



# AFGHANISTAN

TRAINING GUIDE FOR ALL-AGE VACCINATION

## TRAINING GUIDE

Afghanistan and Pakistan have important border crossing points that are attended to by social mobilizers and vaccinators to ensure that all children are vaccinated. To eradicate polio, both governments have agreed to carry out an all-age vaccination programme at border crossings.

This training guide has been developed to support facilitators in providing social mobilization training at border crossings. It comprises short participatory modules for all-age vaccination and a review of practical communication skills.

### NOTES FOR THE TRAINER

Guide the discussion to answer the topic questions.

1. This exercise should be conducted as a discussion where knowledge is exchanged, shared and strengthened.
2. Spend enough time on the questions to ensure that the information is understood.
3. Question and answer sessions should be conducted through dialogue.
4. Listen to responses and encourage other participants to add information and personal experiences.
5. Ask for examples of situations the participants may encounter with caregivers and how they responded.
6. Identify participants who are quiet and encourage them to interact.
7. Remind the participants to be respectful of their peers' answers

### SESSIONS (2 HOURS)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. All-age vaccinations</b><br>(60 minutes)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and discussion on all-age vaccination</li><li>• Methodology: group discussion</li></ul>     |
| <b>2. Polio basics</b><br>(30 minutes)                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and discussion on polio basics</li><li>• Methodology: group discussion</li></ul>            |
| <b>3. Communication skills review</b><br>(30 minutes) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and discussion on effective communication</li><li>• Methodology: group discussion</li></ul> |

# 1. ALL-AGE VACCINATION

## TIME

60 minutes

## OBJECTIVE

To help participants understand the importance of all-age vaccination

## METHODOLOGY

### AND MATERIALS

Discussion and all-age vaccination leaflets

## DISCUSSION POINTS FOR THE TRAINER AND PARTICIPANTS

Take time to review each of the following points and ensure that participants understand the information:

1. Your role as a social mobilizer is: to give key information on polio at all-age vaccination locations and to convince those who are travelling to get vaccinated.
2. All-age vaccinations are for all adults (including the elderly) and children crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan – they will be vaccinated regardless of their age.
3. Vaccinations will be administered in both Afghanistan and Pakistan to help stop the transmission of polio.
4. Adults will be vaccinated once a year. This will be stamped on their vaccination card, which they will have to present to vaccinators each time they cross between the two countries.
5. Children will still be vaccinated against polio each time it is offered.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use the following questions to guide group discussions and help participants understand the importance of all-age vaccination. Listen to participants' responses and encourage them to participate.

**Ask: As a social mobilizer, what is your role in all-age vaccination?**

Answer: A social mobilizer's role is to give key information on polio and all-age vaccination locations and to convince those who are travelling to get vaccinated.

**Ask: What is all-age vaccination?**

Answer: All-age vaccination involves vaccinating everyone against polio, regardless of their age (including children, parents and the elderly).

**Ask: Why are you vaccinating all age groups crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan now?**

Answer: The purpose of vaccinating all age groups is to protect citizens, including adults and the elderly, by stopping the poliovirus from spreading throughout communities as quickly as possible.

**Ask: Is Afghanistan the only country that is vaccinating all age groups?**

Answer: No, Pakistan is also vaccinating all age groups to stop the transmission of polio. If you are crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan, you need to be vaccinated against polio.

**Ask: Has any other country vaccinated adults with the polio vaccine?**

Answer: Yes. Many countries, including China, have vaccinated older age groups to stop the transmission of polio.

**Ask: Do Islamic countries support all-age vaccination?**

Answer: Yes. In Saudi Arabia for example, the Government requires those making a hajj to be vaccinated against polio before they are allowed to enter the country. Pakistanis of all ages are also required to be vaccinated with polio drops before making a hajj.



**Ask: Can children only contract polio?**

Answer: No. Although children are most at risk of contracting polio or being paralysed by the virus, adults can carry the disease without being paralysed and spread it in their community.

**Ask: Can adults contract polio?**

Answer: Yes. Anyone that has not been vaccinated against polio can contract the virus, regardless of their age. In fact, when polio does affect adults, it can be more serious to their health and also in terms of transmission.

**Ask: Why are adults required to have only one dose of polio vaccine per year when children are required to have multiple doses whenever vaccination is offered?**

Answer: Most adults already have some immunity against polio, which is not the case for children. Taking additional doses of the vaccine as an adult acts as a booster in preventing polio from transmitting.

**Ask: Is the polio vaccine safe for adults?**

Answer: The polio vaccine is very safe and effective for both children and adults of all ages. It is important to vaccinate people of all ages when they are crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**Ask: Is the vaccine effective?**

Answer: Yes. The vaccine is the same one that has previously eradicated polio from many Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia.

**Ask: Is the polio vaccine halal?**

Answer: Prominent Saudi, Afghan and Pakistani muftis and religious scholars have labelled the vaccine halal.

**Ask: Is this the same vaccine given to children?**

Answer: Yes, it is.

**Ask: Why are the polio drops required multiple times?**

Answer: Children need to take polio drops several times to ensure that they are completely protected. Every dose of polio drops gives children additional protection from polio paralysis.

**Ask: Is it possible to eradicate the poliovirus?**

Answer: Yes, we can and will eradicate polio.

