

Polio this week as of 21 May 2014

The 67th World Health Assembly, the WHO's highest decision-making body, is meeting this week in Geneva. The report of the polio eradication programme to the Assembly is available [here](#), and is scheduled to be discussed on Friday. On the sidelines of WHA, Bruce Aylward, WHO Assistant Director-General for Polio and Emergencies, discussed polio eradication at the [World Health +SocialGood](#) digital event on Monday. The recorded discussion can be watched [here](#) (start at 1:04:00).

In a statement published on 13 May, the Government of Pakistan announced that it had initiated implementation of the Temporary Recommendations to reduce the international spread of wild poliovirus as recently issued by WHO. Health facilities across Pakistan are now vaccinating prospective travelers and issuing the required vaccination certificates.

An Extraordinary Technical Advisory Group on Polio convened for the WHO Americas Region has agreed with the objectives of the polio endgame, including the phased removal of oral polio vaccine from the routine immunization schedule.

Wild Poliovirus (WPV) cases

Total cases	Year-to-date 2014	Year-to-date 2013	Total in 2013
Globally	82	34	416
- in endemic countries	73	32	160
- in non-endemic countries	9	2	256

Case breakdown by country

Countries	Year-to-date 2014				Year-to-date 2013				Total in 2013	Date of most recent case
	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total		
Pakistan	66			66	8			8	93	01-May-14
Nigeria	3			3	22			22	53	19-Apr-14
Afghanistan	4			4	2			2	14	06-Apr-14
Equatorial Guinea	3			3				0	0	19-Mar-14
Iraq	1			1				0	0	10-Feb-14
Cameroon	3			3				0	4	31-Jan-14
Syria	1			1				0	35	21-Jan-14
Ethiopia	1			1				0	9	05-Jan-14

Somalia				0	1			1	194	20-Dec-13
Kenya				0	1			1	14	14-Jul-13
Total	82	0	0	82	34	0		34	416	
Total in endemic countries	73	0	0	73	32	0		32	160	
Total outbreak	9	0	0	9	2	0	0	2	256	

Data in WHO as of 21 May 2013 for 2013 data and 20 May 2014 for 2014 data.

Afghanistan

No new WPV1 cases were reported in the past week. The total number of WPV1 cases for 2014 is four. The most recent WPV1 case in the country was reported from Laghman province, Eastern Region, with onset of paralysis on 6 April.

No cVDPV2 cases were reported in 2014. The total number of cVDPV2 cases in 2013 remains three, with the most recent cVDPV2 case in March 2013 from Kandahar province, Southern Region.

The most recent nationwide supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) were held on 4-6 May targeting 8.9 million children in all of Afghanistan. The SIA could not be conducted in Helmand province, Southern Region, due to access problems related to insecurity but will be conducted as soon as access for vaccinators becomes possible.

Nigeria

No new WPV1 cases were reported in the past week. The most recent WPV1 case in Nigeria was reported from Yobe state with onset of paralysis on 19 April. The total number of WPV1 cases for 2014 is three.

Two new cVDPV2 cases were reported in the past week from Damboa LGA, Borno state. The most recent cVDPV2 case had onset of paralysis on 20 April. The total number of cVDPV2 cases for 2014 is three, and for 2013 is four.

The most recent nationwide Immunization Plus Days (IPDs) took place on 12-14 April, using a combination of bivalent and trivalent OPV. Subnational IPDs in northern Nigeria are planned for 24-26 May and later in June.

Pakistan

Five new WPV1 cases were reported in the past week from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), including three cases from North Waziristan, one from South Waziristan, and one from Khyber agency, bringing the total number of WPV1 cases reported from Pakistan for 2014 to 66. The most recent WPV1 case had onset of paralysis on 1 May (from Khyber agency).

No new cVDPV2 cases were reported in the past week. The most recent cVDPV2 case had onset of paralysis on 2 April (from North Waziristan). The total number of cVDPV2 cases is 10 for 2014, and 45 for 2013.

North Waziristan is the district with the largest number of children being paralyzed by poliovirus (both wild and cVDPV2) in the world. Immunization activities have been suspended by local leaders since June 2012. It is critical that children in all areas are vaccinated and protected from poliovirus. Immunizations in neighboring high-risk areas are being intensified, to further boost population immunity levels in those areas and prevent further spread of this outbreak.

