Situation Update

• The Somalia Polio Programme has not confirmed any new cases of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) in children with acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) since 8 May 2019.

• The last case of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 3 (cVDPV3) in a child with AFP was detected and confirmed on 7 September 2018.

• A total of three cVDPV2 cases have been reported in Somalia across 2019.

• In total, 15 children with polio have been detected in Somalia since the onset of the ongoing concurrent cVDPV2 and cVDPV3 outbreaks in 2017.

• Sequencing results of PV2 isolate (SOM-SOL-LND-2019-015-C2) reported from a female contact from Lasanod district in Sool region of Somaliland last week were confirmed PV2-Sabin.
WHO Somalia’s Mohamed Shire was a finalist in the REACH Awards, held as part of the Reaching the Last Mile Forum in Abu Dhabi last week.

**Picture of the Week:** A member of the volunteer vaccination team makes an announcement for residents to bring out their children so that they can be vaccinated against polio. *(WHO/Ilyas Ahmed)*

**Latest activities**

**Integrated measles and polio campaign**

An integrated measles and polio campaign kicked off on 24 November in the federal states of Banaadir, Galguduud, Hirshabelle, Jubaland and South West State in Somalia. During the five-day campaign, it is hoped that more than 1,800,000 children will receive bOPV vaccine, and more than 1,600,000 children will be vaccinated against measles alongside deworming treatment and vitamin A supplementation. A total number of 17,024 health workers are implementing the campaign, and 65% of them are female.

During week 46, a total of 59 new suspected measles cases were reported across Somalia. This brings the number of suspected measles cases reported since January 2019 to 3,856. Of these cases, 78% are among children under the age of five.

This integrated campaign will assist with stemming transmission of measles and reducing the likelihood of future measles outbreaks in Somalia. The adding of the polio vaccine to this campaign supports the country’s effort to maintain high levels of protection against polio virus amongst all Somali children.

“Crowded living conditions, malnutrition and limited access to water and sanitation in the camps and other sites breed disease and put children at grave risk. To protect these children, it is critical to reach them with life-saving vaccines.” UNICEF Somalia Representative, Werner Schultink.
Surveillance

Surveillance for Acute Flaccid Paralysis

• As of week 45, a total of 313 children with acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) have been reported by Somalia’s surveillance network during 2019. Of these, 295 children have tested negative for polioviruses, three children have been confirmed positive for the cVDPV2 virus, and 15 stool samples from children with AFP are still undergoing laboratory testing.

• From the 298 stool samples that have lab results, 85 have enteroviruses (EV) and 19 tested positive for sabin-like (SL) virus isolation.

• Analysis of reported vaccination history of the 229 children aged 6 – 59 months presenting with non-polio AFP shows that 21% (48) of these children were under-immunized, having received less than three doses of OPV from National Immunization Days and routine EPI combined. Thirty six (75%) out of 48 under-immunized children are from the access-compromised regions of South and Central zones of Somalia.

• Of the 36 children presenting with AFP who are reported as never having received a polio vaccine, 23 of these children are within the 6 – 59 month age group. Twenty two of these 23 children come from from the access-compromised regions of South and Central zones of Somalia where traditional polio campaign activities are not conducted. This highlights that there are still children with absent or low protection against polio and underlines the need to ensure campaigns reach every child and routine immunization services are invigorated.

Environmental Surveillance
In 2019 to date, 51 sewage samples have been collected from four sites in Mogadishu and sent to the laboratory for testing. Of these, 26 samples have tested negative for polioviruses, 14 samples are confirmed to contain EV; one sample is confirmed to hold an ambiguous strain of vaccine-derived poliovirus (aVDPV); five samples are confirmed to contain Sabin-Like virus (SL3) and five are in the lab. Environmental Surveillance (ES) sampling frequency shifted from once every month to bi-weekly beginning of October 2019.