



SUPPLEMENTAL IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITY

Dear Member,

Kenya has kicked off the second round of its 2017 immunization effort with a polio campaign this week, targeting 2.9 million children aged five years and under. The campaign is targeting 15 counties that are considered on higher risk and vulnerable and which are mainly situated in remote, hard-to-reach and border areas. The campaign also covers Nairobi County, the travel hub that brings the rest of the world into Kenya. Supplemental Immunization Activities (SIA) form an important part of the Ministry of Health's strategy to prevent outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases targeted for eradication, elimination and control. Currently these diseases include polio and measles. Due to the low polio vaccination coverage rates found in some counties, there are many children left vulnerable to the disease even in Kenya. These children remain at risk and pose a risk to others.

The Kenya Paediatric Association wholly supports these supplemental immunization efforts and urges all members to play an advocacy role in promoting its acceptance by the general public. This includes to our own patients even when we are confident that they have received the required doses in the routine vaccination.

We have continued to receive an assurance that the vaccine used for the campaign is safe and is exactly the same as that used for routine vaccination in all health facilities, public or private. Also, an extra dose given to a child during the SIA who has already received the recommended doses during routine vaccination does not put the child at risk of any harm. For this reason let us continue to encourage parents to allow their children to receive vaccination during the SIA.

Dr. Thomas Ngwiri,
National Chair, Kenya Paediatric Association