

Situation Report

MENA EMR Regional cVDPV Outbreaks

Issue #23 | Week 16 (ending 24 April) 2022

Highlights

34 confirmed new cases of cVDPV2 in Yemen in last week of reporting period

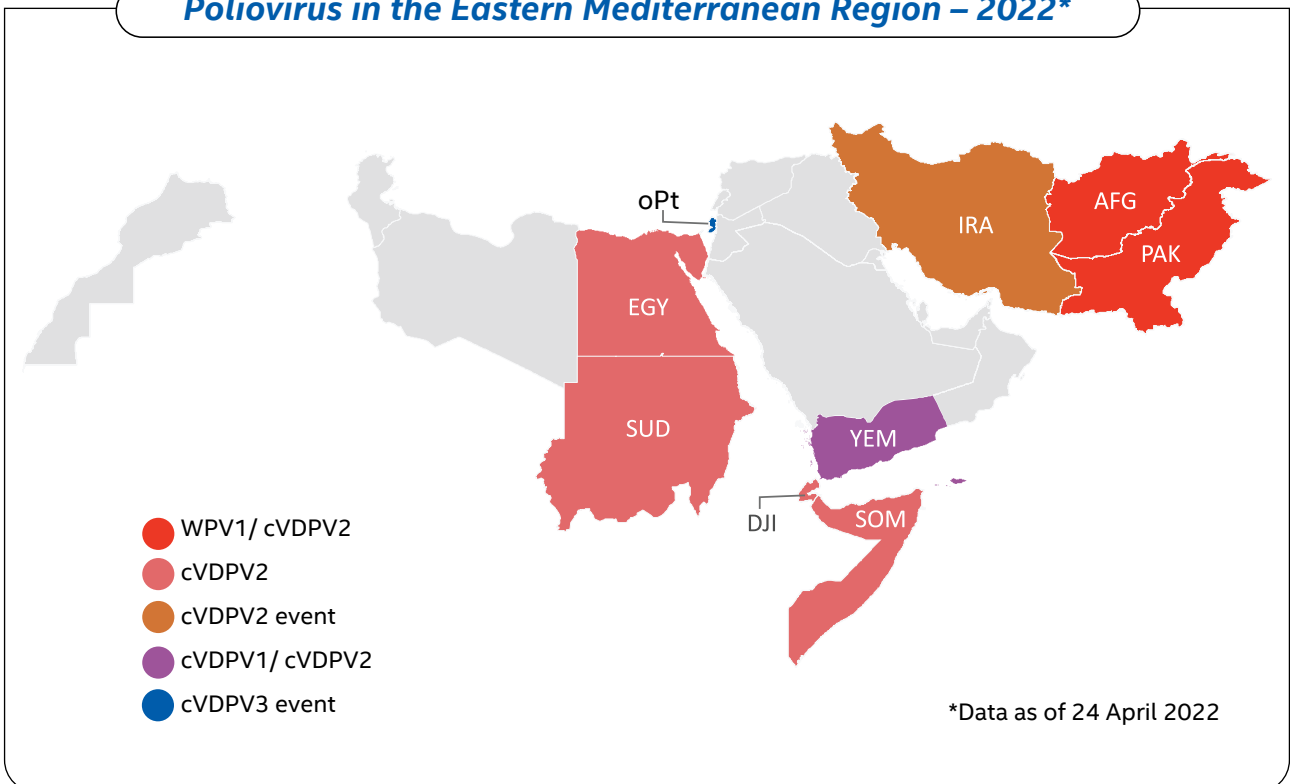
257 AFP specimens awaiting testing in Yemen

16 May planned start of occupied Palestinian territory's first OPV SIA in 8 years

Situation update:

- The cVDPV2 outbreak in Yemen has reached an explosive pace, with 67 cases to date, 34 of them confirmed in the past week alone. A backlog of AFP samples awaiting testing and continued inability to reach northern governorates with polio vaccine suggest a deeply worrying upward trajectory.
- Preparations are under way for a vaccination campaign with bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) in Jerusalem and Bethlehem governorates, occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in response to cVDPV3 outbreak in Israel. oPt will start the first of two rounds of a sub-national campaign using fixed sites and mobile teams on 16 May 2022.

