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THE CORE GROUP POLIO PROJECT ETHIOPIA SECRETARIAT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER



CGPP HOLDS THE ANNUAL PARTNERS REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING

The CGPP annual review and planning meeting (ARPM) is one of the major activities conducted on a yearly basis. This year, the fiscal year (FY) 2020 ARPM took place in four clusters i.e. in Assosa and Jigjiga on September 17 – 18, 2020, and in Hawassa and Gambella on September 22– 23, 2020. The cluster meeting was arranged based on the proximity and convenience of partners field offices. In Assosa, it was conducted with EOC (Kelem Welega Zone), CRS-BDCS, IRC (Benishangul Gumuz Regional Office) and World Vision; In

Jigjiga, it was held with PC, OWDA and SC. In Hawassa, the ARPM was held with Amref, CRS/HCS, and EOC (Borena Zone); and in Gambella, it was with EECMY and IRC (Gambella Regional Office).

Some of the activities conducted during the meetings were; the nine months CGP - GHS project performance of the secretariat and partners was discussed with achievements, challenges and unique experiences related to implementation was shared.

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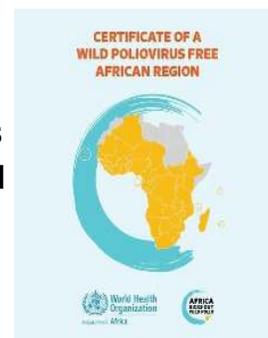
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Congratulations!

**The CORE Group Polio Project
Ethiopia Secretariat and Partners
congratulates all who have strived
for the success of achieving a
Polio Free status of the African
Region! We must continue to
achieve a polio free world!**



We, the members of the Africa Regional Commission for Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication, conclude today, Tuesday, 25 August 2020, that the transmission of indigenous wild poliovirus has been interrupted in all 47 countries of the WHO African Region.





EDITORIAL —

Africa Declared its Free Status of Wild Polio Virus!

*By Filimona Bisrat (MD, MPH),
CGPP Ethiopia Secretariat Director and Senior Regional Technical Advisor*

During the seventh session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa, the independent Africa Regional Certification Commission (ARCC) for Polio Eradication officially declared on August 25, 2020, that the African Region is free of wild poliovirus. This marks the eradication of the second virus from the face of the continent since the eradication of smallpox 40 years back.

In 1996, African Heads of States committed to eradicating polio during the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Organization of African Unity in Yaoundé, Cameroon. At the time, polio was paralyzing an estimated 75,000 children, annually, on the African continent.

The last case of wild poliovirus in the region was detected in August 2016 in Nigeria. Since 1996, polio eradication efforts have prevented up to 1.8 million children from crippling life-long paralysis and saved approximately 180,000 lives. Now, the African children can live free of polio.

This achievement is marked by strong partnerships and collaboration among donors, multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, frontline health workers, NGOs, communities, religious leaders, parents, and others.

It is expected that all African countries should sustain this achievement for the next generation by keeping the same effort until finishing the polio eradication in the world. Each country should maintain a high level of protection against poliovirus vaccination.

Currently, 16 countries in the African Region are experiencing cVDPV2 outbreaks, which occurs in under-immunized communities. The work is not finished until eradicating the cVDPV and keeping the children safe by increasing the level of vaccination in the community.

Still, the wild poliovirus is circulating in two endemic countries; Afghanistan and Pakistan, so that, all the countries should stay vigilant to stop importation of cases and maintain a strong surveillance system.

The current COVID-19 crisis challenges the delivery of essential health services to the population and affects the poor countries' socioeconomic system. The expertise gained from polio eradication can be applied and play a key role in controlling and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Replicated partnerships and collaboration of financial and human resources, logistic and supply system, mobilizing the community for awareness creation and using the existing community surveillance system to track the community's cases are essential focuses to combat COVID-19.

The contribution of the CORE Group Polio Project (CGPP) towards polio eradication in many African and Asian countries is immense. Especially in under-served, hard-to-reach, pastoralists, and refugees settlement areas, CGPP have been complementing the efforts of the government over the years.

In Africa, countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan have been implementing the polio projects funded by USAID. Angola has been graduated three years ago from the project.

CGPP is committed to continue until the end of polio eradicated in the world, working in ensuring equity and quality of polio supplemental immunization activities, strengthen routine polio immunization, community-based surveillance and social mobilization, and demand creation service through partnership, advocacy, research, capacity building, and mainstreaming immunization system with communities.

