



PRESS RELEASE

Polio outbreak in Dadaab refugee camps being contained

DADAAB 31 MAY 2013 - WHO, UNHCR, and partner agencies are engaged in an intensive vaccination campaign to contain an outbreak of polio in the Dadaab refugee complex in north-eastern Kenya. Since the first case was discovered on 17 May, four more people in contact have been confirmed positive in laboratory tests.

WHO has sent an emergency team to Dadaab to implement a vaccination campaign in the five Dadaab camps in collaboration with UNHCR as well as teams from the Kenyan Ministry of Health, UNICEF, and other agencies. The current target group is children aged 0 to 15 years (a population of some 288,000). Today is the fifth and last day of the first vaccination round, and it is expected that close to 100 per cent of the target population will have been reached by the end of the day.

The next vaccination round in one week's time will target the whole refugee population in Dadaab (some 424,000). In addition to that, there will be two more rounds, with one month in between, before the campaign is over.

At the same time, the Kenyan Ministry of Health is also conducting a vaccination campaign among the host community population in North Eastern Province in close collaboration with WHO.

The polio outbreak in Dadaab comes after a similar outbreak in Somalia, where one case has been reported in Mogadishu. The Somali government has expressed concern about the situation in South Central Somalia, where immunization activities have not taken place for the last three years because of the security situation.

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