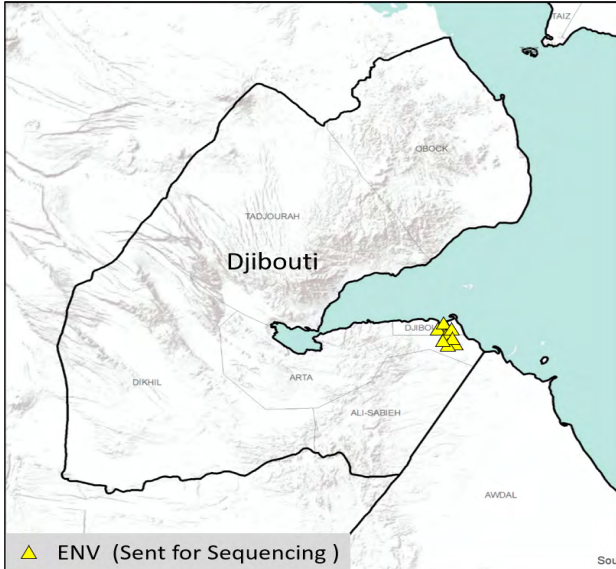
Poliovirus in the Eastern Mediterranean Region – 2022*





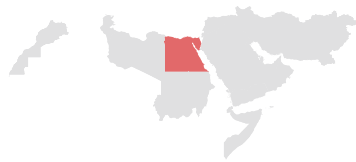
Epi and surveillance update

Djibouti:



- Following the completion of R2 of nOPV2 outbreak response on 27–31 March 2022, the country’s focus is on strengthening AFP surveillance and routine immunization.
- To date, no cVDVP2 cases have been reported; the last isolation of cVDVP2 in the environment was in a sample collected 28 December 2021, but nine samples are pending sequencing results.

Egypt:



- On 26 April 2022, the polio lab reported the isolation of cVDVP2 from 2 different ES sites in Giza governorate, both genetically linked to the Yemen YEM-TAI-01 chain. It is the second time Egypt has detected cVDVP2 imported from Yemen (on 13 December 2021, the first imported cVDVP2 was detected in Giza). The three viruses are not genetically linked to each other. Field investigation is ongoing to identify the source of the virus and the risk of spread

in the area. It is noteworthy that there is frequent population movement from Yemen to Egypt (daily flights), and Giza governorate is a home for many Yemenis in Egypt.

- WHO provided financial and technical support to the Ministry of Health and Population to conduct an internal surveillance review in seven high-priority governorates, due to start by the end of May 2022.
- On 27 April 2022, WHO successfully transferred a total of \$100,000 USD to continue surveillance strengthening efforts in Egypt.

Iran



- Preparations for an independent internal surveillance review, supported by WHO, are ongoing to assess the sensitivity of polio surveillance in Sistan and Baluchistan province.

Occupied Palestinian territory (oPt):



- Circulation of cVDVP3 in Israel continues, with one AFP case (a 45-month-old girl in Jerusalem) and six positive contacts, which is genetically linked to cVDVP3 isolated from environmental surveillance sites in Jerusalem, Israel, and Bethlehem, occupied Palestinian territory, between September 2021 and January 2022.
- Due to proximity and population movement, there is risk of spread of polio in populations in both Israel and West Bank locations in oPt.

Somalia:



- The date of onset of paralysis of the most recent cVDPV2 case is 18 February 2022.
- To date, 26 children have been paralysed in the cVDPV2 outbreak since 2017; the last cVDPV2 from an AFP case was reported from the laboratory to the regional office on 23 April 2022.
- Sequencing results pending for PV2 isolated from:
 - One AFP case in Bakool, Rabdure district, accessible area (SOM-BKL-RAB-22-001) and its three contacts
 - One contact from an AFP case in Gedo, Bardera district, inaccessible area (SOM-GDO-BRD-22-003-C3)
 - Two contacts from the last cVDPV2 case in Lower Shabelle, Awdegee district, inaccessible area (SOM-LSH-AWD-22-001-C1&C2)
 - Nine isolates from environmental samples (one in Lower Jubba, seven in Banadir, one in Mudug).

had onset of paralysis on 18 December 2020. The last positive environmental sample was collected on 9 November 2020.

