

PAKISTAN POLIO UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2019



In February 2019, two new polio cases were reported from Pakistan. One case was reported from district Khyber in the Khyber Pakhtunkwa province and one was reported from Karachi city. This brings the total number of polio cases reported thus far in 2019 to six. In response to the upsurge in cases and persistent transmission of the virus in the environment, the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme conducted multiple vaccination campaigns in different parts of the country.

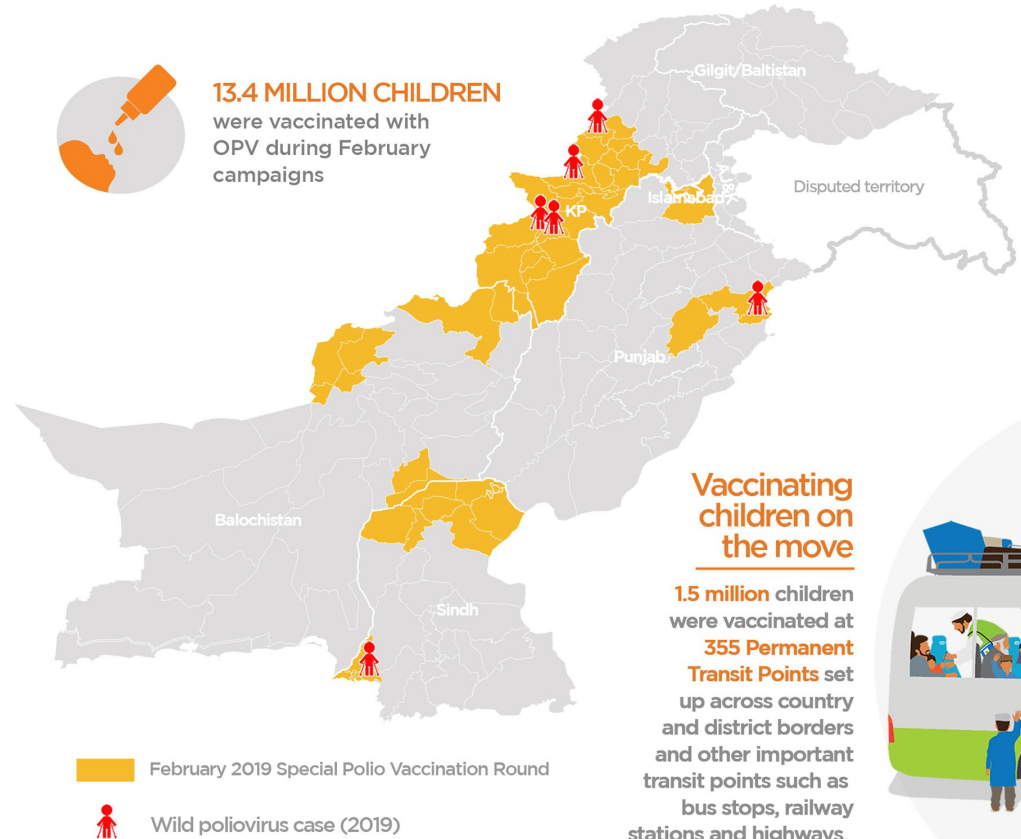
A special polio vaccination round was conducted in February 2019 in a total of 39 districts of the country, resulting in the vaccination of more than 10.9 million children under the age of 5. Furthermore, an expanded age vaccination campaign was implemented in 16 Union Councils of Rawalpindi, during which an additional 72 000 children between 5 and 10 years were vaccinated against polio.

A combined OPV-IPV campaign was simultaneously held in core reservoir areas, including parts of Karachi, Peshawar, and the Quetta Block, in order to boost children's immunity against the virus. During this campaign,

the programme used needle-free jet injectors in parts of Karachi where a fractional dose IPV (fIPV) campaign took place as well. As a result of the combined OPV-IPV campaign, 2.4 million children were vaccinated with IPV, while 2.54 million children were vaccinated with OPV.

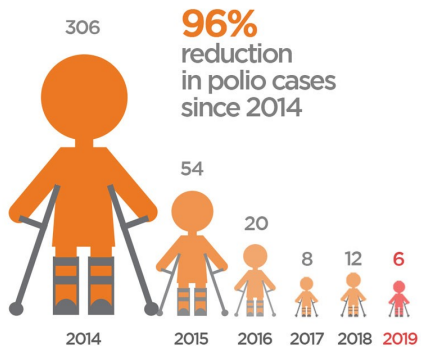
At the same time, the programme continued to engage in auxiliary efforts to respond to challenges that hinder the eradication of polio. The implementation of a robust 'Communication for Eradication' strategy has helped to strengthen community perceptions of the programme and the polio vaccine. As a result, the number of vaccine refusals fell by 27% between September 2018 National Immunization Days (NIDs) campaign and January 2019 NIDs, while the number of total missed children fell by 31%. The programme also continues to coordinate and align activities with the Afghanistan programme in order to combat virus transmission across the shared epidemiological block of both countries. In February, both countries agreed that all age vaccination will be introduced at Torkham and Chaman borders from 25 March.

FEBRUARY 2019 POLIO VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS

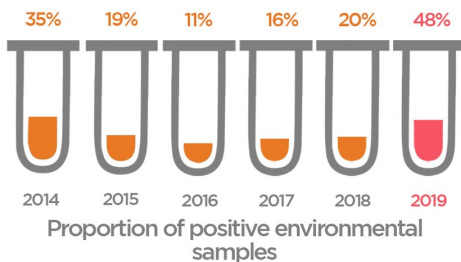


No. of wild polio cases		Proportion of positive environmental samples		No. of infected districts (WPV cases, environmental samples)	
February 2018	February 2019	February 2018	February 2019	February 2018	February 2019
0	6	12%	48%	13	21
0	0	50%	0%	1	0
0	1	5%	41%	2	2
0	1	17%	54%	6	10
0	2	n/a	67%	0	32
0	2	15%	36%	2	4
0	0	10%	64%	2	2
0	0	0%	0%	0	0

*Point in time comparison data as of 12 March 2019.



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



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

PAKISTAN POLIO ERADICATION INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