The densely populated Peshawar valley is considered to be the main 'engine' of poliovirus transmission in Pakistan, alongside North Waziristan, due to large-scale population movements through Peshawar from across this region, and into other areas of Pakistan. The quality of SIA operations must be urgently improved in Peshawar, and immunization activities urgently resumed in North Waziristan.

The only WPV1 cases reported outside FATA/KP in 2014 to date are from the greater Karachi area, where vaccination

coverage gaps remain. 52 of the country's 66 cases this year are from FATA, with 44 of those from North Waziristan.

Central Africa

In Equatorial Guinea, no new WPV1 cases were reported this week. The total number of WPV1 cases reported from Equatorial Guinea for 2014 is three. The cases are linked to an ongoing outbreak in neighboring Cameroon, which has reported four cases in 2013 and three cases in 2014. The most recent NIDs took place on 15-18 May, with further campaigns planned for end of the month.

In Cameroon, an analysis of outbreak response conducted so far indicates overall quality has been insufficient to interrupt poliovirus transmission. Due to subnational surveillance gaps, further undetected transmission cannot be ruled out. Given the continuation and expansion of virus transmission, additional emergency outbreak response activities are being planned and will be implemented with the next round of nationwide SIAs planned for late May.

As part of the regional outbreak response, emergency campaigns have also been conducted in Central African Republic and are planned for the Republic of Congo in late May and for Gabon in the beginning of June.

Horn of Africa

No new WPV cases were reported in the past week. The most recent case in the region had onset of paralysis on 5 January, from Somali region in Ethiopia. It is the only reported case in the Horn of Africa sub-Region in 2014.

The total number of WPV1 cases in the Horn of Africa is 218 since the beginning of the outbreak in April 2013 (194 from Somalia, 14 from Kenya and 10 from Ethiopia).

Outbreak response across the Horn of Africa is continuing. Recommendations from the recently conducted outbreak response assessment for Kenya and Somalia are now being incorporated into outbreak response planning. A team of interagency experts who conducted the assessment underscored that the Horn of Africa outbreak appears to have slowed down. However, there is significant risk of continued transmission particularly in inaccessible and remote areas. Therefore, continued commitment at all levels and a sense of urgency should be maintained.

Israel and West Bank and Gaza

WPV1-positive samples have been detected by environmental surveillance in Israel since 3 February 2013 and continued to be detected in parts of the southern district up to end-March, 2014 (most recent WPV1-positive sample collected on 30 March). So far, no sample collected during the month of April has been WPV1-positive, although several samples collected in April and May are pending lab results.

Since 2005, only inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) has been used for routine childhood immunization in Israel. To interrupt WPV1 transmission, a nationwide supplementary immunization activity (SIA) with bivalent OPV targeting children < 10 years of age was conducted from August to October 2013.

Following a consultation with the country's immunization advisory group, the Israeli Ministry of Health has decided to re-introduce OPV into the national routine immunization schedule.

Several WPV1-positive environmental samples have also been detected in West Bank and Gaza Strip last year, with the most recent positive sample collected in the Gaza Strip during the week of 5 January 2014.

SIAs in West Bank and Gaza Strip were conducted 8-15 December and 8-15 January.

Middle East

No new WPV1 cases were reported in the past week from the Middle East. The most recent WPV1 case in the region was from northern Baghdad, Iraq, with onset of paralysis on 10 February 2014.

The total number of WPV1 cases reported from the Middle East is 37. In Syria, 36 cases are reported (35 in 2013 and 1 in 2014) with the most recent date of onset of paralysis on 21 January. In Iraq, one case has been reported (see point above).

WHO and UNICEF are committed to working with all organizations and agencies providing humanitarian assistance to Syrians

affected by the conflict. This includes vaccination of all children no matter where they are, whether in government or contested areas, or outside Syria.

In the Middle East, a comprehensive outbreak response continues to be implemented across the region. The [WHO/UNICEF Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East](#) outlines the action plan for Syria and neighbouring countries in response to the circulation of wild poliovirus following importation.

West Africa

No new WPV cases were reported in the past week. The most recent case in the region was due to WPV1 from Tahoua province in Niger with onset of paralysis on 15 November 2012.

No new cVDPV2 cases were reported in the past week from Niger. The country has reported a single case of cVDPV2 in 2013, with onset of paralysis on 11 July. Genetic sequencing has shown that the virus is related to that seen in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria (Borno).

Multi-country, synchronized campaigns were held on 25-28 April in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. SIAs in Cote d'Ivoire took place on 16-19 May and in Mali on 2-5 May. Further multi-country activities are planned for late May in Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.