**Remember:**

Sometimes people will refuse to vaccinate when they travel between Afghanistan and Pakistan because they do not understand what a vaccination is. Some adults may think that polio vaccination is only for children, or may be in a hurry without understanding that the area they are travelling through is an all-age vaccination location. All-age polio vaccinations are for everyone – children, adults and the elderly alike.

**NOTE**

All adults will receive a stamp on their vaccination card once they have had the polio vaccine. The card is valid for one year and is required for travel between Afghanistan and Pakistan.



2. INTRODUCTION TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

TIME	OBJECTIVE	METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS
30 minutes	To help participants review basic communication skills and tips when talking to parents and caregivers	Discussion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use the following questions to guide group discussions and help participants understand the importance of good communication skills. Listen to participants’ responses and encourage them to participate.

Ask: Why is communication important?

Answer: Communication is important when we speak with parents or caregivers. We want them to understand that it is a good idea for them to vaccinate. If parents have confidence in the health workers then they will be more likely to accept vaccination.

Introduce the three main components of communication:

1. Building rapport and creating a caring environment: It is important to remember to greet people, be friendly, speak clearly, explain what you are doing, ask questions and listen patiently.
2. Gathering information: Asking questions and listening is important because it helps health workers assess the situation and decide what will be the most effective way to convince the caregiver.
3. Counselling and sharing information: This helps inform parents about what they need to do.

Ask: What are some of the most important communication skills?

Answer: Some of the ideas that participants may suggest include being friendly, greeting people with respect, dressing appropriately, speaking clearly and listening carefully.

REVIEW TIPS

FACIAL APPEARANCE	
DO	DON'T
Smile	Frown
Nod in agreement (appear neutral)	Appear as if you disagree
Look interested	Look distracted
Appear honest and reliable	Appear intimidating or unapproachable
CLOTHES AND APPEARANCE	
DO	DON'T
Dress cleanly	Wear strong perfume / natural oils
Dress professionally	Wear too much makeup
Be culturally sensitive	Wear excessive jewellery
Use good self-grooming	
BODY LANGUAGE	
DO	DON'T
Look calm	Appear to be impatient
Look attentive	Do multiple things at the same time (focus on the client)
Look organized	
Look neutral	
THINGS TO DO BEFORE VISITING A HOUSEHOLD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that you are dressed appropriately in clean and professional attire. Wash your hands with soap before beginning your duty.</li><li>• Review the area you are working in.</li><li>• Review your guiding messages so that you can answer parental queries confidently.</li><li>• Ensure that you have all the appropriate tools and materials with you.</li></ul>	

### 3. REVIEW: POLIO BASICS

#### TIME

30 minutes

#### OBJECTIVE

To help participants review polio basic messages and frequently asked questions

#### METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

Discussion

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use the following questions to guide group discussions and help participants review polio basics for all-age vaccination. Listen to participants' responses and encourage them to participate.

#### **Ask: What is polio?**

Answer: Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious disease that is caused when a person contracts the poliovirus, which invades the nervous system. Polio can cause paralysis and even death. There are three types of poliovirus: type 1, type 2 and type 3. Types 2 and 3 have been eradicated.

#### **Ask: Who is most at risk of getting polio?**

Answer: The poliovirus mainly affects children under 5 years of age who are not fully vaccinated. It can also affect adolescents and adults.

#### **Ask: How is polio transmitted?**

Answer: The poliovirus enters the body through the mouth when food or water is consumed that has been contaminated with faecal matter from someone who carries the virus. After being consumed, the virus multiplies in the intestines and is passed through faeces.

#### **Ask: What are the symptoms of polio?**

Answer: Fever, fatigue, headache, vomiting, stiffness in the neck and pain and weakness in the limbs.



**Ask: What are the signs of polio?**

Answer: If a child, adolescent or adult suddenly shows signs of a floppy or weak arm or leg, then community leaders and health authorities should be informed immediately.

**Ask: Is there a cure for polio?**

Answer: No, there is no cure for polio.

**Ask: Can polio be prevented?**

Answer: Yes, polio can be prevented by immunizing a child with vaccines.

**Ask: What is OPV?**

Answer: OPV stands for oral polio vaccine, which is given to people to protect them against the three types of poliovirus that can cause polio.

**NOTE**

OPV is used for all-age vaccination (including children, adults and the elderly).

**Ask: Does OPV have any side effects?**

Answer: OPV is one of the safest vaccines ever developed. It is so safe that it can even be given to sick children and newborns. It has been used all over the world to protect children against polio.

**Ask: Is it safe to administer multiple doses of OPV to children?**

Answer: Yes, it is safe. The vaccine is designed to be administered multiple times to ensure full protection. Each additional dose further strengthens a child's immunity against polio.

**Ask: How many doses of OPV does a child need before they are protected?**

Answer: OPV needs to be administered multiple times to be fully effective. The number of doses it takes to immunize a child depends entirely on their health and nutritional status. The child still has a risk of contracting polio until they are fully immunized.

**Ask: Is OPV safe for sick children and newborns?**

Answer: Yes. OPV is safe to be given to sick children and newborns. In fact, it is crucial that sick children and newborn babies are immunized as they have weaker immune systems than other children.