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CGPP-GHS Holds its Annual Staff Retreat For 2020

As it's yearly custom, CORE Group Polio Project Ethiopia (CGPP-GHS) organized its annual retreat program to review the project activities of 2020 and plot the fiscal year 2021 implementation. The event was held at Adulala Hotel and Resort in Bishoftu Town on September 3 – 7, 2020. In attendance were all CGPP Secretariat staff members.



The retreat in progress

The retreat provided an avenue for CGPP to review its project activities and budget in the year 2020, presented its technical and financial plan ahead for the successful implementation of its projects and activities in 2021, and reorient staff on its goals and objectives.

Day one of the retreat featured a reflection of the year 2020, a presentation of the 2021 draft work plan, as well as discussed modalities on the harmonization of CGP-GHS and Gavi Projects.

Highlights of day two were discussions on the frameworks of the establishment of one health Taskforce at woreda level and revisions on the staff assignment implementation areas.

In the 3rd day, the Secretariat monthly reporting format and field-level reporting format were reviewed and updated, the FY20 activity and budget performance reviewed; and challenges and successes were discussed. Also, orientation given for Staff members on the ODK/ ONA platform.

The focus of the 4th and 5th day was a review of documents such as EPI mainstreaming guideline, COVID-19 impact assessment tools on immunization and surveillance, and assessments related to COVID-19.

It was an enlightening, engaging, motivating, and fun-filled five-day retreat as everyone interacted and contributed effectively in every segment of the program.

The retreat was commenced and brought to a close by Dr. Filimona Bisrat Secretariat Director and Senior Advisor to the HoA, who gave an opening and closing remarks and appreciated everyone for their contributions, urging all staff to be prepared to put all that they had learned and discussed into effective use towards the development of CGPP-GHS implementations.

Meet our Partners

ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX TEWAHIDO CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND INTER-CHURCH AID COMMISSION (EOC-DICAC)



EOC-DICAC was established in 1972 as a development wing of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church with the objective of enhancing the development efforts of the country. Since its establishment, the Commission has been engaged in various development programs and brought about a significant impact on the lives of the people of Ethiopia.

Refugee and returnee support, rural water supply, access road construction, agricultural development (agricultural & horticultural crop production, small-scale irrigation, livestock production), education, and rural development/food security/

livelihood improvement are EOC's main focus. Furthermore, income generation, natural resource development, climate adaptation, relief and rehabilitation support to drought affected communities, health, nutrition, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS, care and support to OVC and HIV affected community are also major areas of interventions. In addition, monastic institutions development and building the capacities of community including clergies and Sunday school youths are the focus areas of EOC/DICAC.

EOC/DICAC has been working with CGPP since 2013. The CGPP and EOC/DICAC are working in 11 Woredas of Borena and Kelem Wolega Zones in Oromia Region.



POLIO CORNER

The latest on the battle to eradicate polio

Summary of AFP Surveillance indicators by Region , Ethiopia
Jan 01 – Sep 18, 2020

Region	Expect ed Cases (2020)	Report ed (this period 2020)	Report ed (same period 2019)	Report ed this Week	NP-AFP Rate (annual ized) 2020	NP-AFP Rate (annual ized) 2019	Stool Adequac y (%)	Stool Cond. (%)	NPENT (%)	Compati bles	VDPV Cases	WPV Cases
A ABABA	17	17	18	0	2.7	2.9	94	100	7.1	0	0	0
AFAR	21	18	24	0	2.3	3.1	94	94	6.5	0	0	0
AMHARA	182	135	134	3	2	2	98	98	3.4	0	0	0
B/GUMUZ	12	9	13	0	2.1	3	67	100	11.1	0	0	0
D/DAWA	4	1	2	0	0.7	1.4	100	100	12.5	0	0	0
GAMBELLA	7	4	21	0	1.6	8.2	100	100	0.0	0	0	0
HARERI	2	1	3	0	1.4	4.1	100	100	0.0	0	0	0
OROMIA	380	209	289	4	1.4	2.1	88	98	2.6	1	11	0
SNNPR	191	123	148	2	1.7	2.1	93	97	4.1	0	4	0
SOMALI	60	100	107	4	4.6	4.7	93	100	9.3	0	0	0
TIGRAY	48	21	32	0	1.2	1.8	95	100	3.6	0	0	0
NATIONAL	924	638	791	13	1.8	2.3	92	98	4.3	1	15	0

Week 38, 2020



CGPP Joins the Tree planting initiative at the Polio Memorial Park in Addis Ababa

CGPP Ethiopia has participated in the tree planting event at the Entoto Polio Memorial Part at the Entoto Kusquam Area located in the northern part of Addis Ababa on Saturday, August 14, 2020. The tree planting event was organized by Rotary international Ethiopia and CGPP and representatives from the Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF, and others were in attendance. The event was launched by a representatives from Addis Ababa City Administration Bureau and Ethiopian Public Health Institute.



