province in the South-eastern region. This brings the total number of WPV1 cases in Afghanistan to 12 in 2016: six cases are from Paktika, four from Kunar, one from Helmand and one from Kandahar. One VDPV2 was reported in 2016 from Paktika, classified as aVDPV2.

WPV1 transmission is limited to small geographical areas of Kunar and Paktika provinces in Eastern and Southeastern regions as well as northern parts of Helmand and Kandahar provinces in the Southern region. There are currently four WPV infected districts, including Shigal Wa Sheltan, Bermel, Nawzad and Shahwalikot.

No new environmental samples positive for WPV/VDPV2 have been reported in 2016, the last WPV1 positive being from Jalalabad in December 2015. This is the longest ever period without positive environmental samples since sampling started in Afghanistan.



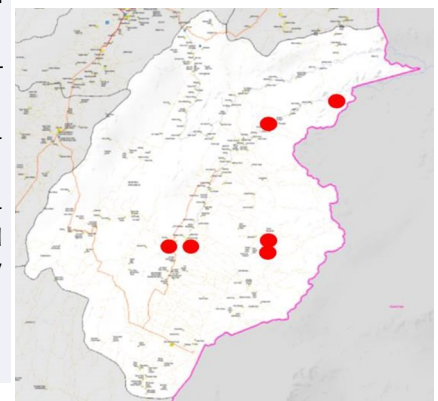
### Transmission in Bermel District:

- ◆ Bermel is one of the 47 very high-risk districts (VHRD), sharing a border with Pakistan with large areas of the district being under anti-government element (AGE) control.
- ◆ 6 cases: first case onset on 2 August and last case on 12 October.
- ◆ Four OPV SIAs and one IPV-OPV campaign conducted since the onset of the first case.
- ◆ The number of permanent transit teams and cross-border teams in Bermel has been increased.
- ◆ Continuous dialogue at the community level has resulted in better coverage in campaigns.
- ◆ Supervision from the national level has been intensified with permanent presence of one national level staff from WHO and from the national Polio Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).



Photo: WHO/R.Akbar

**Bermel District, Paktika**



## IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITIES

### Supplementary Immunization Activities (SIAs)

- ◆ National Immunization Days (NIDs) were implemented on 17-21 October targeting over 9.5 million children under the age of 5 with OPV in all 34 provinces.
- ◆ Sub-national Immunization Days (SNIDs) were implemented on 7-11 November targeting over 5.6 million children under the age of 5 with OPV in 24 provinces.
- ◆ Over 5.6 million children under the age of 5 were targeted with OPV during Sub-national Immunization Days (SNIDs) in 24 provinces on 12-16 December 2016.

### IPV-OPV Campaigns

- ◆ IPV-OPV campaigns took place in Shah Wali Kot, Maywand and Panjwayi districts of Kandahar province, Bermel district of Paktika, Loywiala and Manzilbagh sub-districts of Kandahar city, Gulan Camp in Khost and Baghran district in Helmand, covering a total of 191,759 children (see table for details).

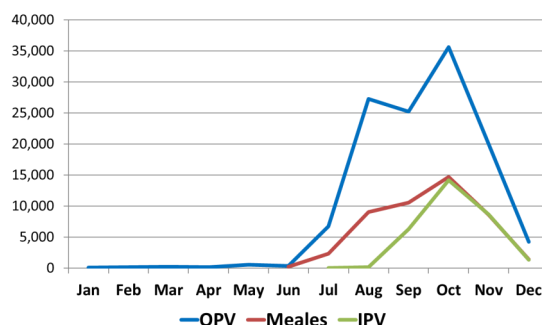
### Complementary Vaccination Activities

- ◆ A total of 49 cross-border teams at 18 cross-border vaccination points, 294 permanent transit teams (PTTs) and 48 permanent polio teams (PPTs) were operational across Afghanistan during this quarter.
- ◆ Permanent transit teams vaccinated 2,897,341 children under the age of 5 during the quarter while cross-border teams vaccinated 244,956 children under the age of 10 against polio this quarter
- ◆ During the quarter, 59,773 children were vaccinated with OPV and 24,104 with IPV by teams at UNHCR and IOM sites receiving returnees from Pakistan and Iran. In 2016, a total of 122,789 returnee children were vaccinated with OPV and 32,405 with IPV at these sites.
- ◆ The number of returnees coming to Afghanistan dropped significantly after UNHCR stopped registrations in Pakistan in November— repatriation is likely to increase from March 2017 onward.
- ◆ In compliance with International Health Regulations (IHR), 40,442 international travelers were vaccinated against polio this quarter, totaling to 118,799 during 2016.

