



World Health
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VOICES

from the field

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Ensuring Every Child receives nOPV2 Vaccine in Twic East, Jonglei

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On day two of the nOPV2 campaign February 5, 2025, a team of dedicated health supervisors, including County EPI Officer John Awai Piok and National Supervisor Simon Maketh, embarked on a critical mission from Panyagor to Wernyol, Lith Payam, in Twic East County. Their goal was to support the 4th round of the nOPV2 vaccination campaign and ensure that every child in the community was protected against polio.

The Challenge

Their journey was met with significant obstacles. Severe flooding had cut off the main road at the Jonglei Canal, making it impossible for vehicles or motorcycles to pass.

Strategic action

Prior to the campaign the team made some deliberate strategic decisions that enable a successful campaign that realized a higher impact than that of the previous campaign. These strategies include:

Community engagement and support

Prior to the campaign, community engagement efforts, including awareness, social mobilization, and education, built trust and encouraged families to participate in vaccination. Local leaders and gatekeepers, such as chiefs, religious leaders, and community elders, played a key role in mobilization, contributing to high coverage, particularly in remote areas like Lith Payam.

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EPI officer & National Supervisor crossing over water, Right is Vaccination team in Wernyol.



Vaccination team at Wernyol village of Lith Payam

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Multisectoral collaboration

With support from WHO, the Ministry of Health played a central role as the driving force, actively involved

at all levels—from planning to implementation, along with other partners including UNICEF, the teams worked together to ensure the campaign's success. This collaborative approach brought together expertise, resources, and logistical support, enabling the team to overcome challenges and achieve their objectives. The involvement of multiple stakeholders highlights the importance of a unified effort in addressing public health challenges and ensuring the well-being of vulnerable populations.



Angok Mayom WHO field supervisor for Twic East County conducting supportive supervision during nOPV2 campaign

Targeting zero dose children

The campaign prioritized identifying and vaccinating zero-dose children, those who had never received any vaccine and remained vulnerable to preventable diseases like polio. By vaccinating 41 zero-dose children, the team addressed gaps in healthcare access and provided essential protection, integrating them into the routine immunization system for future vaccinations. The implementation of the micro plan, Reaching Every Community, guided the systematic identification and vaccination of all eligible children through detailed community mapping. Overcoming logistical challenges, including severe flooding and difficult terrain, was essential in reaching remote communities and internally displaced persons, particularly those displaced from Uror County due to insecurity.

Overnight stay in Wernyol

The decision to stay overnight in Wernyol was necessary to maximize the impact of the campaign. By staying in the community, the team avoided additional travel delays caused by the challenging terrain and flooding. This allowed them to dedicate more time to supporting the local vaccination teams, ensuring that every eligible child was reached. The overnight stay also demonstrated the team's commitment to the mission and their willingness to go the extra mile to achieve their goals.

The Impact

A total of 1,759 children (860 boys and 899 girls) were successfully vaccinated, including 41 zero-dose children who had never received any vaccine, marking a notable increase from the 687 children vaccinated in the 3rd round. This milestone was especially significant in Lith Payam, a remote and hard-to-reach area where access to

healthcare services is severely limited. By reaching these children, the team not only provided critical protection against polio but also delivered routine immunization vaccines to zero-dose children, addressing a long-standing gap in healthcare for this underserved community.



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Despite floods, risks, and hardships, our team's commitment to reaching every child in Wernyol never wavered. Vaccinating 1,759 children, including 41 zero-dose children, proves no challenge is too great in protecting communities from polio and advancing toward eradication.

– Dr. Ademe TEGEGNE, Polio Team Lead, South Sudan

Recommendations for future campaigns:

Future campaigns should explore alternative transport methods to improve vaccine delivery in areas with logistical challenges. Integrating community-based and multisectoral approaches from the planning stage can enhance mobilization and coverage. Strengthening logistical and operational capacity will ensure efficient vaccine distribution and administration. Additionally, improving routine immunization data collection is essential to track coverage and ensure all eligible children receive vaccinations.