July 2019 saw a further rise in the number of polio cases and positive environmental samples in Pakistan. Nine wild poliovirus (WPV) cases were reported in July including one case each from Killa Abdullah, Quetta, Lakki Marwat, Charsadda, North Waziristan, and four cases from Bannu, bringing the total number of polio cases this year to 53. The geographical distribution of cases illustrates how the southernmost region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is currently facing unprecedented levels of poliovirus transmission.

The Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme continues to vigilantly monitor the presence of the virus via 60 strategically located environmental sampling sites across the country. Over the past 7 months, the majority of positive environmental samples were detected from core reservoir areas, such as Quetta, Karachi and Peshawar, and from hotspots in Lahore, Rawalpindi, interior Sindh and southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

As of July, up to 44% of environmental samples tested positive for poliovirus. Multiple case response activities were carried out in July to respond to the increase in polio transmission in Pakistan. The first case response was carried out in Northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 15-18 July, covering a total of 10 districts. The second case response was implemented in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan from 22-28 July, covering a total of 17 districts. The last case response was held in Killa Abdullah from 29 July - 4 August, covering two districts. A total of 3.25 million children were vaccinated through these case response activities.

The Extension of the National Emergency Action Plan 2018-19 was finalized this month. This document covers the programmatic planning for the period between July and December 2019, and introduces a number of modifications, interventions, and innovations to respond to persistent challenges and unfolding epidemiological risks.

96% reduction in polio cases between 2014-2018

High sensitivity of the surveillance system enables the programme to detect the virus and respond quickly.

60 environmental detection sites = largest polio environmental footprint in the world

39.4M average no. of children < 5 targeted during NIDs

260,000 frontline workers

62% of frontline workers are female

2,100 social mobilizers

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