Supplementary Immunization Activities (SIAs)			
Campaign	Children Targeted	PCM Coverage	% Failed Lots in LQAS
17-21 October NIDs	9,523,382	95%	15%
7-11 November SNIDs	5,659,304	94%	10%
12-16 December SNIDs	5,606,912	93%	8%

IPV-OPV Campaigns			
Date	Location	Children Vaccinated	PCM Coverage
16-21 October	Shah Wali Kot, Kandahar	10,325	75
20-26 October	Bermel, Paktika	19,816	88.7
7-12 November	Loywiala and Manzilbagh, Kandahar city	71,238	94
30 November –5 December	Gulan Camp, Khost	5,024	93.3
3-9 December	Baghran, Helmand	43,374	87.1
3-9 December	Shah Wali Kot, Kandahar	11,233	62.6
3-9 December	Maywand, Kandahar	11,253	73.2
3-9 December	Panjwayi, Kandahar	19,496	77.7

Vaccination Coverage of Returnees in 2016

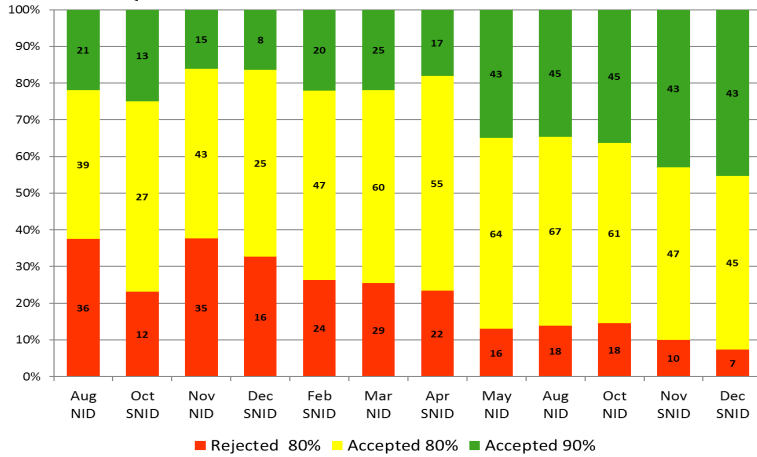


Photos: WHO/S. Ramo



# QUALITY OF SUPPLEMENTARY IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITIES

## LQAS Results in 2016



Lot Quality Assessment Sampling (LQAS) data shows improvement in the quality of supplementary immunization activities over the past year. The proportion of failed lots decreased from 32% in December 2015 to 7% in December 2016.