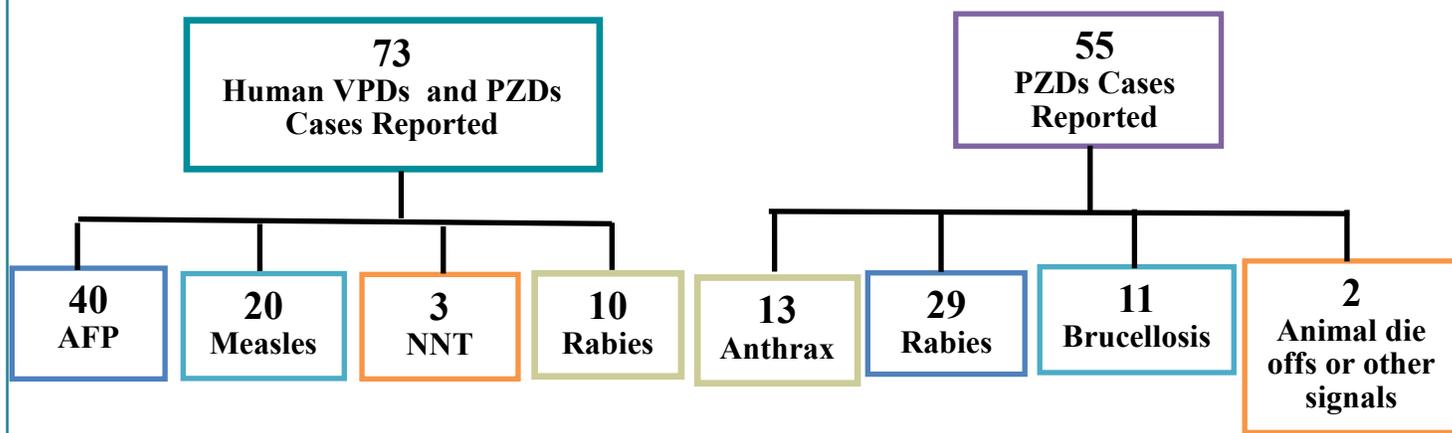
Besides supporting the National Green Legacy Initiative led by Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Ethiopian Prime Minister, the aim of the tree planning at the Polio Park was to uphold partners coordination towards COVID -19 prevention, strengthening polio eradication and routine immunization initiatives. In the tree planting events, a team from CGPP Secretariat and partners offices have participated. CGPP has also provided financial support for the tree planting event.



SURVEILLANCE UPDATES

Human and Animal Disease Cases Reported through ODK from CGPP implementation Areas (As of June 30, 2020)

VPDs = Vaccine Preventable Diseases
PZDs = Priority Zoonotic Diseases



COVID – 19 UPDATES

Reported Cases in Ethiopia As of September 30, 2020

Laboratory test → 1, 272, 352

Active cases → 42,964

Total recovered → 31,204

Total deaths → 1,198

Total Cases → 75, 368

Thank you for your contribution

Your contribution to this newsletter is highly appreciated. Without your valuable contribution, it is hard to reach our audiences with messages that are worth reading. We need to collaborate and exert more efforts together.



RESEARCH CORNER

Experiences from the field

Quality of health worker and caregiver interaction during child vaccination sessions: A qualitative study from Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia

Samuel Teshome, Legesse Kidane, Asrat Asress, Muluken Alemu, Bethelihem Asegidew, Filimona Bisrat:

INTRODUCTION:

Benishangul-Gumuz is one of nine regions in Ethiopia, located in the north-west of the country. The region has low immunization coverage, and a corresponding high risk to children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Adequate and clear communication during immunization sessions is a key factor that influences caregivers to adhere to the vaccination schedule and continue to bring children for vaccination.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

This study aims to explore the quality of interaction between health workers and caregivers during vaccination sessions, and to identify communication gaps that impact on the continued use of the vaccination service.

METHODS :

This cross-sectional qualitative study was carried out using in-depth interviews with health workers who provide vaccination at health facilities, observation of the

interactions between vaccinators and caregivers during vaccination sessions, and exit interviews of caregivers. Health workers who provided vaccinations in 12 health facilities based in central and remote parts of the region were interviewed. A total of 79 vaccination sessions in the 12 health facilities were observed and caregivers were interviewed on exit.

