Situation Update

- A new circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) case was confirmed from an AFP case from Las Anod district in Sool region, Somaliland. The date of onset of paralysis was 15th March 2019 (with final classification results released on 23rd April 2019);
- The latest case to be detected is considered to be a continuation of the existing outbreak of cVDPV2. Prior to this detection, the last cVDPV2 case had a date of onset of 2 September 2018;
- A total of 13 cases have been identified in the concurrent outbreaks (6 cVDPV2 and 6 cVPDV3, with one additional child with coinfection of type 2 and 3);
- No new cVDPV2 or cVDPV3 isolates have been detected through environmental sampling since 2018;
- Sub-national immunization days commenced on 28 April in 40 districts where populations of children with low immunity were identified;
- Special immunization activities have already begun in response to the new case in three regions (Sool, Togdher and Sanaag).

Outbreak Summary

Somalia is responding to concurrent outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 and type 3. The type 2 virus (cVDPV2) was first detected in environmental sampling in October 2017 in Banadir region, prompting large-scale outbreak response activities, including enhanced surveillance for other undetected polioviruses. In February 2018, an outbreak of cVDPV type 3 was confirmed following its isolation from environmental samples also in Banadir region. Outbreak response activities for both strains of poliovirus are ongoing.
Case Response

- Planning is ongoing for special immunization activities in response to the new cVDPV2 case. ‘Round zero’ is ongoing, and will be completed by 10 May 2019, in Las Anod and the surrounding seven districts of three regions (Sool, Togdher and Sanaag), aiming to reach more than 170,000 children under five years with mOPV2 in May 2019;
- Surveillance system for AFP has been intensified: active case search is being conducted in the area where the AFP case was detected and increased sensitization/orientations sessions are being conducted at reporting sites to enhance system sensitivity.
- Additional emphasis for surveillance among high-risk, special populations such as nomadic groups, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and cross-border settlements, aiming to reduce possibilities of missing any circulating virus.

Epi Curve and AFP Classification, 2017 - 2019
(2017 Week 24 to 2019 Week 18)

Somalia’s polio team recently participated in a media training for Voice of America journalists from the Horn of Africa. Journalists were updated on the outbreak response, including communications for development, and "Vaccinators are all in the same boat. Until we do not succeed in eradicating polio completely, we are all in the same boat."
Surveillance for Acute Flaccid Paralysis

- So far in 2019, the surveillance network has identified 112 children with AFP in 2019; 44 of these were identified by the Village Polio Volunteer (VPVs);
- Stool samples from these cases of children with AFP were collected for further testing; 94 stool samples were discarded (tested negative for any polioviruses); one was classified as a cVDPV2 case; and 17 stool samples are still undergoing tests for polioviruses;
- Six of the AFP cases reported had not received any polio vaccinations;
- A total of 20 specimens collected from four environmental sampling sites for lab testing in 2019: Eight are negative, three have confirmed enterovirus, one was confirmed to have ambiguous vaccine-derived poliovirus (aVDPV) and four are pending testing for polioviruses;
- The polio team in Somalia has launched a mobile application for real-time collection and analysis of the Active Surveillance and AFP Case investigation data.

Country context

More than one million children in Somalia are still considered to be under-immunized against polio. Outbreak response activities are striving to ensure optimal immunization activities in the districts that currently host the highest number of populations who may still be at risk for polio infection, including children who live in IDP camps, are from mobile communities or reside in densely-populated areas of the big cities where immunization access may be compromised, and those living along borders shared with Kenya and Ethiopia. In addition to polio vaccinations, teams are planning to provide Vitamin A supplements and deworming pills in these targeted districts where possible.

Relevant Links

Somalia Weekly Surveillance: available here
http://www.somaliapolio.org

Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) website

*Vaccine-derived polioviruses video
QnA: What is vaccine-derived poliovirus?

Questions & Feedback:
Email to Namita Mediratta, WHO Somalia, or Leila Abrar, UNICEF Somalia