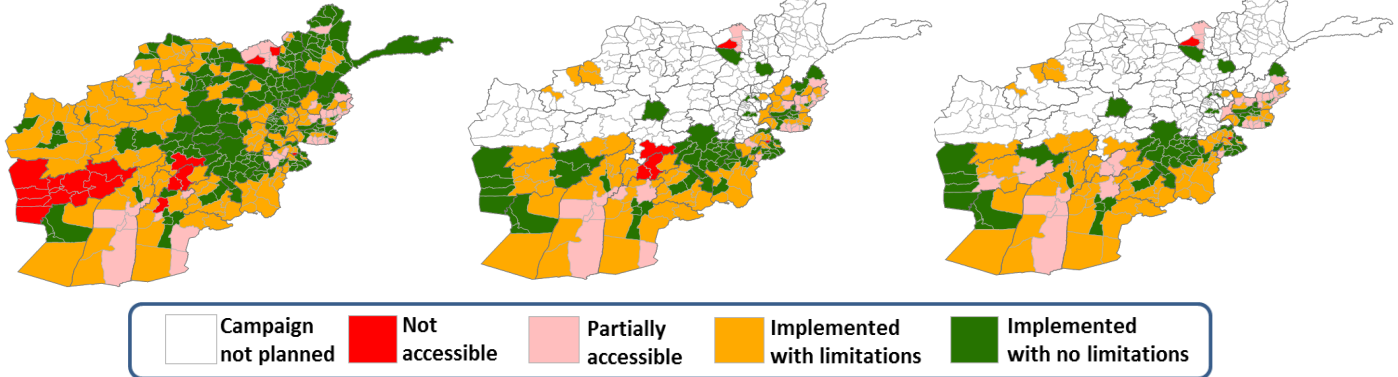
Photo: WHO/JJalali

# ACCESS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITIES

October NID

November SNID

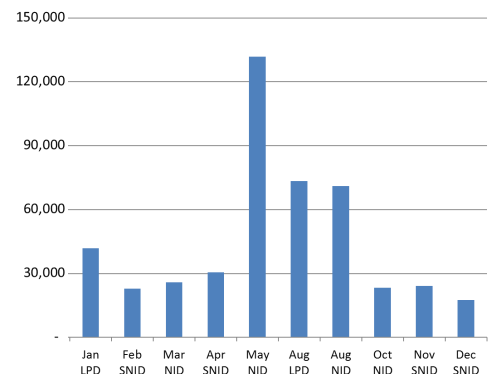
December SNID



## Inaccessible Children: January-December 2016

Region	Jan LPDs	Feb SNID	Mar NID	Apr SNID	May NID	Aug VHRD	Aug NID	Oct NID	Nov SNID	Dec SNID
East	41,744	22,938	25,869	30,555	131,781	73,355	71,085	23,204	24,213	17,488
North	0	0	0	0	3376	0	0	6,206	0	0
NE	65,584	97,998	146,810	106,281	165,333	101,434	197,192	176,377	105,539	105,024
South	12,335	7,079	11,684	56,662	22,811	49,403	28,798	141,142	120,597	18,192
SE	0	380	0	380	400	1,215	12,101	46,808	13,827	12,651
West	0	0	0	0	0	132,806	38,260	183,100	0	749
Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	0	75	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>119,663</b>	<b>128,395</b>	<b>184,363</b>	<b>193,878</b>	<b>323,701</b>	<b>358,213</b>	<b>347,507</b>	<b>576,835</b>	<b>264,251</b>	<b>154,178</b>

Accessibility in the Eastern Region for campaign implementation significantly improved in the past quarter:





## SURVEILLANCE

### Environmental Surveillance:

- ◆ 58 environmental samples from 15 sites located in five provinces of Southern, Eastern and Central Regions have been collected and sent to the laboratory in good condition during this quarter.
- ◆ A total of 184 samples have been collected in 2016 and laboratory results have been received for 175 samples—none of the samples are positive for WPV/VDPV.
- ◆ An assessment of environmental surveillance was conducted for suitability of existing sites and exploring of possible new sites. All existing sites were found to be relevant and three additional sites were identified; one each in Kandahar, Khost and Nangarhar provinces.
- ◆ Sample collection at the new environmental sampling site in Kandahar City started in December.

### AFP Surveillance:

- ◆ Non-polio AFP rate is 14, stool adequacy 92%, and non-polio enterovirus rate 21%. In all regions non-polio AFP rate is 10 or above, stool adequacy above 85%, and non-polio enterovirus rate above 17%. Out of 34 provinces only Nuristan has an adequate stool rate of less than 80% (79%).
- ◆ Extensive AFP reporting network in Afghanistan consists of 3,553 reporting sites and 20,974 reporting volunteers

