### Polio Snapshot

**Afghanistan**

**September 2019**

- **1** WPV cases in September
- **16** Total WPV cases in 2019
- **7** Positive environment samples in September
- **6.1M** Children vaccinated in September
- **6,243** Social mobilizers
- **2,153** Female social mobilizers
- **788** Permanent transit teams
- **18** Cross-border vaccination points

**Data as of 30 September 2019**

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**WPV Cases in September:**
- **Ghorak District:** 1 WPV
- **Nawzad District:** 1 WPV
- **Spinboldak District:** 1 WPV
- **Watapoor District:** 1 WPV
- **Tirinkot District:** 1 WPV

**Cases from Jan to Aug:**
- **Shahid-e Hassas District:** 1 WPV
- **Watapoor District:** 1 WPV
- **Chora District:** 1 WPV
- **Spinboldak District:** 1 WPV

**Cross-Border Vaccination Points:**
- **Hirat, Farah, Nimroz, Badghis, Bamiyan, Wardak, Kabul, Logar, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Ghazni, Zabul, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Ghor, Samangan, Sangeen, Garamser, Washar, Musaqala, Kandahar, Ghazni, Zabul, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Ghor, Samangan, Sangeen, Garamser, Washar, Musaqala**

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**Wild Poliovirus Case Count 2018-2019**

- **2018:** 0 cases
- **2019:** 0 cases
One new wild poliovirus (WPV1) case was reported in September.

The Regional Rapid Response Team conducted an epidemiological investigation in response to the isolation of one new WPV1 case.

204 acute flaccid paralysis cases (101 girls and 103 boys) were reported in September. Overall 2,775 AFP cases have been reported in 2019, of which 2,466 have been discarded as “non-polio” and 293 cases are pending classification.

In all regions, the non-polio AFP rate is above 11, stool adequacy above 89%, and non-polio enterovirus ranges between 10 - 22.

Seven WPV1 positive environmental samples were confirmed from Kandahar, Hilmand and Nangarhar in September.

During targeted catch up days under social mobilization efforts in September 44,280 (out of total 106,497) absent and missing children were immunized.

Southern Afghanistan continues to record the highest number of missing children. 74,875 Children were missing in September campaign in south, 40% of them were recovered during the catchup days.

Total 44,861 children and families received health service referral vouchers by social mobilisers for routine immunization. Out of those, total 24,621 children (54%) have utilized the services at health facilities.

To develop evidence based key messages and action plan, UNICEF conducted communication research in southern region. Initial findings indicate the need for addressing vaccine uptake from religious perspective, especially the view of Islam on vaccine substance. Other findings include the dominance of religious radio stations and the rise of social media with links to rumors which requires special strategy.

Until recently, 29 years old Shagufa from Baladi village in Surkhrod district of Nangarhar province, had never vaccinated her two children of seven and four years old. Her family belonged to stream of vaccine refusals who had strong misconceptions about polio vaccination.

“My husband was against polio vaccination, he believed that polio vaccine would affect fertility of our children,” said Shagufa.

Ms. Malina a social mobilizer under Immunization Communication Network (ICN) was a frequent visitor at Shagufa’s home. It was part of her work to persuade families to vaccinate their children against polio.

“My work is to educate the community about the dangers of polio virus and the importance of vaccinating the children,” explained Ms. Malina, who is also the cluster supervisor for Surkhrod district.

Although, the family was adamant to vaccinate their children, but I continued to persuade them during my visits.”

One day, Shagufa became ill and needed urgent medical attention because she was pregnant. The husband was away and fortunately, Ms. Malina found her while on her regular visits. She immediately referred her to the nearest health facility.

“I was worried about my pregnancy,” explained Shagufa. “I went to the Bakhtan health centre, where I presented the referral sheet. I was treated for free and vaccinated against tetanus.” She continued.

“When my husband returned, I told him how the social mobiliser referred me to get treatment at the clinic. He was thankful, and this is what convinced us to start vaccinating our children.”

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