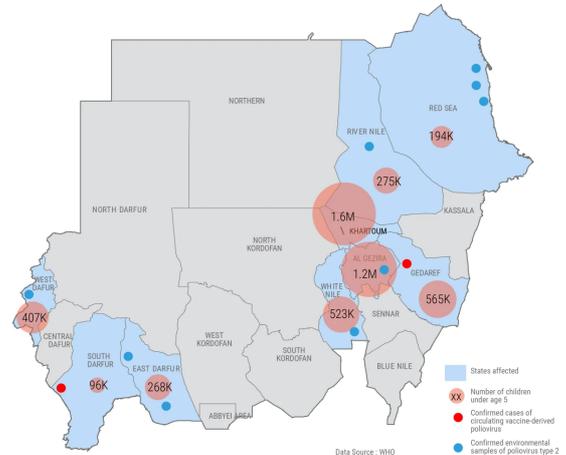


**FLASH UPDATE** (14 Aug 2020)**SUDAN: Vaccine-derived polio outbreak - Flash Update No.****1****HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Government declared, on 9 August, an outbreak of poliomyelitis in Sudan, following the confirmation of two vaccine-derived poliovirus in South Darfur and Gedaref states.
- Tests also confirmed positive environmental samples of poliovirus type 2 in at least nine states, according to WHO. More than 5.2 million children under age 5 live in the affected states and will require urgent vaccination.
- Neighbouring Ethiopia, Central African Republic and Chad also reported cases, which puts more risks on Sudan, especially Darfur region due to border movements.
- The Federal Ministry of Health and humanitarian partners have already activated the response, that will necessarily include mass immunization campaigns across the country.

**SITUATION OVERVIEW**

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) declared, on 9 August, an outbreak of polio in Sudan, following the confirmation of two cases of [vaccine-derived poliovirus](#) in South Darfur and Gedaref states. While laboratory tests are still ongoing, positive environmental samples of poliovirus type 2 have also been found in seven more states, including West Darfur, East Darfur, Gezira, White Nile, River Nile, Khartoum and Red Sea, indicating a possible wide circulation of the virus within the country. At least 5.2 million children under age 5 live in the affected states and will require urgent vaccination.

The outbreak, the first since March 2009, has been considered by the authorities as a national emergency and response has been activated to tackle the high risk of transmissions within and beyond Sudan, including South Sudan, declared by WHO as polio-free just a month ago. Neighbouring Ethiopia, Central African Republic and Chad also reported cases, which puts more risks on Sudan, especially in the Darfur region, due to border movements. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and current floods in Sudan will likely increase the challenges for Government and humanitarian partners to contain the new outbreak.

According to WHO, a vaccine-derived polio outbreak occurs in countries with low levels of immunization and poor sanitation conditions. When a child is immunized against polio, the weakened vaccine-virus replicates in the intestine and can be excreted in the environment. Although sometimes it can even offer protection to other children through 'passive' immunization, in some rare cases, after a long period of circulation, the vaccine-virus can genetically change into a form that can paralyze. Circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses must be managed in the same way as wild poliovirus outbreaks. The response must include vaccinating every child under age 5 with oral polio vaccine to stop transmission.

**RESPONSE**

Sudanese Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and health partners have already activated the urgent response to the outbreak. The FMoH briefed the Cabinet of Ministers on 8 August and declared the outbreak one day later, following the protocols of the International Health Regulations. Risk assessments have already been completed, while a National Task Force committee is being currently established. Government and health partners, led by WHO, are in close contact with neighbouring countries to coordinate efforts.



OCHA

## SUDAN

### SUDAN: Vaccine-derived polio outbreak - Flash Update No. 1

Last updated: 14 Aug 2020

---

**For more information, please contact OCHA Sudan:**

Saviano Abreu, [deabreuisidoro@un.org](mailto:deabreuisidoro@un.org)

---

*OCHA coordinates the global emergency response to save lives and protect people in humanitarian crises. We advocate for effective and principled humanitarian action by all, for all.*

<https://www.unocha.org/sudan>

<https://reliefweb.int/country/sdn>

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/sudan>

[About](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

[Copyright notice](#)