### AFP Surveillance: Quality Key Indicators

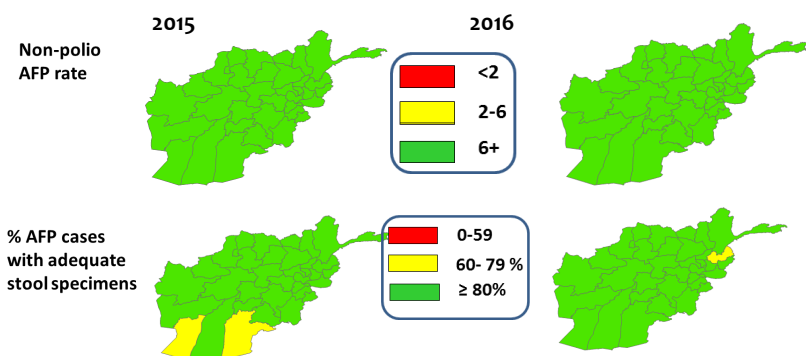


Photo: WHO/ S.Ramo

Photo: MOPH/M. Rasekh



### National Emergency Action Plan presented to key stakeholders

A one-day workshop on the National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) 2016-2017 for polio eradication in Afghanistan was held in Kabul on 24 October to brief key stakeholders from all 34 provinces about the contents of the NEAP and guarantee support for its implementation. The accountability framework of the NEAP was introduced to ensure stronger transparency and accountability of the polio eradication programme. Click [here](#) to access the 2016-2017 NEAP.

### Afghanistan no longer a poliovirus exporting country

The 11th meeting of the Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (IHR) regarding the international spread of poliovirus was held on 11 November 2016, stating that Afghanistan is no longer a poliovirus exporting country. [In its statement](#), the Committee welcomed the progress being made in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the renewed emphasis on cooperation along the long international border between the two countries.

Vaccination points continue their operations at all international airports and official transit points in Afghanistan. In compliance to IHR, 118,799 international travellers were vaccinated against polio during 2016.



Photo: WHO/ S.Ramo

## Community Engagement

### Immunization Communication Network:

A total of 728 cluster communication supervisors and 5,129 social mobilizers are operational across the 50 districts, including 43 very high-risk districts (VHRDs), in high-risk provinces supporting household engagement, tracking missed children, and supporting outreach for broader health activities such as routine immunization, sanitation and hygiene promotion, nutrition, and maternal health. Women make up 28% of all social mobilizers.

Social mobilization teams started following up on missed children in between campaigns in all VHRD areas which have full time social mobilizers.



Photos: UNICEF Afghanistan/Hayeri

- ◆ In areas where the ICN operates, 47,367 children were reported missed during December Sub-National Immunization Days
- ◆ 72% were vaccinated during a catch-up campaign by ICN
- ◆ 13,155 remained unvaccinated, including 7,442 refusals

### Female Social Mobilizers Step Up the Fight Against Polio

Afghanistan's female polio vaccination social mobilizers are in a unique position. As more women than ever are working to eradicate one of the world's oldest diseases, they are all the while peacefully and unintentionally leading a social revolution that is chipping away at taboos against women who work.

[Read more](#)

## Religious Scholars in Nangarhar and Farah Support Polio Eradication

Photo: WHO Afghanistan



Over 100 Islamic scholars, the Ulama, gathered in two separate conferences in Nangarhar and Farah provinces in November and December to express their support for Afghanistan's polio eradication programme. The Ulama highlighted that the polio vaccine is crucial for children's health, called on all Afghans to cooperate with health workers during polio vaccination campaigns, and endorsed the national Ulama Declaration on polio issued in February this year. The Islamic scholars committed to spreading positive messages within their communities about the benefits of the polio vaccine, highlighting that it is the only effective prevention for the disease. Read more about the Nangarhar conference [here](#) and Farah [here](#).

Photo: WHO/R-Akbar



### Tahera works towards a polio-free Afghanistan:

**"I am proud of my job and my family is proud of me too"**

Tahera is one of the over 65,000 dedicated frontline workers who are working tirelessly to eradicate polio from Afghanistan. For the past year, she has been working as a volunteer polio vaccinator in Bamyan province, going from house to house in her community to vaccinate children during immunization campaigns. "The best thing about my work is helping women and children and spreading awareness about the problems that are caused if children are not vaccinated," she says. Dedicated and brave women like Tahera are at the heart of the polio eradication effort.

[Read more](#)

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