

Peer Review

Review of: "Integrated Determinants of Persistent Wild Poliovirus Transmission in Pakistan and Afghanistan: The Roles of Cross-Border Mobility, Hard-to-Reach Populations, and Micro-Transmission Hotspots, 2010-2025"

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The manuscript provides a comprehensive synthesis of determinants of persistent WPV1 transmission in Pakistan and Afghanistan and is relevant to global eradication efforts. It is a strong manuscript overall, and I enjoyed reading it.

Below are suggested areas for improvement:

Overall

1. There is inconsistency in how percentages and abbreviations are written, e.g., 90% vs. 90 %, and WPV1 vs. WPV 1. Please standardize.
2. I noticed the use of causal statements, e.g., “inevitable,” “single most effective way,” “function as a single epidemiologic block,” “will remain unattainable.” Consider revising to be more cautious to avoid overstatement.
3. Define SIAs at first mention and use SIAs subsequently.

Introduction

- Paragraph 1, last sentence: Remove “in recent times.”
- Paragraph 2, first sentence: Add a reference.

- Paragraph 2, second sentence: Remove “August” for Africa, as the months have not been stated for the other regions. Also, remove “which have been certified free of WPV” as this is explained in the previous sentence.
- Paragraph 3, second sentence: It appears as though up to 200 children will be paralyzed from one confirmed case. I believe what was meant to be said is more on the lines of “approximately 1 in 200 poliovirus infections results in irreversible paralysis” – suggest rephrase.
- Paragraph 4, first sentence: Replace “exported” with “imported.” Also, 2022 is incorrect for Malawi; it should be 2021.
- Paragraph 6, first sentence: Unclear, please rephrase. Also, “frequentover” should be replaced, maybe “...remains frequent, with over...”
- Paragraph 7, last sentence: The statement “will remain unattainable” is too definitive. Consider using “may” or “is likely to.” Table 1: Clarify the title to indicate mOPV2, nOPV2, and tOPV.

Figure 1

- The current figure title, “PRISMA Chart,” does not convey the purpose of the figure. Please expand.
- You use “Records” and “Reports.” Suggest maintaining the use of “Records” throughout.

Section on “Immunity Gaps...”

- Paragraph 2: Starts as “found that...”. Please correct.

Discussion

- First sentence: Consider replacing “to explain” as this sounds too causal.

Study Limitations

- Consider adding publication and grey literature bias.

Conclusion

- Last sentence of the first paragraph: Suggest adding “that” after confirms.

Again, this is a well-written, strong manuscript overall!

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.