



EPI Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

July 2015

Editorial

July was marked with several high level events and visits in Addis Ababa and at field level including a high level vaccination session officiated by the Ethiopian Minister of Health, the World Health Organization Director General, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) Chief Executive Officer and UNICEF Deputy Executive Director; a high level polio advocacy summit in Dollo Zone, Somali Region led by Mr Moulid Hayir, Vice President of the Somali Regional Government in the presence of the Chairperson and members of the Africa Task Force on Immunization and the Horn of Africa Polio Technical Advisory Group Chair; as well as a Visit by a delegation of French Parliamentarians.

Accordingly, this newsletter highlights the acknowledgement of the Immunization program achievements commemorated in the presence of high level guests and the continued effort that Government and partners are exerting in strengthening of the programme. The deployment of STOP 46 team to the field, preparations for the upcoming subnational polio vaccination campaign in high risk areas, and highlights from key EPI meetings and workshops are also featured in this newsletter.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to our donors and partners that are collectively working together to support the Government of Ethiopia in achieving its immunization and broader child health targets: Gates Foundation, USAID, CDC, Rotary, UNICEF, GAVI, Clinton Health Access Initiative, JSI and PATH.

Enjoy Reading!

Inside this issue

A High Level Vaccination Session led by Ethiopian Minister of Health Conducted	1
A High Level Advocacy Polio Summit Held in Warder, Dollo Zone, Somali region	1
Preparation for Sub National Polio Campaign at field level	2
STOP 46 Team Orientation Conducted	2
Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Guideline Finalization Workshop	2
Paediatric Bacterial Meningitis Annual Review Meeting Held at Bishoftu	3
cMYP Dev't Workshop, Kampala Uganda	3
A High Level Donor Visit Held in Tigray	4
Immunization Advocacy and Comm. Workshop	4
Upcoming Events August 2015	

A High Level Vaccination Session Led by Ethiopian Minister of Health Conducted

Loza Mesfin & Selamawit Yilma



WHO DG, Dr Margaret Chan, Speaking at the Event, 14 July 2015

A high level vaccination session was conducted at Selam Health center in Addis Ababa on July 14 2015, with a theme "Sustaining Achievements in Polio Eradication in Ethiopia and Africa" to acknowledge the achievements in polio eradication and advocate for further strengthening of routine immunization and the health system.

The session led by the Ethiopian Minister of Health, Dr Kesetebirhan Admasu, was attended by high level delegates including the

World Health Organization (WHO) Director General Dr Margaret Chan, The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) Chief Executive Officer Dr Seth Berkley, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Ms Yoka Brandt; US Ambassador Ms Patricia M. Haslach, UNAIDS Executive Director Mr Michel Sidibe, Rotary National Polio Plus Committee Chairperson Dr Tadesse Alemu, Brazil Ambassador Mrs Isabel Cristina, President and CEO of PATH Dr Davis Steve, the WHO

Representative Dr. Pierre M'Pele Kilebou, UNICEF Representative Gillian Mellsop and CDC Country Director Dr Jeff Hansen, as well as national and international EPI partners, health workers and mothers with their children.

The event included vaccination of children by the high level delegates and remarks by the Addis Ababa Health Bureau Head, the GPEI partnership and the Ministry of Health.

"Strong leadership, political will and coordination are key to sustaining the gains made in interrupting polio transmission in Ethiopia and Africa," said Dr Margaret Chan WHO Director General, commending Ethiopia's aggressive response to the 2013 outbreak of wild polio virus. She added "Horn of Africa countries should continue to immunize all at risk age groups until the threat drops to zero and eradication is achieved. And this is possible only through high quality immunization activities for all communities." Continued to page 3

A High Level Advocacy Polio Summit Held in Warder, Dollo Zone, Somali Region

(Dr Hassan, Bashir, Dr. Habibu Yahaya and Loza Mesfin)



Polio Advocacy Summit participants, Dollo Zone, 2 July 2015.

