



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

National Statement

On the High-level meeting of Global Polio Partners Group

8th June 2018

Madam Chair,

We thank the co-Chairs for convening this meeting. Pakistan is making progress towards eradication of Polio. We continue to march towards reaching the ultimate goal of interrupting polio virus transmission with political commitment, data driven management and the vigilant oversight by the dynamic network of National and Provincial EOCs. In this regard we wish to highlight the following:

- The current poliovirus epidemiology in Pakistan is promising. Till date, only one polio case was reported from district Dukki in Balochistan. This is in line with the declining trend evident since 2014 (from 306 cases reported in 2014 to 54 in 2015 to 20 in 2016 and only 8 in 2017). Likewise, the number of districts reporting polio cases has also decreased from 14 in 2016 to 7 in 2017 indicating restricted geographical presence of the wild poliovirus.
- The country programme also vigilantly monitors the potential presence of poliovirus in sewage samples from 55 strategically selected sites spread across the country - the largest ever environmental surveillance network established by any country.
- The most recent sero-prevalence survey Round-II results depict that the programme has further enhanced immunity against WPV1 in all zones of concern, with the overall protection level consistently above 95% (the only

exception is Killa Abdullah with immunity level of 92% -- improved from 88% in Round-I).

- The National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) 2017-18 builds on the successful approaches and strategies fine-tuned based on the lessons learnt from 2016-17. It defines clear priorities to address the remaining programmatic gaps, milestones with timeline and provides strong guidance on exact mechanism of execution of the devised strategies. The development of NEAP 2018-19 is also in the final stages.
- Nine strategically planned door to door Polio vaccination campaigns (SIAs) for current low season (Sept 2017 – May 2018) have been successfully implemented. An additional response round was further conducted in October 2017, targeting almost 4 million children in central Pakistan to mitigate the epidemiological risk. Moreover, to further boost the immunity levels of under two children in high risk areas, a combined IPV-b OPV campaign was also conducted in the selected areas of Rawalpindi-Islamabad, KPK, FATA and Balochistan.
- The efficient support of law enforcement agencies and security forces is enabling frontline workers to reach all under five children in every corner of the country. We deployed thousands of health workers, social mobilizers, and volunteers to carry out various polio eradication activities.
- The program has enhanced focus on tracking and vaccinating the high-risk mobile populations, moving within the country and between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Thorough surveys have been conducted to define such groups, understand movement patterns and assess their vaccination status leading to an effective action plan during this season. Pakistan is closely working with Afghanistan for a coordinated effort towards eradication of Polio virus from this block.
- As the Polio Eradication Initiative approaches its completion in Pakistan, and without distracting from completing the task of stopping all wild poliovirus transmission, it becomes critical for the country to initiate a transition process. A key outcome of transition planning will be to ensure the anticipation and circumvention of a potentially ruinous fiscal cliff. Pakistan must equally avoid a hard Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) funding transition and exit.
- The Government will be directly involved in not just transition planning but financial decision making and timelines for an orderly and responsible transition. GPEI must consider a more realistic timeline. Careful planning and

discussions between the global health initiatives and the Government of Pakistan will need to take place to ensure a smooth process that does not adversely impact child health in Pakistan.

Madam Chair,

The government of Pakistan remains fully committed towards eradication of Polio. We appreciate the work of this forum and acknowledge the support of our partners in our efforts to prevent the spread of Wild Polio virus.

I thank you.