- Enhanced surveillance activities continue.

Yemen:



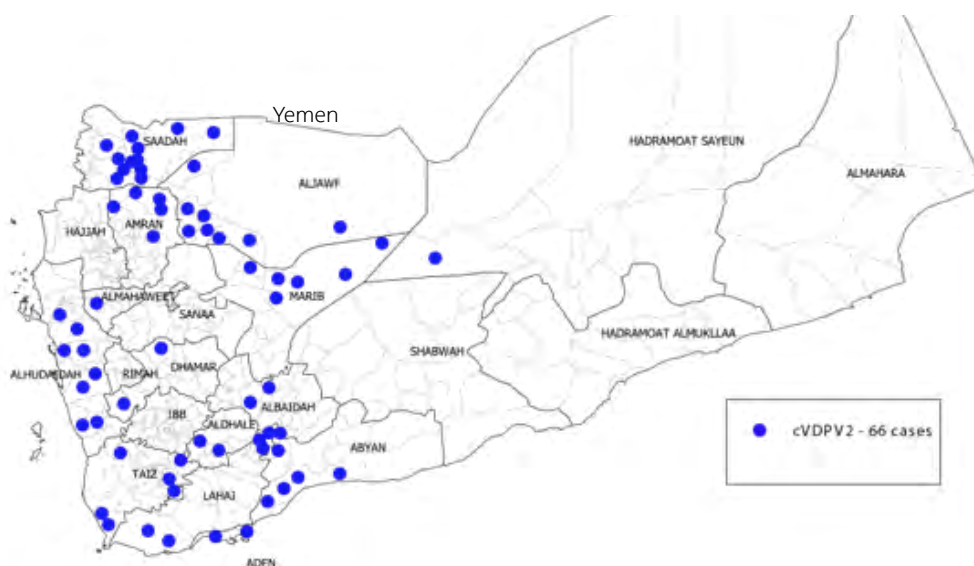
- As of 18 April 2022, Yemen has reported a total of 67 cVDPV2 cases since the start of the outbreak, with 62 having onset of paralysis in 2021 and five in 2022. As of 15 April, 257 specimens from AFP cases are pending testing.
- The most recent positive cVDPV2 had onset of paralysis on 7 January 2022 and the most recent cVDPV1 case had onset of paralysis on 25 March 2021.
- A total of 224 AFP cases were reported up to week 10. The NPAFP rate is 7.4, and the stool adequacy rate is 88%, reflecting a well-functioning AFP surveillance system.
- Enhanced surveillance activities continue, with a recent improvement in sample shipment frequency, from fortnightly and weekly. Despite this, security and logistical challenges continue to slow the movement of samples to labs outside the country.

Sudan:



- Sudan has not reported a cVDPV2 case for more than one year: the most recent case

Location of cVDPV2 cases in Yemen





Outbreak response update

Djibouti:

- Following the laboratory confirmation of cVDPV2 isolation in environmental samples on 25 January 2022, two NID were conducted (27 Feb - 3 March and 27 - 31 March). The administrative coverage was 98% for both rounds, although post-campaign monitoring (PCM, LQAS) showed less consistent coverage. Currently no third round is planned but surveillance is being strengthened.

Egypt:

- Preparations for the two sub-national nOPV2 campaign are ongoing in Qena and Luxor, with an aim to start R1 on 8 May 2022 in response to the isolation of cVDPV2 from ES in Qena.

Occupied Palestinian territory (oPt):

- The risk assessment for the response to cVDPV3 isolated through environmental sampling has been completed, submitted and approved by ORPG.
- Preparations are under way for implementation of bOPV sub-national immunization days in two districts (Bethlehem and East Jerusalem) targeting 100K children under age five.
- R1 is planned for 16 May 2022 and R2 a month later. Missions from EMR POL and UNICEF MENAR POL teams have begun to support country teams and coordinate key players.