A high level advocacy polio summit was held in Warder, Doolo Zone of Somali region. The summit was held in the presence of Mr Moulid Hayir - Vice President of Somali Regional Government,

Mr Mahamud-Ali Ahmed- Dollo Zone Administrator, Dr Ephrem Lemango - FMOH Director of the Maternal and Child Health Directorate, Professor Helen Rees - Chairperson of the Africa Task Force On Immunization (TFI), Dr Jean-Marc Olive - Chairperson of the Horn of Africa Polio Technical Advisory Group, Members of the TFI, Abdulfetaah Said - Acting Somali Regional Health Bureau Head, WHO Representative - Dr Pierre M'pele-Kilebou, Chairperson of the National Polio Plus Committee, Dr Tadesse Alemu, UNICEF, members of the Regional and Dollo Zone Command Posts, religious and clan leaders, and community stakeholders.

Continued to page 3

Preparations for Sub-national Polio Campaign at Field Level

Andargachew Merga HaileMariam

A sub national polio campaign will be implemented in Somali, Gambella, Benishangul Gumz regions and high risk areas of Oromia, Amhara, Tigray

under five year old children. Accordingly, all the vaccines and supplies have been distributed by Pharmaceutical Fund and Supply Agency (PFSA) to respective Woredas as per the micro plan of the regions. to respective target Woredas as per the micro plan of the regions in advance of the SNID.



WHO EPI central team conducted supportive supervision to Jimma zone and Gambella region. On job training was provided at health facility level, specifically in vaccine and cold chain management. Immunization In Practice (IIP) manuals and stool cups for AFP surveillance were also provided to health facilities.

and SNNP regions starting on 31 July 2015. The campaign will cover a target population of over 4.8 million

A Regional EPI Task Force meeting was conducted for Gambella region with participation of WHO EPI experts also focussing on the upcoming polio



campaign. Experiences in the past campaign were discussed and strategies identified to minimize gaps in social mobilization, vaccine distribution, logistics, supervisors selection and evaluation methodology.

STOP 46 Team Orientation Conducted

Dr. Ayesheshem Ademe Tegegne

Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP) mission 46 arrived in Ethiopia in July to provide technical support on polio eradication activities. The team is comprised of four (4) Field Epidemiologists and two (2) Communications Officers. A one week orientation was provided at the country office on routine EPI, SIAs, surveillance, reporting, supervision (PDA) checklists and other relevant areas stated on their terms of reference.

Following the orientation, the team was then deployed to the field in high risk zones of Somali, Gambella, Benshangul Gumz, Amhara, SNNPR and Tigray regions to work closely with the respective Zonal Health Departments and Woreda Offices.

The STOP 46 team will be in the country for the next six months.



Barnabas Blessing, STOP Team Member in Dollo Zone, Somali Region

Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Guideline Finalization Workshop

Dr. Ayesheshem Ademe Tegegne

A two days' workshop on Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Guideline finalization organized by the Food, Medicine and Health Care Administration and Control Authority (FMHACA) with support from WHO was conducted from 7-8 July 2015 in Adama. A total of 35 participants from FMHACA, all RHBs health facilities, L10K and WHO attended the workshop.

The participants reviewed the draft AEFI guideline and finalized it as per the agreed discussions. FMHACA will facilitate the printing of the final document to be distributed to all regions and health facilities.

A High Level Vaccination Session ...

Continued from page 1

HE Dr Kesetebirhan Admasu, Minister of Health, said, "We will focus on equity and quality for every child and mother in Ethiopia" adding, "The Government of Ethiopia continues to be committed to eradicating polio from Ethiopia, and Africa." He further affirmed that "The Government of Ethiopia will continue to engage communities for active participation in routine immunization, and will continue to build strong health partnerships."

Ms Yoka Brandt, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director asserted, "Immunization, especially routine immunization, is a core priority within UNICEF, and it will continue to be. With the availability of new innovations, new vaccines, and new research and evidence, we can go fast and far."

Dr Seth Berkley, GAVI CEO, highlighting GAVI's commitment to strengthening routine immunization, said, "Strong routine immunization systems are a bedrock of healthy societies and are central to global plans for the eradication of polio. By working together, we are reaching more children than ever before with lifesaving vaccines and the GAVI partners are committed to supporting countries like Ethiopia to sustain and build on their progress on immunization."

