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South-East Asia Regional Certification Commission for Polio Eradication (SEA-RCCPE)

*Report of the Ninth Meeting
Colombo, Sri Lanka, 7-9 December 2016*

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Acronyms

AFP	acute flaccid paralysis
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
bOPV	bivalent oral polio vaccine
CAG	containment advisory group
CCS	containment certification scheme
US CDC	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cVDPV	circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus
cVDPV1	circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1
cVDPV2	circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2
EB	Executive Board
Endgame Plan	Polio Eradication & Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018'
EOC	emergency operations centre
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ES	environmental surveillance
fIPV	fractionated inactivated polio vaccine
GAPIII	Global Action Plan to minimize post-eradication poliovirus facility-associated risk (third edition)
Gavi	Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
GCC	Global Commission for Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis
GPEI	Global Polio Eradication Initiative
IHR	International Health Regulations
IM	independent monitoring
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IPV	inactivated polio vaccine
MOH	Ministry of Health
mOPV	monovalent oral polio vaccine
mOPV2	monovalent oral polio vaccine type 2

NAC	National Authority for Containment
NCTF	National Containment Taskforce
NCCPE	National Certification Committee for Polio Eradication
NEAP	national emergency action plan
NID	national immunization day
OBRA	outbreak response assessment
OPV	oral polio vaccine
OPV2	oral polio vaccine type 2
OPV3	oral polio vaccine type 3
PEF	poliovirus essential facility
RCA	rapid coverage assessment
RCCPE	Regional Certification Commission for Polio Eradication
SAGE	Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization
SEA	South-East Asia
SEAR	South-East Asia Region
SEARO	Regional Office for South-East Asia
SIA	supplementary immunization activity
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
tOPV	trivalent oral polio vaccine
TOR	terms of reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VDPV	vaccine-derived poliovirus
VDPV2	vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2
VPD	vaccine-preventable disease
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization
WPV	wild poliovirus
WPV1	wild poliovirus type 1

Executive summary

The 'Polio Eradication & Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018' (Endgame Plan), endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO) World Health Assembly in 2013, contains 'certification and containment' as one of its four key objectives. In view of this strategic approach, the continued risk of wild poliovirus (WPV) importation from an infected area or country and the close monitoring of the potential vaccine derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) emergence after the global switch from trivalent oral poliovirus vaccine (tOPV) to bivalent OPV (bOPV) in April 2016 (the 'switch'), it is consider critical that the South-East Asia (SEA) Regional Certification Commission for Polio Eradication (RCCPE) meet on a regular basis to review annual progress reports from all countries.

The ninth meeting of the SEA-RCCPE was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 7 to 9 December 2016 with the following main objectives:

- (1) To review updated reports from each Member State on maintaining polio-free status, including poliovirus laboratory containment, as per requirements of the Endgame Plan;
- (2) To review the implementation status of the recommendations made at the eighth meeting of the SEA-RCCPE; and
- (3) To update the Global Certification Commission (GCC) on the polio-free certification status of the SEA Region.

The meeting was attended by all 11 Commission members, chairpersons/members of the National Certification Committees for Polio Eradication (NCCPEs) of all 11 countries of the Region, representatives of the WHO African Region RCCPE, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Sri Lanka Ministry of Health and a WHO secretariat.

The SEA-RCCPE reviewed the annual progress reports presented by the NCCPEs of all 11 countries of the SEA Region and welcomed the new formats used in reports and presentations. These formats focused on a structured analytical reporting approach and addressed key questions on population immunity, surveillance sensitivity, laboratory containment and outbreak preparedness. In addition to reviewing in detail these four areas which are key to maintaining polio-free status, the SEA-RCCPE reviewed

the global polio situation and the response to vaccine derived polioviruses (VDPVs) detected in India and Myanmar during 2015 and 2016. Based on the information presented and the discussions with NCCPE representatives, the SEA-RCCPE reached specific conclusions and made recommendations for the Region and for individual countries to address country-specific gaps. These were identified as gaps that could put the Region at risk of the spread of imported poliovirus and emerging VDPV, causing new polio outbreaks.

The SEA-RCCPE commended the SEA Region for maintaining its polio-free status for nearly six years and congratulated the countries for having successfully completed and validated the switch in 2016. However, the RCCPE was concerned that there is growing complacency due to the fact that the Region has been polio-free for many years. Countries should remain vigilant and continue to give priority to polio eradication activities. In this context, the SEA-RCCPE highlighted the continued importance of the NCCPEs' role, work and submission of high quality analytical progress reports for the SEA-RCCPE to oversee.

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