



Zimbabwe

Polio Response Situation Report No.1



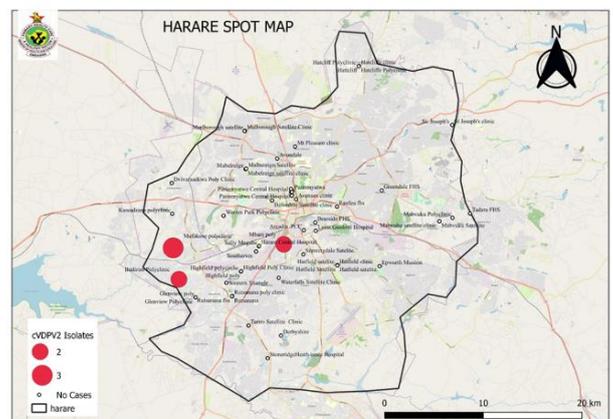
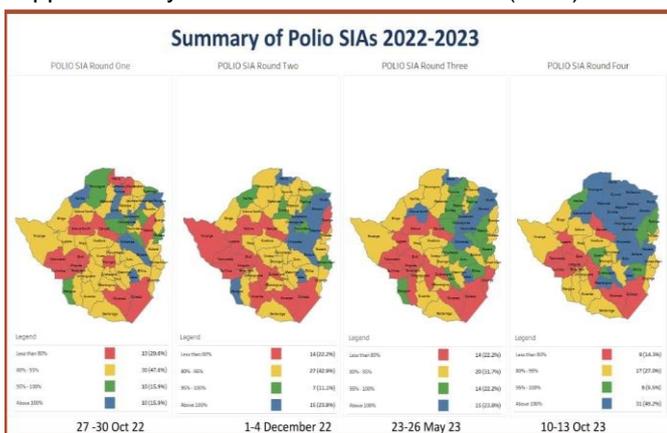
Reporting Period: 2 February 2024 to 16 February 2024

Highlights

- Zimbabwe detected seventeen (17) circulating vaccine derived polio virus type 2 (cVDPV2) from environmental samples in Harare since October 2023. The samples were from four polio environmental surveillance sites in Harare.
- Polio outbreak was declared a public health emergency (PHE) by the Minister of Health and Child Care in October 2023.
- An index human cVDPV2 was reported in a 10-year-old female AFP case in January 2024.
- Two newly confirmed AFP cases (samples from contacts) have been reported this week (cumulative 23) with a NPAFP rate at 1.3 per cent children over 15 years.
- A total of 10,517,500 doses of nOPV2 were received on 29 January 2024 for the planned two supplementary immunization activities (SIAs). Expiry date 14/08/2025.
- A joint press release on Round 1 national nOPV2 polio SIA done by the Honorable Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) with UNICEF, WHO and Partners on 16 Feb 2024.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Zimbabwe last reported a case of indigenous wild polio virus (WPV) in 1986 and had been certified polio free in 2005. Following the detection of WPV1 in Mozambique and Malawi, in 2022, Zimbabwe also undertook the multi-country supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) with bOPV2 and managed to conduct four rounds of SIA.



In 2023, Zimbabwe detected seventeen circulating vaccine derived polio virus type 2 (cVDPV2) from environmental samples in Harare since October 2023. The samples were from the 4 polio environmental surveillance sites in Harare. Two newly confirmed AFP cases (samples from contacts) have been reported this week (cumulative 23) with a NPAFP rate at 1.3 per cent children >15 years.

The cVDPV2 outbreak was declared a public health emergency by the Minister of Health and Childcare (MOHCC) in October 2023. Polio outbreak response activities commenced with plans to conduct two supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) using novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2) starting 20 February 2024.