WHO, UNICEF, GAVI and other immunization partners remain committed to support African governments in reaching every community with vaccination – the gift of life.



HE, Dr Kesetebirhan Admasu, Minister of Health, speaking at the higher level vaccination session

High level Summit

Continued from page 1

The Advocacy Forum in Dollo Zone brought together key EPI stakeholders in the previously infected outbreak zone including religious and clan leaders, Women groups and partners, to discuss the lessons learned, and to understand, articulate and define their role in health systems strengthening and the



Maryan Aydid, (Dollo Women Community Leader), Liya Woldegiorgis (FMoH EPI Case Team Leader) and Dr Fiona Braka (WHO EPI Focal Point) honoured for their outstanding roles in leading Community, Government and Partners in the polio outbreak response

improvement of routine immunization to sustain the achievements of polio eradication.

The Dollo Zone Administrator welcomed all participants and expressed his appreciation to the FMoH, Somali Regional Government, WHO, UNICEF and the international community for their support. Clan and Religious leaders, and Women Society Organization representatives also expressed their appreciation to stakeholders and testified to their personal roles in the response, the impact of the polio outbreak in their communities and the demand created for sustained immunization and health services in general. The WHO Representative, Dr Pierre M'pele-Kilebou, delivered a goodwill message on behalf of all polio program partners in Ethiopia and committed continued support to strengthen the routine immunization, surveillance and broader health system in Somali and Ethiopia as a whole.

The resounding message at the Advocacy Forum was that as we mark the interruption of polio in Somali Region and Ethiopia, we should be more vigilant in our joint efforts to strengthen health systems to ensure improved immunization. Only through this, the Forum confirmed, can the victory over polio be sustained and subsequent victories against other vaccine-preventable diseases be obtained.

The Forum also acknowledged the commitment and hard work of the 36,000 women health workers and the 3 million women health development army towards achieving the interruption of polio virus transmission in Ethiopia.

Paediatric Bacterial Meningitis Annual Review Meeting Held at Bishoftu (Dr. Ayesheshem Ademe Tegegne)

The Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI) and WHO organized the Paediatric Bacterial Meningitis (PBM) Surveillance Annual Review Meeting on July 6-8, 2015. The purpose of the review meeting was to assess the annual progress and gaps in the surveillance system .

A total of 19 participants from three sentinel site hospitals namely Gondor University, Tikur Anbesa and Yekatiti 12 as well as EPHI and WHO staff attended the review meeting. A welcome note and opening remarks were provided by Dr. Aduugna Woyessa PBM Surveillance Coordinator & EPHI Director of the Bacterial, Parasitic and Zoonoses Diseases Research Directorate and Dr Fiona Braka, WHO EPI Focal Point respectively. The meeting was moderated by Dr Ayesheshem Ademe Tegegne, WHO Surveillance Officer and Dr. Aduugna Woyessa, from EPHI.

The annual surveillance performance and data quality issues were discussed, the new module for new vaccine surveillance was introduced, challenges at each level and the way forward were discussed. Finally, participants agreed on action points based on the issues raised and discussions during the two day meeting to further strengthen performance.



PBM surveillance annual review meeting

cMYP Development Workshop, Kampala Uganda (Dr Aschalew Teka Bekele)

A team from Ethiopia comprised of FMOH, WHO, and UNICEF participated in a cMYP Development and Updating Workshop held in Kampala Uganda from 9-13 July 2015. Participants were Mrs. Liya Wondwossen, EPI Case Team Leader FMOH; Dr. Tersit Assefa, Immunization specialist UNICEF and Dr. Aschalew Teka, Immunization Officer WHO. The workshop was jointly organized by WHO/IST and UNICEF/ESARO. A total of 48 participants from seven countries attended the workshop. WHO IST/ESA, WHO HQ and GAVI and other international organizations facilitated the workshop.

The Ethiopia team updated the draft comprehensive Multi-year Plan for Immunization (cMYP) 2016-2020, which aims at achieving five major goals within the context of GVAP and

aligned with the Health Sector Transformation Plan (HSTP 2016-2020). Major activities were identified and costing done using the cMYP costing tool. The logistics forecasting tool was also used for estimating vaccines and supplies' need and associated costs, which were then integrated into the comprehensive planning tool.