Somalia:

- With the exception of Somaliland, the country concluded its mOPV2 NID in March 2022, covering six states. Somaliland has not yet confirmed its NID dates.
- Of the 2,669,790 under-five children targeted in South, Central and Puntland, approximately 94% administrative coverage has been reported. About 441,257 infants were covered, of which 2.7% of children received the vaccine for the first time (2.7%). The PCIM finding has reported overall 99% vaccination coverage. Further, the PCIM showed that over 60% of districts with low awareness levels about the NID campaign are from Banadir.
- According to LQAS, five lots failed out of 74: two from Banadir and one each from Hiran,

Mudug and Nugal regions. Per microplan and admin coverage, a total of 369,113 children were inaccessible for vaccination.

- An updated risk assessment is being developed to request the remaining mOPV2 doses in line with the Somalia Emergency Action Plan (SEAP) in which five campaigns of different scope and target were planned (two campaigns have already been conducted), taking into account the newly accessible areas.

Sudan:

- The Outbreak Response Assessment (OBRA) was conducted in the last quarter of 2021. The Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF have closed or are implementing OBRA recommendations from the assessment conducted in 2021.
- Providing no significant changes, the final OBRA is being planned, which will likely take place in May-June 2022.
- Under the supervision of the vaccine disposal committee, and in coordination with GPEI partners, the MOH is working to safely dispose of the remaining unusable and empty vaccine vials from the campaign in early 2021.
- The country has been developing an annual plan for polio eradication in close consultation with the Federal Ministry of Health.

Yemen:

- In R2 of a national trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) campaign which was carried out in 12 southern governorates over 19-24 March in response to ongoing circulation of both cVDPV1 and cVDPV2, 2.3 million children under the age of 10 years were reached with tOPV; R1 took place in January 2022, vaccinating 2.2 million under 10 years old children. R3 is planned for 29-31 May 2022 targeting 1.7 million children under age five in 120 districts of 12 southern governorates.
- Intense advocacy efforts are ongoing to facilitate access for vaccination in Yemen's northern governorates.
- No response campaign has been conducted in the northern governorates since the start of the cVDPV2 outbreak due to a ban on house-to-house vaccination campaigns.



Risk communication and community engagement

- In **Yemen**, UNICEF is supporting interventions to improve uptake of polio vaccines. For R2, completed on 24 March 2022, interventions included:
 - *Messaging deployed over eight private sector radio stations and two TV channels, covering most of the areas targeted by the campaign.*
 - *Engagement of 4,710 community volunteers and 1,390 religious leaders (male and female) in social mobilization.*
 - *Use of 135 mobile vehicles with public announcement systems in announcing the campaign and disseminating messages on vaccination*
- Using lessons learned from Yemen's R1 and R2, a social mobilization plan is under development to address the remaining challenges and support R3.
- Plans are in place to support intensified social mobilization interventions in Yemen's northern governorates, depending on access.



Health and humanitarian issues with an impact on polio activities

- A measles outbreak has been reported in **Yemen's** southern governorates. An outbreak response is being planned in May 2022, falling in the same month of both R3 of the polio campaign and an upscaling of the integrated outreach campaign to support Covid-19 vaccination.

