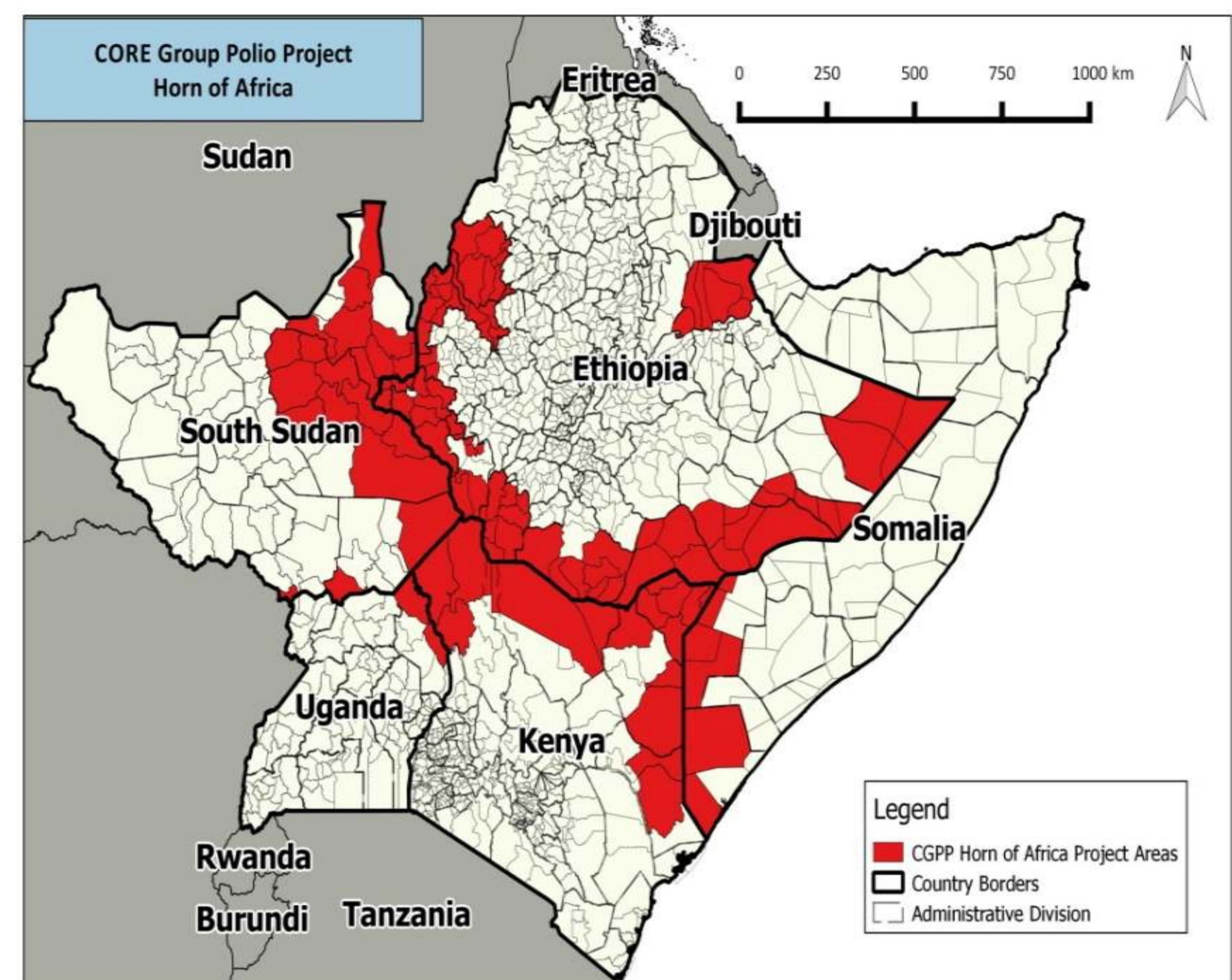


# Strategies to immunize children in conflict affected inaccessible areas: Experience of CORE Group Polio Project.

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## Background:

Millions of children are affected and displaced due to conflict in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Ethiopia due to ongoing conflict. These children are most vulnerable as they lack access to food, shelter, and health care. These children move from one country to other or within the country to relatively safer zones. Disease does not respect geo-political boundaries is proven fact in polio, Ebola, Zika and many other diseases. Large number of unimmunized children in these areas was threat to global polio eradication initiative. CORE Group Polio Project (CGPP) in South Sudan, Kenya and Somalia with host governments and WHO, UNICEF designed and implemented strategies to access these children from the inaccessible, hard-to-reach populations and vaccinated them.



## Methods:

Desk review of Core Group Polio Project program planning document reports and presentations from WHO Technical Advisory Group meetings.

## Strategies

1. Permanent vaccination posts along borders of conflict zones,
2. Special Vaccination Posts
3. RRM (Rapid Response Missions)
4. Tracking of nomadic population movements
5. Cross border synchronized immunization rounds
6. Social mapping-Mapping of border villages, border health facilities, formal and informal crossing points.



## Results:

1. Cross border collaboration and coordination meetings institutionalized in Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda.
2. Formation of cross border health committees in border districts/counties headed by District medical officers of neighbouring countries.
3. CORE Group Polio Project Somalia Reached 48,976 children through polio SIA and RI in FY 16-17
4. CORE Group Polio Project Kenya Reached 178,599 under five years age children through polio SIA and RI FY 16-17
5. CORE Group Polio Project South Sudan reached 93,427 under 15 years age children through 11 special vaccination posts along borders of conflict affected states between October 2015-2017.

## Conclusion:

CGPP has demonstrated how to access children in conflict zones. These strategies are replicable in similar setting to reach out the population with other services like food, sanitation, etc.