

# Polio Outbreak in Sudan

## Factsheet

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World Health  
Organization

unicef   
for every child

### Key Facts

- In August 2022, Sudan closed the 2020 poliovirus outbreak that affected 58 children in 15 out of 18 states.
- On 16 December 2022, Sudan declared a new polio outbreak after a variant type 2 poliovirus (cVDPV2) was confirmed in a four-year old boy in Kereinik locality, West Darfur state.
- Poliomyelitis, also known as polio, is a highly infectious disease that can lead to permanent paralysis or death.
- Polio can strike at any age but mainly affects children under 5 years of age.
- Polio is spread through person-to-person contact, mainly through the fecal-oral route, or through contaminated water or food.
- Polio invades the nervous system causing irreversible paralysis in a matter of hours.
- Polio is often common in areas with poor hygiene practices, including poor handwashing and ingestion of food or water contaminated with feces. Infants and young children who are not toilet-trained are often most at risk.
- Transmission is often, but not always, concentrated in crowded areas and those with poor sanitation and health care services. This means polio often affects more vulnerable and disadvantaged children including nomads, displaced people and members of remote communities who may lack access to essential services like water and health care.
- Polio's re-emergence is a public health concern. If one child has polio, no child in the country is safe. Every child must be vaccinated to eradicate polio.
- There is no cure for polio, but unlike most diseases, polio can be prevented through vaccination. Polio vaccines – both the injectable vaccine and the oral drops – are safe and effective.
- The oral polio vaccine (OPV) is easy to take and should be accepted every time it is offered. It is not possible to overdose on OPV; each dose offers an additional layer of protection. But if a single child becomes infected, all unvaccinated children are at risk.
- All children under 15 years of age with the onset of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) must be immediately reported to a nearby health worker, health facility or to a designated focal point in the community.
- Community engagement and social mobilization efforts ensure information about polio and vaccination campaigns are widely available, which means vaccines reaches more children and ultimately raises immunity levels across the country.

# Catch-up Campaign Against Polio and Yellow Fever 2023

## Target

Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) catch-up campaign in twelve states with a target of about 1.2 million children including those who missed routine vaccination doses.

The first round of nationwide house to house polio vaccination campaign targeting over 8.9 million children under 5 years is planned for the first week of March 2023. The second round is planned for after Ramadan.

## Response



### Capacity building

Capacity building of health professionals and social mobilizers at the federal, state and locality level will ensure high-quality vaccination campaigns.



### Social Behavioral Change Communication

Marginalized and vulnerable populations especially nomads, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees that require protection from disease outbreaks will be reached through ongoing awareness and vaccination campaigns.

## Story from the Field



Arafa Saleh is a mother from the Mujamri nomadic community in Kereink locality in West Darfur. Arafa vaccinated her daughter in the recent catch-up polio vaccination campaign.

“Polio is a very serious disease. It is important for us as parents to be aware of the importance of vaccination to get rid of the diseases,” said Arafa Saleh.

## For more information, please reach out to

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