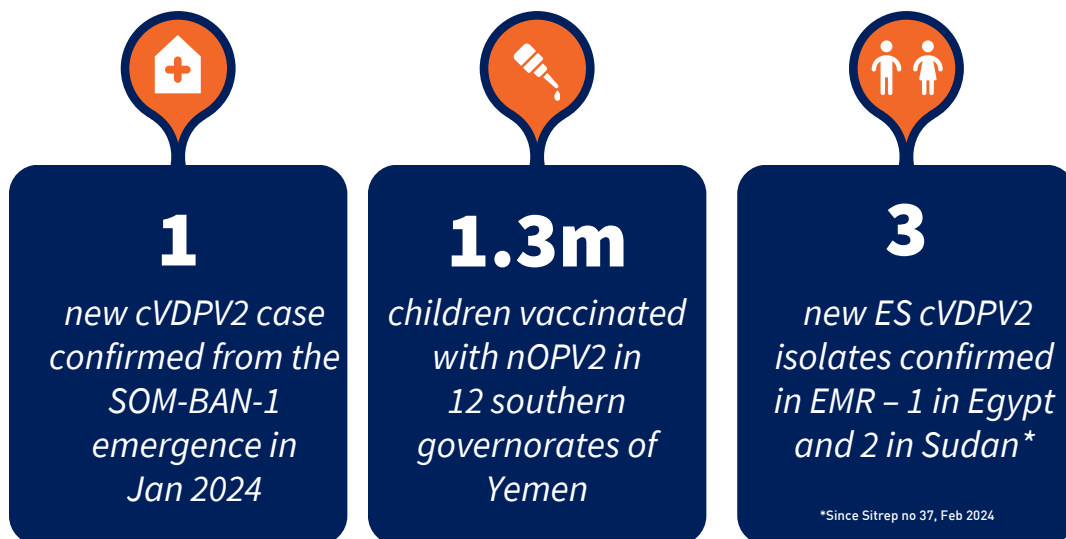


MENA EMR REGIONAL CVDPV OUTBREAKS

Issue #38 | Week 13

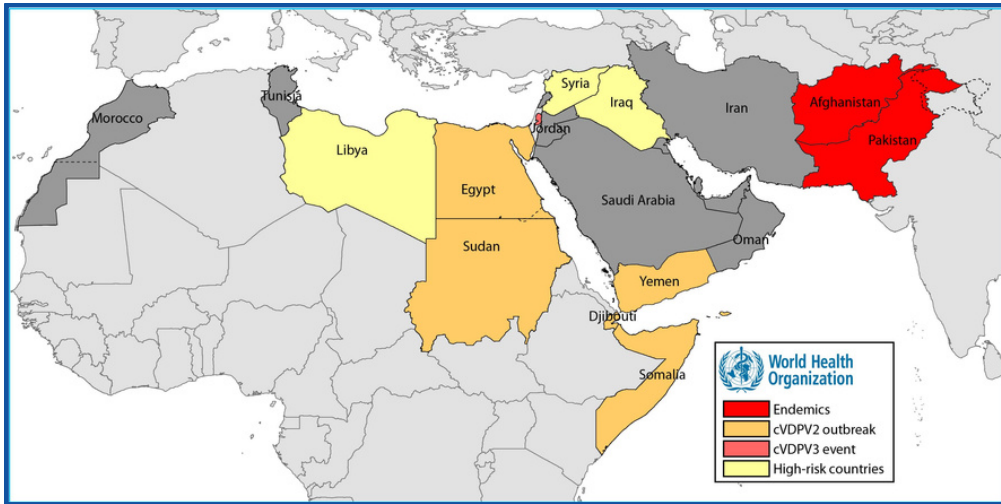
(10 February 2024 - week ending 28 March 2024)

BY THE NUMBERS:



SITUATION UPDATE

- An environmental surveillance (ES) sample isolated on 31 January 2024 in Cairo governorate, **Egypt**, was confirmed as cVDPV2 and is linked to the SUD-RED-1 emergence.
- In **Somalia**, a new cVDPV2 case from SOM-BAN-1 emergence was confirmed, with date of onset of 20 January 2024. Three new cVDPV2 isolates were confirmed in early 2024 from a new emergence group, SOM-BAY-1, with date of onset in December 2023.
- In **Sudan**, two new ES isolates were reported from Port Sudan - that belong to the SUD-RED-1 emergence.



Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) isolates:

	2023		2024	
	AFP	ES	AFP	ES
DJIBOUTI	0	0	0	0
EGYPT	0	11	0	1
SOMALIA	8	9	1	0
SUDAN	0	5	0	1
YEMEN	8	10	1	0

EPI AND SURVEILLANCE UPDATE

EGYPT



- The circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus-novel (cVDPV2-n) outbreak in North Sinai has almost been contained after the implementation of four subnational immunization days (SNIDs) in August, October and December 2023, and January 2024. The most recent isolate was detected on 30 December 2023. Following this, seven more samples were collected from the environmental surveillance (ES) site in North Sinai, none of which showed cVDPV2-n.
- On 15 February 2024, the polio laboratory in Egypt reported the isolation of cVDPV2 from sewage water collected from one ES site in Cairo governorate on 31 January 2024. Genetic sequencing showed 11 nucleotide changes from standard SABIN2 and links to SUD-RED-1 emergence. A cVDPV2 importation event was declared accordingly. No other samples out of the 46 sites in Egypt showed circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2).

SOMALIA



- Additional cVDPV2 cases were reported in 2023 from the new emergence: SOM-BAY-1. Of these, two detections in Dinsor district, Bay, with 16 nt difference, had 13 December 2023 as the date of onset of paralysis. The third cVDPV2 isolate, having 17 nt difference is from El-Bur district, Galgadud, with onset of paralysis reported on 15 December 2023.
- A new cVDPV2 case from SOM-BAN-1 emergence group was notified on 13 March 2024. This isolate has 74 nt difference and was found to be genetically linked to an earlier cVDPV2 from Burhakaba district in Bay. The onset of paralysis of this case was 20 January 2024.
- An external surveillance review is planned from 27 April to 2 May 2024 to assess the sensitivity of poliovirus surveillance in Somalia.

SUDAN



- Two cVDPV2 positive ES isolates were confirmed by the laboratory on 13 February 2024 bringing the total cVDPV2 isolates from the SUD-RED-1 emergence from Red Sea State to six. All were collected from the same collection site in Port Sudan district of the Red Sea State between 18 September 2023 and 11 January 2024.
- A case of cVDPV2 from Yemen, from Mothekhira, Ibb, with date of onset of 11 November 2023, has now been classified as linked to SUD-RED-1 emergence from Sudan. Additionally, a cVDPV2 ES from Cairo, Egypt, collected on 31 January 2024, has also been linked to SUD-RED-1.
- A VDPV2 was isolated from White Nile State; and is not genetically linked to any previously sequenced VDPV2s.
- Surveillance continues, including through six ES sites. A seventh shipment of AFP and ES samples was transported across Sudan and delivered to the VACSERA Regional Lab in Egypt on 26 March 2024.
- Several states in Sudan are still experiencing telecommunications and connectivity problems, which is affecting the surveillance reporting system. The field team is consistently working to find solutions to send their weekly or biweekly surveillance updates, using any available means of communication in their states.

YEMEN



- A total of 241 VDPV2 cases have been reported since the start of the outbreak in 2021: 237 cVDPV2 and four VDPV2. The most recent case had onset of paralysis on 17 January 2024.
- As of week 12 2024, Yemen has reported 1331 AFP cases in all of 2023 and 260 AFP cases in 2024. Of these:
 - 1359 cases were discarded as they were negative for poliovirus;
 - Nine were confirmed as cVDPV2 and one as VDPV2 (not circulatory); and
 - The remaining samples are pending classification.
- Of the 32 ES samples collected in 2023, the status is as follows:
 - 12 are positive for VDPVs; they are from Sana'a, Hodeida and Aden;
 - 12 are negative for VDPV and WPV; and
 - 11 samples from October 2023-January 2024 are pending testing in the laboratory.



OUTBREAK RESPONSE UPDATE

EGYPT



- A field investigation, conducted after the cVDPV2 importation event in Cairo, identified 11 high-risk districts. The government implemented an inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) catch-up campaign targeting children from non-Egyptian communities, aged between two months and nine years, who had never received IPV vaccination before. On 11 March 2024, during the first phase of the IPV catch-up campaign, 7300 children were vaccinated.
- In February 2024, the Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Egypt Red Crescent, WHO and UNICEF met with community leaders from non-Egyptian communities in Cairo, to intensify poliovirus surveillance and boost immunity of children from Sudan and other countries, through polio vaccination.

SOMALIA



- The second round of SNIDs, delivering nOPV2, was conducted from 3-7 March 2024. The SNID targeted 2.7 million under-fives in 81 districts in south and central areas of Somalia. The campaign could not be conducted in Run Nirgod district, due to lack of access.
- The administrative coverage data from the campaign shows that approximately 2.51 million under-fives (around 91% of the target) were vaccinated. More than 19 000 of these children received polio vaccines for the first time.
- Lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS), conducted in 62 LOTs, to assess the quality of the campaign showed the following results:
 - 65% (40 lots) passed at 90%
 - 14% (9 lots) achieved intermediate status (passed at 80%)
 - 21% (13 lots) failed

