



**Ministry of Health and Sanitation-GoSL  
Public Health National Emergency Operation Centre (SL)**

**Press Release Sierra Leone confirms three poliovirus type 2 cases**

**Freetown, 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

On 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, the regional laboratory in Abidjan notified the Ministry of Health and Sanitation of three isolates of poliovirus type 2 in children from Kambia, Tonkolili and Western Area Rural respectively. Further advanced investigations of the isolates sent to the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, confirmed circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus 2 (cVDPV2).

The cVDPV2 has been reported in eleven other countries in the West African region including neighbouring Guinea, Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire in 2020. Genetic sequencing of the poliovirus cases in Sierra Leone showed that two of the three confirmed cases are genetically linked to cases earlier detected and confirmed in Guinea while one is genetically related to a case in Cote D'Ivoire.

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation and its development partners are working relentlessly to stop this outbreak from affecting more children. We therefore encourage all parents, care givers, community leaders and the media to join effort with health authorities by ensuring that all children under 5 years receive all their recommended doses of immunisations to protect them against all forms of vaccine preventable diseases including polio.


In order to promptly and effectively respond to the confirmed polio outbreak, the United Nations through WHO and UNICEF and other partners are swiftly mobilising local and international resources and teams of polio experts to support the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) mounts a robust national response to help curb further circulation of the virus in Sierra Leone.

For more information, please contact:

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