The risk of poliovirus spreading within the country and neighboring countries remains high. Special considerations need to be made in the polio outbreak response for special populations who include vaccine hesitant religious groups who are densely populated in Manicaland (Buhera, Mutasa and Mutare districts), populations in refugee camps (Tongogara in Manicaland and Waterfalls transit camp in Harare), populations along borders, cross border traders, artisanal miners, and populations in emerging peri urban settlements in Harare.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

To respond to the outbreak, UNICEF Zimbabwe has received funding support from the German Development Ministry (BMZ) and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). The funding from BMZ will support the surge staff for the 6-month period between January and June 2024 while the BMGF funding will support the vaccination campaign scheduled in February and March 2024.

UNICEF's Response

Coordination and Planning

- Strong leadership and support by the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) through the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC).
- UNICEF participates in the Monday and Thursday EOC coordination meetings conducted to review daily progress of the preparedness dashboard including feedback to the provinces for the identified issues.
- Weekly UNICEF's internal meetings under leadership of Representative (every Monday) and polio team meetings (Every Tuesday and Thursday).
- Through MOHCC leadership, bi-weekly SitReps are developed and shared with health partners, stakeholders, and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) team.
- Weekly UNICEF and WHO meetings to discuss the coordination, planning and implementation concerns and joint advocacy with MoHCC.
- National level supervisors' deployment plan and orientation for 85 members was completed to support the pre-intra-post campaign supportive supervision.

Human Resources & Surge support

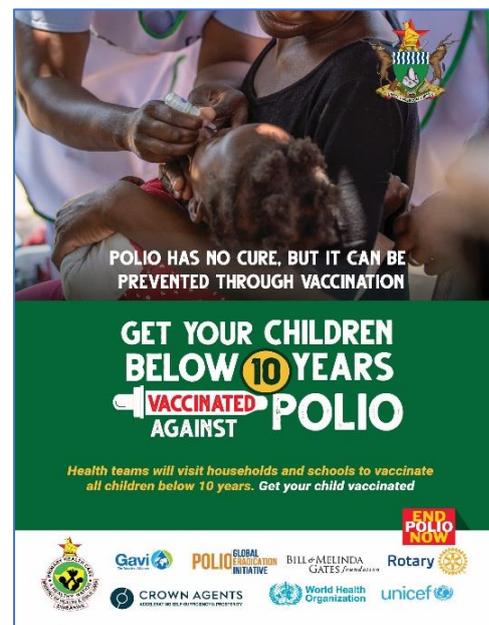
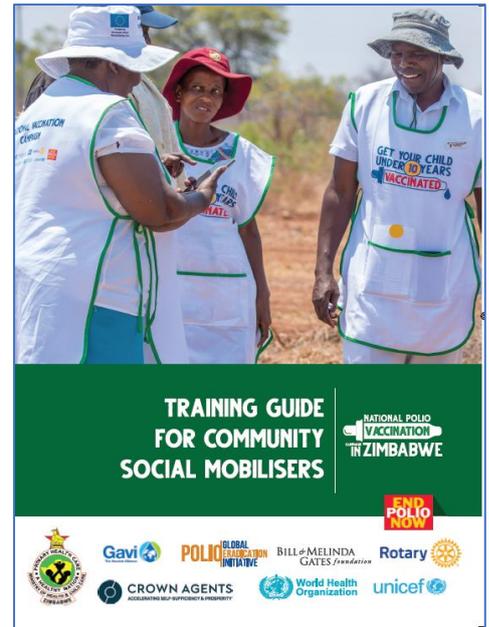
- UNICEF has supported the MoHCC with additional surge staff to support the outbreak response through the recruitment of seven local and three international surge staff to support coordination, SBC, and vaccine management.

Vaccine Management and Logistics

- A total of 10,517,500 doses of the vaccines for the two rounds were received in country on 29 January 2024 (Expiry date 14/08/2025) and distribution of vaccines along with other campaign materials and supplies (tally sheets, plastic, and Information, Education and Communication materials, etc) to the provinces according to the distribution plan has been started last week. UNICEF team will continue to follow up ongoing monitoring of the proper distribution of vaccines and supplies from districts to health facilities.
- UNICEF procured 1,466 additional vaccine carriers to support the outbreak response which has been received by the MoH last week and will be distributed largely to Harare province.
- In addition, indelible markers, procured through World Health Organization (WHO) are adequate for round one. However, given their expiry date as of 21 March 2024, WHO will be requesting additional markers to support round two.
- National Level training of trainers for the 85 national supervisors was conducted on 8-9 February 2024 and cascaded training are being conducted in the provinces and districts.
- UNICEF disbursed US\$ 1,865,386.73 (49 per cent of total budget) to Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South provinces to support round one campaign.