SUDAN



- In response to the cVDPV2 emergence, Sudan is planning to roll out an nOPV2 campaign in eight accessible, high-risk states, starting with Red Sea State, in April 2024. Nationwide, although there has been some disruption to essential immunization activities, efforts are ongoing to ensure vaccines are replenished in all states and activities continue wherever possible. UNICEF has made special arrangements to supply vaccines to replenish depleted stock levels using chartered flights. In total, 156 000 doses of nOPV2 arrived by chartered flights in Port Sudan on 28 February 2024, to prepare for the response in the Red Sea State.
- National supplementary immunization activities (SIA) guidelines, microplanning tools and training materials have been prepared and distributed. Additionally, federal-level training of trainers (ToT) sessions have been conducted and cascaded trainings are planned.
- A cold room and cold freezer rooms have been installed in Port Sudan, adding 65 cubic metres of storage capacity to store nOPV2 vaccines safely ahead of the April campaign.



- A first round of a polio vaccination campaign for the year was conducted in 12 southern governorates of Yemen, in which 1.29 million children aged under five were vaccinated with nOPV2. This was the first time Yemen provided nOPV2 to children. The post campaign monitoring by independent monitoring shows that 91% of targeted children were reached.
- A second nOPV2 round is planned at the end of April 2024 in the southern governorates, targeting 1.3 million children under the age of five.
- Access to vaccinate children in the northern governorates continues to elude the programme. Robust, multi-channel advocacy efforts are ongoing to carry out a multi-antigen vaccination campaign to respond to ongoing polio, measles and other vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.

DJIBOUTI OBRA RECOMMENDATIONS



- Of the 40 recommendations made by the Outbreak Response Assessment (OBRA) mission conducted in Djibouti in November 2023, 60% of recommendations have either been implemented or are currently being acted on.
- The WHO and UNICEF country teams will support the national polio team to implement the remaining 40% of OBRA recommendations.
- A consultant for the expanded programme on immunization (EPI), currently in Djibouti, has started to support the development of the annual EPI operational plan.
- Ten TempTale log tag devices have been received in the country and a training session on these tags was conducted in March 2024 to monitor the quality of stool samples as they are shipped to Kenya for testing.
- Surveillance cascade training for all surveillance focal persons will begin in late April 2024.



REGIONAL COORDINATION

- The tenth meeting of the Regional Subcommittee for Polio Eradication and Outbreaks brought together health ministers and key partners virtually on 26 March 2024. The high-level delegates reviewed progress made, and underlined urgent actions required to end polio in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. This was the first subcommittee meeting convened by Dr Hanan Balkhy, the WHO EMR Regional Director.
- The delegates reiterated their unwavering support towards polio eradication efforts. Member States issued two statements to scale up support to end wild poliovirus transmission in Afghanistan, Pakistan and to close cVDPV2 outbreaks in Somalia and Yemen.



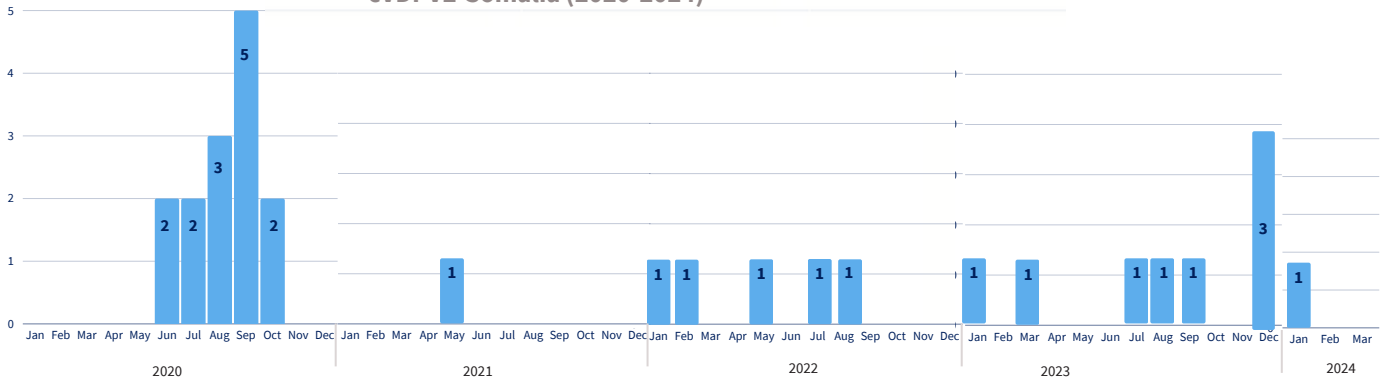
GLOBAL COORDINATION

- The Federal Ministry of Health, Sudan, participated in the 38th International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee for Polio on 20 March 2024. The team from Sudan provided updates on the epidemiological situation, challenges faced, including limited access to special populations and security issues, and measures taken to prevent international spread.
- The Regional polio programme commemorated International Women’s Day 2024 on 8 March 2024, and lauded the diverse contributions women continue to make to eradication efforts in the Region.
- On 27 March 2024, the EMR polio programme marked ten years of the South-East Asia Region being polio-free.

