

# Malawi Wild Polio 1 Outbreak Situation Report #2 23 February 2022

## Situation Overview

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- On 17 February, the President of **Malawi declared a National Public Health Emergency** in response to the outbreak of WPV1.
- A joint **press conference** by Deputy Health Minister along with WHO Representative, UNICEF Country Representative and CDC Country Head organized on 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2022.
- Polio Outbreak Response Emergency Operation Center (EOC) activated and is operational at Ministry of Health since 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022
- **No new cases of Wild Polio Virus 1** or circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) were reported during the period of reporting. Still, waiting for the report of the six stool and environmental samples sent to NICD, South Africa.
- **Risk Assessment with social mapping completed and presented to Outbreak Response Polio Group (OPRG)** for the scope and vaccine.
- Nation-wide four rounds of SIAs targeting 2,887,815 U5 children is planned and the first-round campaign **will start on 21 March 2022**
- **Vaccine quantification** completed and UNICEF Supply Division to process POs for urgent delivery of bOPV for the campaigns
- **GPEI mobilized 14 international professionals** from WHO, UNICEF, CDC to work closely together with MOH and health partners to support surveillance, SBCC, vaccine management, monitoring and supplementary immunization efforts
- **Planned campaign response activities:** Ministry of Health (MOH) is planning for nation-wide four vaccination rounds targeting 2,887,815 under-five children with bivalent Oral Polio Vaccine (bOPV) against wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) and the first-round campaign **will start on 21 March 2022** and the total bOPV requirement for first two rounds is 6,896,334 doses (R1-3,448,167 and R2-3,448,167).
  - Round 1: 21 March,
  - Round 2: 18 April,
  - Round 3: May/June and
  - Round 4: June/July
- Both WHO and UNICEF are advising health workers and caregivers to observe strict health and safety measures against COVID-19 during the campaign
- Govt of Malawi has intensified surveillance measures to improve detection of Acute Flaccid Paralysis and poliovirus are being implemented in the Lilongwe District.
- The **Polio Task Team (PTT) of the UNICEF Malawi Country Office (MCO)** is meeting regularly, every alternate day to better coordinate and manage resources and support from all concerned sections to accomplish the outbreak-related tasks effectively and on time.
- **COVID-19 vaccination roll-out** efforts intensified with launch of the COVID-19 Vaccine Express Program 2.0 (2<sup>nd</sup> Phase) on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 to further improve vaccine uptake and avert the risk of vaccine expiry, especially given that 500,000 doses of J&J vaccines are expiring in April 2022.

## Polio Outbreak Response Human Resources:

- Regional Polio Logistics Specialist is on-board
- Polio Communication Consultant is arriving on 28th Feb subject to visa.
- International SBC consultancy recruitment is in the process
- International Cold Chain & Vaccine Management consultancy recruitment is in the process
- Zonal Outbreak Response Management Consultants (5) health/immunization/C4D professional at NOB level to support the districts is in process

## Vaccine logistics:

**Cold Chain space assessment** has been completed and there is adequate space to store the immunization supplies.

1. **Vaccine quantification** has been completed- about 3.4 million doses for 1<sup>st</sup> round.
2. SD is fast-tracking the procurement process for urgent delivery of 6,897,000 bOPV doses for the campaigns from Serum Institute of India (WHO prequalified supplier). The doses available at short notice will have expiry dates as follows:
  - 60,700 vials with batch expiry Feb 2023
  - Remaining doses batch Expiry April 2023
4. Microplanning is underway.
5. Training module development for capacity building of Cold Chain Technician and Vaccine Handlers is in process.

## Social Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC):

1. **Social Investigation:** The main purpose of this activity is to understand social behavioral issues around Polio including knowledge, attitude and practices. The assessment has been completed with follow up activities to be finalized by today,
2. **Polio SBC Strategy Budget:** Under finalization
3. **Partnership:** SBC partners platform, including with PAC/MIAA (faith-based actors) to actively utilize.
4. **Media Briefings:** Taking place this Friday with support from Malawi Red Cross
5. **Message Development:** Sessions with partners taking place this week
6. **UNICEF SBC Technical Team meeting:** The second team meeting is scheduled for tomorrow

## Key Issues for support

1. **Human Resources:** Most of the individuals on the roaster are not either available or prefer other duty stations for better payment. First campaign starts on 21 March and require urgent support.
2. **Budgeting:** In the key areas of UNICEF support example on SBCC and vaccine management there are no clear indication what will be funded. Grant conditionality for the 500,000\$ pre financing will also be appreciated if available.
3. **GPEI coordination:** The speed of the GPEI partners is at a very varied stage and a Sit Rep provided is brief. More clarity and guidance on role of GPEI coordinator and use of one SitRep is great
4. **Regional collaboration:** MCO reached out to the Reps in Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia. A guidance is needed on enhancing the regional collaboration including coordination between EOCs and country offices.

