PAKISTAN POLIO UPDATE

صحت محافظ

01/03/16

OVERVIEW

Pakistan is making significant progress in the fight against polio. Last year, the country achieved 82% reduction in polio cases, reporting 54 cases in 2015 compared to 306 in 2014.

The number of children paralyzed by polio have further declined from 20 in March 2015 to only 5 in March 2016. The cases reported so far from five districts/agencies, compared to 12 districts/agencies in the same time in 2015.

Despite this progress, many children in key high-risk areas of the country are still being missed by vaccinators and left unprotected against the virus.

There are 12 High Risk Districts that represent the final polio reservoirs in the country. These 12 districts are the focus of the low-transmission season (Sep. 2015-May 2016).

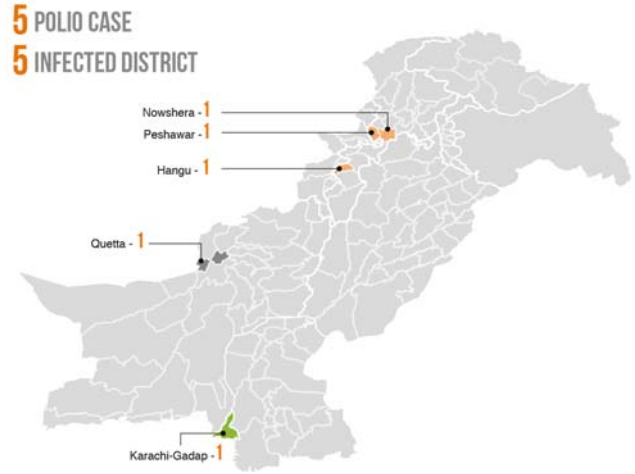
Under the leadership of the National and Provincial Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs), the polio eradication programme in Pakistan has focused on reaching every single child during every campaign in the low-transmission season.

Almost half a million children who were previously missed have been reached, due to gradual improvements in programme quality and access since late 2014.

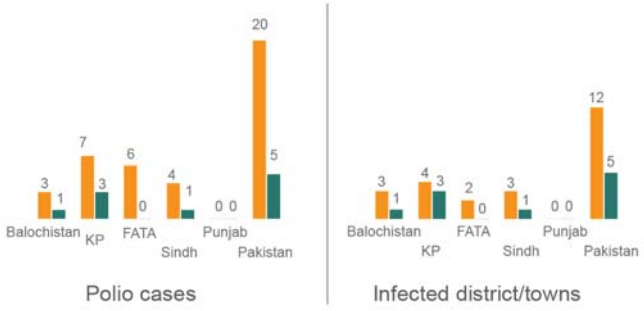
Nine high quality campaigns that have been planned for the low transmission season (September 2015 to May 2016) are in steady progress to ensure every missed child is vaccinated during every campaign.

In September 2015 the programme started to apply the Continuous Community Protected Vaccination (CCPV) in 461 Union Councils of core virus reservoirs with immunity gap. The CCPV approach is based on engagement of communities (local influencers, elders, religious and community leaders) in identifying, selecting and recruiting vaccinators from local areas.

To date, 7,532 CCPV frontline health workers and 1,478 area supervisors, 72% of which are women, have been deployed to locate and vaccinate missed children.



Point-to-point comparison Feb 2015 - Feb2016



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CAMPAIGN FACTS

Polio is a communicable disease that causes lifelong paralysis. The polio virus spreads from one child to another through contaminated food, water or sewage.

Each National Immunization Day (NID) aims to vaccinate approximately 35 million children under 5 years all over Pakistan. The Sub-National Day (SNID) covers 60% of the total targeted children with OPV.

For full protection against the virus, all children under 5 years of age must receive OPV each time it is offered. Repeated vaccination builds individual and herd immunity, so both the child and the community receive additional protection with each additional dose.

More than 200,000 heroic frontline health workers have been selected from their local communities and are trained with state of the art tools to ensure that every child is reached with the vaccine and every parent can trust their local vaccinator to protect their community from polio.

To reach people on the move, mobile teams immunize children at transit points, inside running trains, at bus stands, market places, and construction sites and on the borders of Afghanistan. Around 3 million children are immunized by transit and mobile teams during every round.

POLIO VACCINES

Parents in Pakistan have the highest rate of vaccine acceptance in the world: fewer than 1% in the highest risk areas refuse vaccination.

OPV is among the safest vaccines in the world, and has been used in nearly all countries that have stopped polio.

Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) is being added to vaccination campaigns where it can help boost immunity, for example in high risk areas of Balochistan, FATA, Karachi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. It has been introduced into the routine schedule across the country as well.

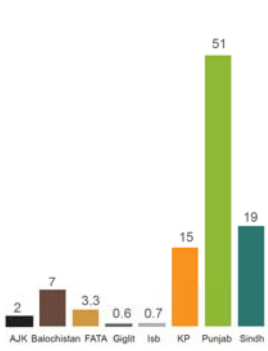
Combining OPV and IPV provides stronger protection against polio. IPV strengthens immunity in the blood while OPV strengthens immunity in the gut. Using both vaccines together provides the best form of protection from polio - it protects the child and helps protect the community.

COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

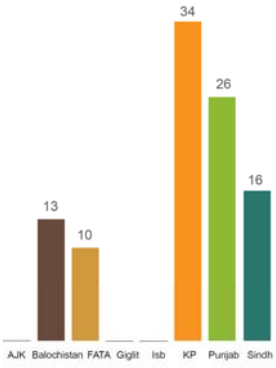
Polio thrives in areas where many health needs converge. Nearly 550 camps has been established in Balochistan, FATA and Karachi to provide vaccination for children, and pregnant women as well as basic curative services for families.

So far, almost 95,000 people have received additional health services alongside polio vaccines at the 550 camps established in the high risk areas of FATA, Balochistan and Sindh.

Pakistan is in the best position in its history to stop transmission of polio this year if every child under 5 in all communities has been immunized during monthly vaccination campaigns. The cooler, drier months are the optimal period for delivery of the vaccine meaning the next four months are absolutely critical if Pakistan to win the fight against this crippling disease.



% of children aged <5 vaccinated during NID



% of children aged <5 vaccinated during SNID