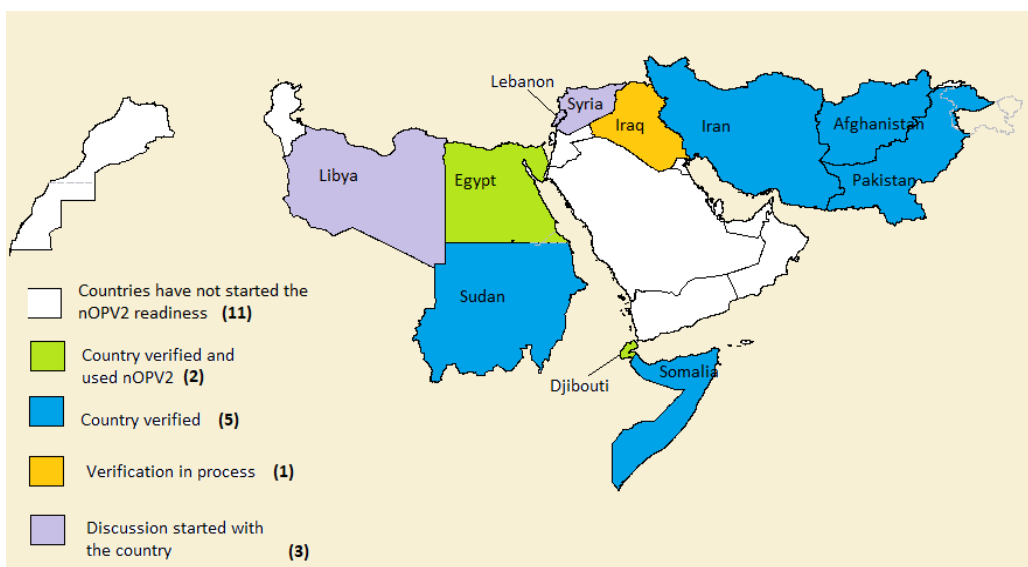


Regional coordination

- At the **Somalia** Summit, held in Nairobi 21-23 March 2022, the SEAP (Somalia Emergency Action Plan) was endorsed by Somali Health Minister HE Fawziya Abikar Nur. The Somalia Polio Eradication Action Plan 2022 outlines a four-point call to action to stop the outbreak, which is one of the longest lasting cVDPV2 outbreaks reported so far. The plan aims to direct partners' efforts and resources towards boosting population immunity, reaching high-risk populations — including inaccessible and nomadic communities and internally displaced persons — to strengthen their immunity, enhancing the search for poliovirus, and strengthening coordination among stakeholders.

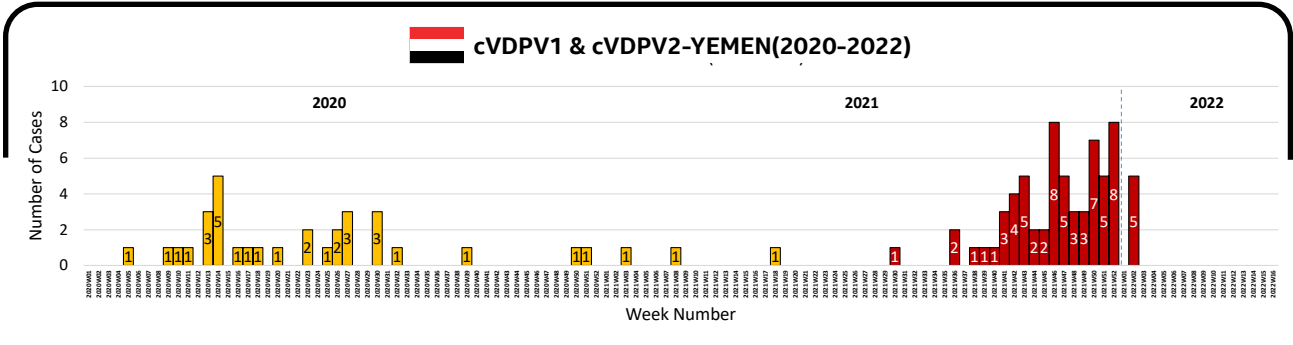
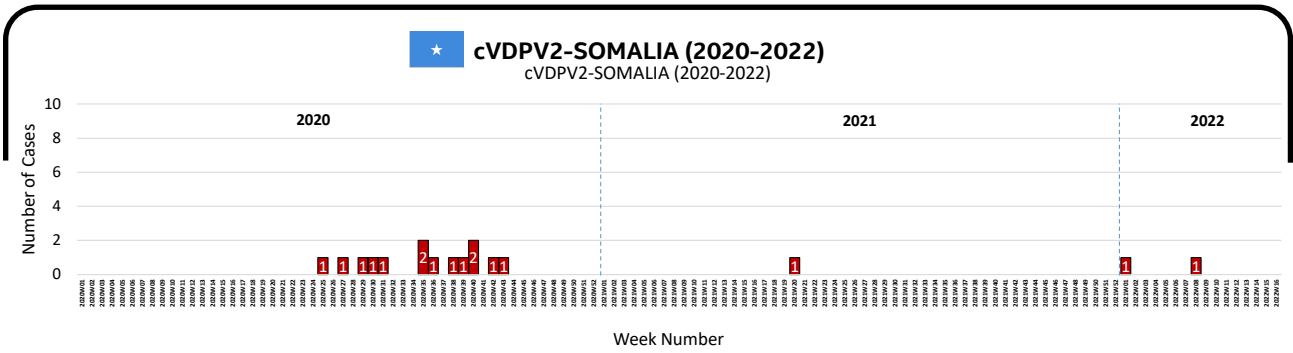
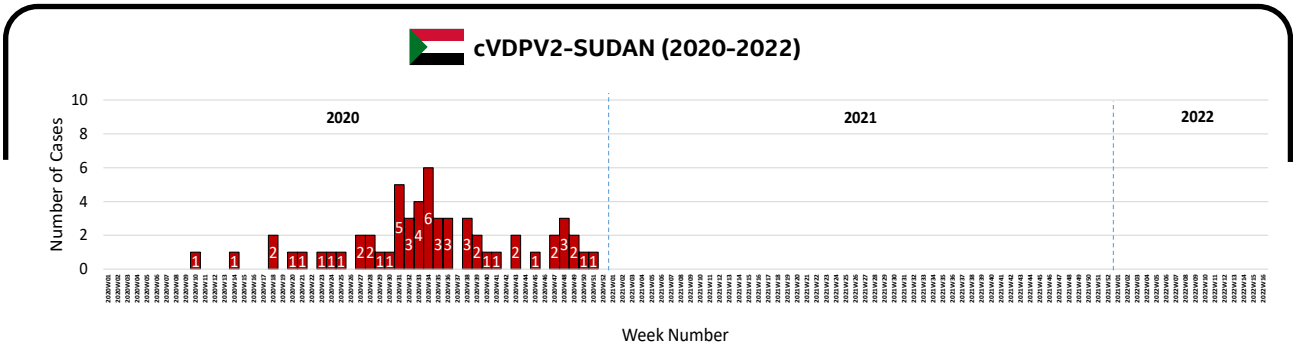