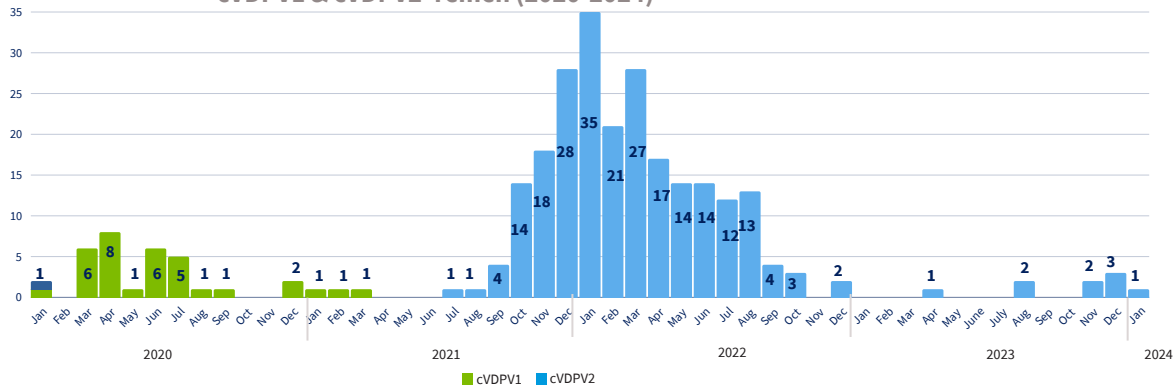


OUTBREAK EPI CURVES

cVDPV2-Somalia (2020-2024)



cVDPV1 & cVDPV2-Yemen (2020-2024)

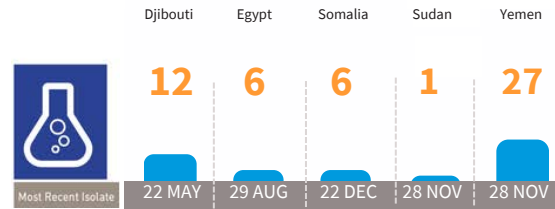
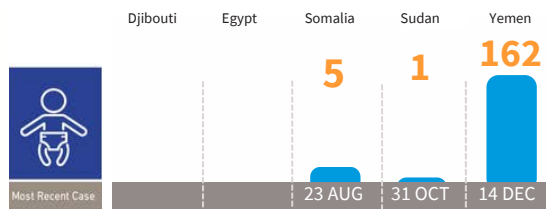


ALL cVDPV2 OUTBREAKS IN THE EMR

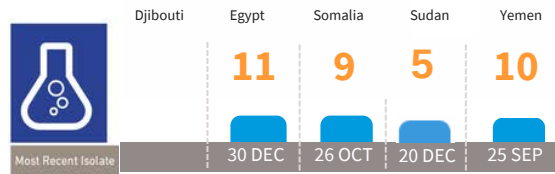
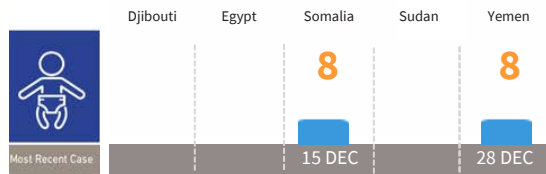
AFP- cVDPV2

Environmental -cVDPV2

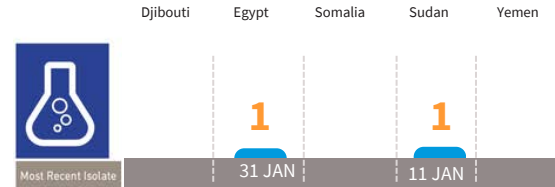
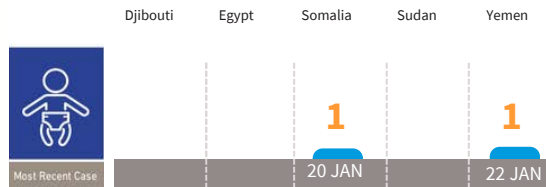
2022



2023



2024



Send questions to:

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UNICEF:

Regional Polio Coordinator: atsega@unicef.org

Regional Chief of Communications: amar@unicef.org

Relevant links:

- [Global Polio Eradication Initiative \(GPEI\) website](#)
- [Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026](#)
- [Regional Subcommittee on Polio Eradication](#)
- [GPEI factsheet—VDPV](#)
- [Vaccine-derived polioviruses animation](#)