The five goals of the new cMYP and its strategic components are to: achieve a country free of wild polio virus by 2018; meet vaccination coverage targets at Woreda, Zone, Region, and nationally by 2020; exceed the MDG 4 target for reducing child mortality in the country; meet national elimination targets for measles and MNT; and introduce new and under-utilized vaccines.



A High Level Donors Visit Held in Tigray Region

Dr. Abidara Desalegn

A high level donor visit was held in Tigray region from 13-15 July 2015. The high level mission was comprised of 14 high level delegates including the CEO of GAVI - Dr Seth Berkley, the Global Fund, EU, DFID and Italian Cooperation, accompanied by a team of experts from FMOH TB, Malaria and Immunization programmes. WHO and UNICEF Programme Officers based in Tigray and Addis Ababa also took part in the joint visit.

The Tigray RHB provided key updates to the delegates on programme achievements, key issues and challenges; HSTP priorities; and the status of projects funded by Global Fund. Field visits were undertaken to health facilities (HP, HC and Hospital) where facility plans, performance and challenges were discussed, involving health extension workers, health workers and woreda and RHB Managers. The team also paid a visit to the President of Tigray Regional State.

Financial accountability (Government funding versus donors expenditure, procurement processes), equity, strategic indicators for the national strategic plan, data quality and coverage were key aspects discussed during the visit.

“Posts You Should Read” with link/s:

The 23rd issue of WHO Ethiopia newsletter: <http://whoethiopia-whoafrocmaster.newsweaver.com/>

Immunization Advocacy and Communications Workshop

(Selamawit Yilma)

A three days' workshop on Advocacy for Immunization was held in Addis Ababa, Harmony Hotel from 8-10 July 2015. The main objective of the training was to introduce a new online resource aiming to guide and support health advocates and stakeholders to develop their advocacy and communication strategy and implementation plan in support of strengthened immunization, coverage and equity and also get feedback for future improvement.

The online resource is designed to strengthen the advocacy efforts on immunization and avails advocacy manual that shows the necessary steps in planning, implementing and evaluating the program, to provide examples of advocacy materials from different country and organizations and other similar resources which help health advocates to conduct successful immunization advocacy efforts at national and sub-national level.

The workshop was supported by GAVI and co-facilitated by Senior advisors in immunization advocacy and communication from PATH HQ Office with GAVI Secretariat presence. The participants included RHBs, FMOH, and partners including WHO, UNICEF, USAID, BBC Media Action, CHAI, CDC, CCRDA/CORE Group, EPHA, Plan, IFHP, EMA, JHU, Ethiopian Red Cross, Rotary and JSI.

The participants found the online resource and the training very useful and also provided their feedback after examining each part of the manual individually and as well as through group discussions.



EPI team bids farewell to Dr. Aregai Woldegebriel, WHO EPI Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

We would like to take this opportunity to accord a warm goodbye to our colleague Dr. Aregai W/Gebriel who left WHO Ethiopia at the end of June 2015. Dr. Aregai left WHO after seven years of service at WHO Country Office. Dr Aregai joined WHO on January 1, 2008 as NPO Immunization and surveillance field Officer based in Tigray Region. He served as Tigray Regional Coordinator for over four years from January 01, 2008 – May 21, 2012, and was later reassigned to the central team as Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.



Dr Aregai Woldegebriel

Dr Aregai contributed towards strengthening WHO support at field level and monitoring of routine immunization and surveillance aspects of the program. We all appreciate and thank him for his dedicated work over the past seven years. Dr Aregai has taken up a new assignment in Liberia to support the Ebola response. The EPI team wishes him success in his new endeavor.

Upcoming Events, August 2015

- ◇ 3-6 August: Training workshop on VPD surveillance and tOPV-bOPV switch, Harare, Zimbabwe
- ◇ 11-21 August: IIP trainings in Harari and DireDawa
- ◇ 13-14 August: Visit to Jijjiga, Somali Region, by the WR and EPI Central team to meet with WHO field team and RHB
- ◇ 17-20 August: Horn of Africa Polio Technical Advisory Group meeting, Nairobi, Kenya

