

Progress report on poliomyelitis eradication and polio transition

Kuwait stands firm in the fight against polio, having been free of indigenous cases for many years. The last recorded incident dates back to 1983. With unwavering commitment, Kuwait has fully embraced the World Health Organization's strategies for poliomyelitis eradication, highlighted by the following measures:

- Initiated in 1994, our consistent and rigorous Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) surveillance at both national and subnational levels has surpassed global standards for over four decades. We proudly report a non-polio AFP rate consistently meeting the target per 100,000 children under 15 years of age, and a stool adequacy rate exceeding 80%.
- Kuwait is among the pioneering countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region to introduce supplementary surveillance activities. Our advancements include the implementation of environmental surveillance in 2019 and surveillance of children with Primary Immune Deficiency (PID) for iVDPV in 2022.
- Our robust Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) system has achieved a national Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) and Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV3) coverage exceeding 95%, with no region falling below 90%. This achievement significantly bolsters our defence against any potential importation of the polio.
- Our comprehensive and effective national response plan has been tested and proven successful through the Polio Outbreak Simulation Exercise (POSE) conducted twice in 2017 and May 2019. This plan was recently updated in June 2023, aligned with the latest WHO guidelines.
- Backed by a WHO-accredited regional reference laboratory, Kuwait assures optimal support for the AFP surveillance system. Our Public Health Virology Laboratory diligently handles the testing of stool samples from patients and contacts.
- We continually conduct risk assessments of core indicators related to surveillance and immunization coverage at both national and subnational levels, ensuring the highest standards of public health.

Kuwait remains steadfast and dedicated in its efforts to sustain a polio-free environment, contributing actively to global polio eradication, and safeguarding the well-being of future generations.

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