



UPDATES

PM meets Rotary delegation

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with a delegation of Rotary International on May 11 and reiterated that polio eradication is a top priority for the government. The delegation comprising of Rotary's International Polio Plus Committee Chair Mike McGovern, Rotary Foundation Trustee and National Chair Aziz Memon, Rotary International Director Faiz Kidwai and DG Adnan Rohaila called on the PM to discuss Pakistan's progress and remaining barriers to eradication. PM Shehbaz Sharif said he was personally overseeing polio eradication efforts in Pakistan and lauded Rotary and other partners for their long-standing support. The delegation thanked the PM for his sustained commitment and appreciated Pakistan's progress. The delegation members also visited the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) for Polio Eradication on May 11 where they were given a tour of the polio control room and a briefing on the polio programme. The Rotary delegation also visited transit vaccination sites in Azad Jammu and Kashmir on May 13 and interacted with vaccinators. (More details on Page 2)

JEE visit

A three-member delegation of a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) mission to assess International Health Regulations Core Capacities of Pakistan visited NEOC on 19 May. The delegation toured the polio control room and was given a comprehensive presentation on Pakistan's progress in combating poliovirus. Appreciating Pakistan's achievements,

the delegation deliberated on exploring how the Polio Programme's operations can serve as a model for other public health interventions. The JEE is a tool used to evaluate a country's preparedness and response capacity for preventing, detecting and responding to health emergencies.

May campaign

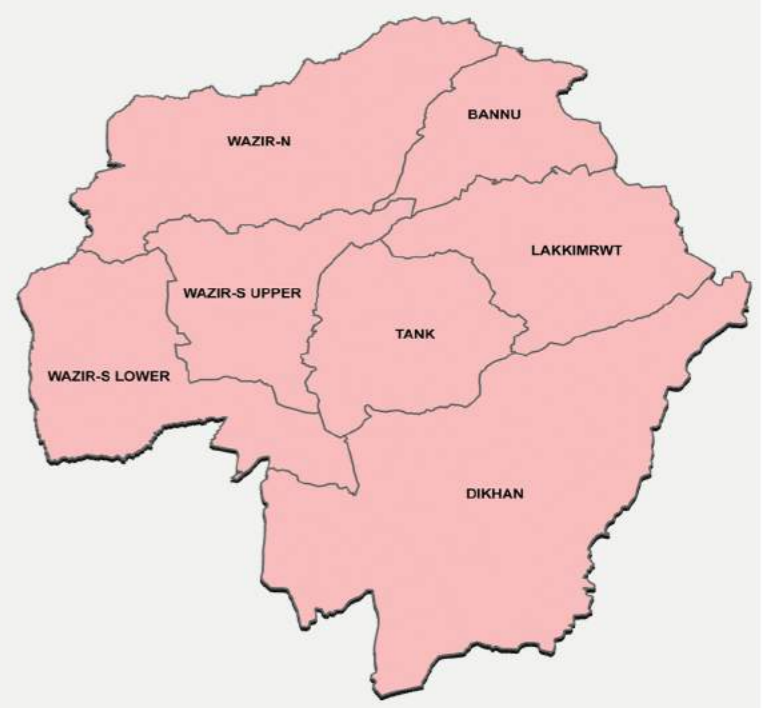
A phased subnational vaccination campaign began across the country on 15 May to vaccinate more than 23 million children under five against paralytic polio. The campaign began in Islamabad and 48 districts of Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab on May 15. Minister for Health Sindh Dr Azra Pechuho inaugurated the drive along with NEOC Coordinator Dr Shahzad Baig in Karachi. While monitoring vaccination activities, Dr Baig visited various health centres, engaged with frontline workers in the field and appreciated their hard work. In 22 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the campaign began on 22 May, while in the seven endemic districts of southern KP, it will begin on 29 May during which eligible children will be given fIPV and over 1.1 million children under five will be given OPV.

FLWs incentives raise

In a step recognising the essential services of frontline workers, the Pakistan Polio Programme has increased daily incentives for various cadres of frontline workers by 65%. The daily incentive raise came into effect from 1 May and will benefit more than 350,000 frontline workers working across the country on various positions.