nOPV2 update

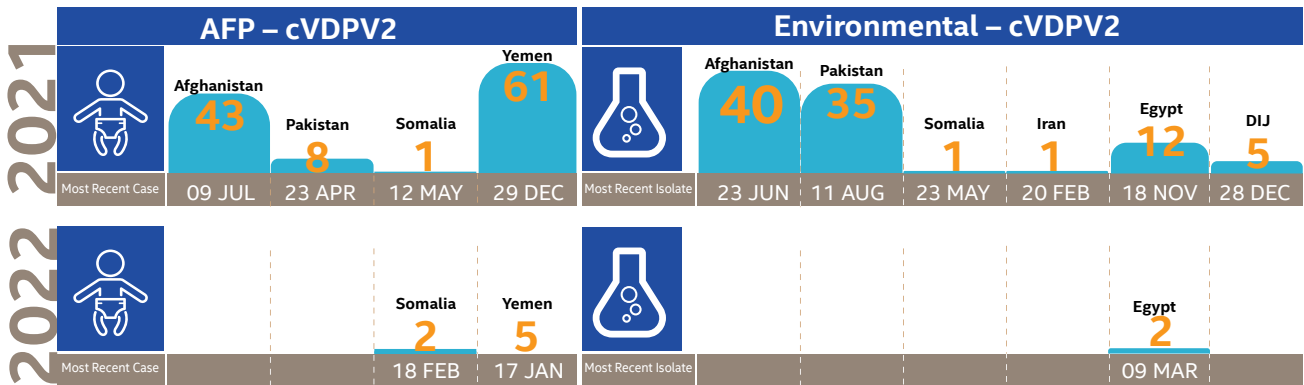




Outbreak EPI curves



Other cVDPV2 Outbreaks in the EMR



Send questions to:

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 Regional Outbreak Communications: williamssa@who.int

UNICEF:

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 Regional Chief of Communications: jtouma@unicef.org

Relevant links:

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