Social Behaviour Change (SBC) Community Engagement & Accountability

- UNICEF supported MoHCC with 200,000 posters with varied key messages in local languages, 10,000 aprons, 2,100,000 vaccination cards, 110,000 summary sheets, 220,000 tally sheets, 10,000 sun hats, 10,000 pocket guides, 5,500 pocket guide, 2,000 megaphones, 500 polio ID cards for Independent Monitors and LQAS surveyors, and 500 banners to build awareness on polio vaccination among the communities.
- Guided by the social ecological model and insights from the social investigations reports, UNICEF printed 600,000 factsheets for each target audience (health workers, community influencers and caregivers).
- UNICEF also printed 500,000 parents notice to raise awareness among parents and societies.
- UNICEF also developed ToRs for conducting advocacy and community meetings.
- 400 social mobilisers manuals were also developed and printed to build capacity of the community cadres.
- 7,500,000 household stickers have been printed to be used for household marking during the campaign with support from UNICEF.
- All Provincial Health Promotion Officers were trained on the social mobilization strategy and tools for cascading trainings.
- Social mobilization and community engagement started in the communities in all implementing districts.
- Online social listening/ news alert specific to Zimbabwe started. The first analysis report has been shared with social mobilization response pillar and partners. No significant issues or concerns noted so far from social listening.
- Social mobilization crew (social mobilisers, megaphone announcers, supervisors) identified for the cascade training.
- U-Report poll on caregiver's polio Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices rolled out and findings shared with partners.
- Crisis communication has been activated with focal person's identified at national, provincial and district levels.
- Sensitization and system activation to take place by this week.
- Different data collection tools (rumors and misinformation management, refusals tracking, and social mobilisers activities reporting) introduced and shared with provinces/districts.



Surveillance

- Two new confirmed AFP cases (samples from contacts) have been reported this week (cumulative 23) with a NPAFP rate at 1.3 per cent children >15 years.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- UNICEF supported the development and printing of the data collection tools which includes the tally sheets, summary sheets, vaccination cards and vaccine accountability forms.
- A dashboard to support monitoring of the response was developed. UNICEF supported the review of the open data kit (ODK) based preparedness and implementation monitoring checklists to be used throughout the response.
- UNICEF surge team including staffs will be supporting the field monitoring during the round one campaign.

- A national LQAS training for independent monitors is planned for 16 February in Kadoma and UNICEF will be part of the facilitation team

Partnerships

- Support to the Ministry of Health and Childcare is through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative which includes UNICEF, World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, US-CDC and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as part of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) partnership, as well as GAVI the Vaccine Alliance.
- UNICEF is also leveraging local partnerships and community-based organisations to engage the local, religious and influential leaders to strengthen community engagement and mobilisation towards polio vaccine acceptance and improving broader health seeking behaviours.

Next Steps:

- The confirmation of the two new (samples from contacts) cVDPV2 cases during reporting week will not alter the scope and target age group for the planned SIA and we will continue with the pre implementation activities.
- Review the dashboard with MoHCC and WHO to access the implementation plan progress.
- Media journalists and stakeholders' engagement meetings to be conducted by week.
- Ongoing support to facilitate and validate pre campaign intervention by the national supervisors.
- Polio Launch by MoH on 19 February 2024.
- Supervision and monitoring support during pre and intra campaign.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

Stories can be found on UNICEF's website and social media channels:
UNICEF Zimbabwe stories: <https://www.unicef.org/zimbabwe/stories>

UNICEF Zimbabwe Social Media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

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