RESULTS :

Health workers at the health facilities expressed that they enjoy the work they do to get children vaccinated, while caregivers who brought their children for vaccination described the vaccinators as friendly and supportive. Not all health workers explain the purpose of the immunization card to caregivers, hence caregivers do not give due attention to the importance of the card. Some caregivers forget to bring the immunization card with them to vaccination session. In some institutions, those who did not bring the immunization card were refused the service. Health workers write the date of the next vaccination on immunization cards.

Table 1: Profile of caregivers who brought a child to a health facility for vaccination

	Age			Relation to Child		Literacy (Read and Write)	
	15 - 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	Mother	Other	Yes	No
Number	25	44	10	78	1	47	32
%age	32	56	13	99	1	59	41



RESEARCH CORNER

Experiences from the field

The majority of caregivers, however, cannot read, so that, they do not understand the return date, type of vaccine, or the purpose of the vaccine given. Caregivers agree that their children should get all vaccines recommended by health workers.

Vaccination is scheduled twice weekly at health centers and once weekly at health posts. The BCG and measles vaccination is scheduled monthly. However, when there are uncertainties regarding the availability and/or transportation of vaccines for the scheduled day, health workers do not tell caregivers when the next vaccination date will be.

Health workers work with community volunteers to pass on immunization messages house to house.

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes of quality of health worker and caregiver interaction

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Vaccinator and caregiver interaction at the health facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccinator’s opinion on interaction with caregivers during vaccination sessions • Caregivers’ perception of interaction with vaccinator
2. Key immunization messages to caregivers by vaccinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of immunization • The return date of vaccination • The type of vaccine given for age • When it is safe to vaccinate a child • Side effects of vaccine and vaccination
3. Factors affecting dependability of message from the vaccinator for immunization service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine stock-out • Lack of transport services for vaccines • Malfunctioning refrigerators • Lack of job aids • Vaccination days
4. Communicating with caregivers through community volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccination messages to caregivers given by community volunteers

CONCLUSION

Health workers do not communicate all key immunization messages to caregivers during vaccination sessions. Training health workers in health facilities on the essentials of immunization and interpersonal communication is important to ensure the continued use of the vaccination service by caregivers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to the health workers and caregivers who took their time to participate in the in-depth and exit interviews. We are also thankful to the data collectors, to Benishangul-Gumuz regional health bureau, to all study area health facility heads, and to the CORE Group Polio Project (CGPP) admin and finance team, who made this study possible. This study was supported by USAID through a grant to the CGPP.



CGPP commences groundworks of impact assessment study on COVID-19

With the objective of assessing the impacts of COVID - 19 towards immunization services and the conducts of stigma related to COVID-19 in its program implementation areas, the CGPP Ethiopia started ground works of a research undertakings. According to the Ministry of Health Ethiopia, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, immunization and other essential health services were at risk and disrupted which could result in further outbreaks.

As the CGPP quarterly reports reveals, there are: interruption of immunization session, decline in routine immunization coverage (i.e first and second quarter of Penta3 coverage in 2019 is 66% in the same period of 2020 FY is 59%) and high dropout rate and less number

of surveillance cases observed in the CGPP Ethiopia program implementation areas. The reasons for disrupted services vary. Even when services are offered, people are either unable to access them because of fear of being exposed to people with COVID-19, shortage of transportation, movement restrictions, and other related or non-related reasons. Many health workers are also unavailable because of restrictions on travel or redeployment to COVID-19 response duties as well as lack of protective equipment.

The studies will be conducted in Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella and Somali Regions. The results of these study is expected to help to design interventions for the continuity of immunization and surveillance activities.

CGPP Holds its Annual Review and Planning Meeting

Continued from page 1

Moreover, modalities on the establishment of transit vaccination points; and the establishment of One Health Taskforces at the zone and woreda levels were discussed, detail plan reviewed for the COVID-19 impact assessment studies, updates given on ODK/ONA reporting system and the FY21 activity and budget plan was completed.

In all the clustered meetings, a total of 77 staff members from CGPP Secretariat, partners head office and field offices were attended. During the two days event of each clusters all the planned agendas were covered with active participation of all attendees and the FY2021 activity and budget plan was completed and submitted by all partners.



David Newberry

February 1934 – August 2020

The CORE Group Polio Project Ethiopia Secretariat teams express our deepest sadness on the death of David Newberry. David was a humble man who made a significant impact on the polio eradication activities and changed the lives of countless people. David was a hard-working person who served the public health world for over 40 years. We greatly appreciate the support he had given to CGPP. We will remember his energy, vision, and passion for doing the right thing, and recognize him as a symbol of what one person can accomplish for the sake of many.