MAY SNID Scope: Southern KP

District	OPV (0-59 months)	fIPV (4 months-59m)
Bannu	255,359	240,037
DI Khan	334,516	314,445
Lakki Marwat	196,403	184,619
Tank	86,550	81,357
North Waziristan	142,359	133,817
S.Waziristan Upper	28,428	26,722
S.Waziristan Lower	72,466	68,118
Total	1,116,081	1,049,116



Campaign begins on 29 May

06
Environmental samples positive for wild poliovirus have been reported from Pakistan so far this year. The latest detection was from Lower South Waziristan on April 19.

23.8 million
children under the age of five will be given the life-saving polio vaccine in the May subnational polio drive underway across the country.

144
Health camps have been set up across the country after polio campaigns since January to provide polio and essential immunization to children not reached during the drive.

01
Polio case has been reported in Pakistan so far this year. The affected child is a three-year-old from Bannu – one of the seven endemic districts of southern KP.

Enhanced surveillance in southern KP

As part of enhanced surveillance activities in the seven endemic districts of southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan Polio Programme's surveillance teams collected 68 additional environmental samples in April to detect any low-level circulation of wild poliovirus in these districts.

So far, WPV1 has been detected in only one of these samples, which was collected on April 19 from Qureshi Mohalla in Wacha Khaura union council of Lower South Waziristan.

The programme is already collecting environmental samples for testing from 114 sites across the country, however, these 68 samples were collected from sites that are not part of the existing site network.

This is an additional strategy being deployed in the endemic southern KP region. The programme will continue to collect samples from this site as well as other high-priority areas.

A vaccination drive is scheduled in Lower South Waziristan from May 29, which will be considered the first round of case response, while more will follow.



Encounters on the frontline of polio eradication



Light rain fell as two men in high-visibility jackets dashed across the road waving at a car to stop at the Gujjar Kohala check-post in Kohala, Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The family listened intently as the men explained that they were vaccinators with the Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) and that all children under five need to be vaccinated to protect against poliovirus, which can cause lifelong disability.

Without hesitation, the father got out of the car and reached for his baby and infant daughter. To protect the children from the rain, the vaccinators brought them into the shipping container placed just beside the check-post where Mike McGovern, Chair of the International Polio Plus Committee of Rotary International and Trustee and PolioPlus Committee National Chair Aziz Memon were busy talking to other vaccinators.

The container bustled with excitement as the vaccinators brought the iconic blue vaccine carrier to Mr McGovern and he poured two drops of the life-saving polio vaccine into the baby's mouth. While marking the child's finger, he thanked the father for safeguarding his children's future.

Minutes later, Mr McGovern and Mr Memon vaccinated children from a passing passenger van and waved them goodbye. Such is life at Permanent Transit Points (PTPs) across the country where vaccinators flag down all types of vehicles to immunize travelling children against polio.

During the last leg of the Rotary International delegation visit to Pakistan this month, Mr McGovern and Mr Memon visited two PTPs in Kohala where Rotary has donated repurposed shipping containers as







shelters for vaccination teams. They spent time engaging with vaccinators, PEI and EPI staff over lunch at the historic Quaid-e-Azam Residency overlooking the picturesque River Jhelum.

In discussions with Chief Secretary AJK Usman Chachar over tea, Mr McGovern appreciated that AJK has not reported a polio case in over 20 years and praised the hard work of the health workers.

The Rotary delegation was on a four-day visit to Pakistan which included high-level meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir. The delegation members appreciated Pakistan's progress against polio and reiterated that Rotary's support will continue as the country makes the last dash to eradication.

Rotary International is a pioneer of polio eradication efforts in the world and a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. It has contributed over USD2 billion to eradication efforts worldwide and its support remains sustained to make the dream of a polio-free world a reality.

Rotary's Support to Pakistan: Some Highlights

-  **09** Polio Resource Centers in high-risk areas of Pakistan
-  **23** Permanent Immunization Centers in remote areas
-  **09** Repurposed shipping container shelters for permanent transit points
-  **04** Repurposed shipping container shelters for cross-border PTPs at Pakistan-Afghanistan border
-  **48** Solar water filtration plants
-  **20K** vaccine carriers for polio workers

