

4.4. Individuals involved in polio vaccination campaigns

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: October 2026

This profile refers to individuals taking part in polio vaccination campaigns such as those administering the vaccine, the physicians and the administrative staff supporting the vaccination, as well as security officers assigned to provide protection to vaccination teams.

This profile should be read in conjunction with Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report: COI Update 2026, 2.; Country Focus 2026, 6.1.8.; Country Focus 2024, 4.2.2., 7.3.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Armed attacks targeting polio vaccination campaigns significantly increased in 2024.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which individuals involved in polio vaccination activities could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution, such as killings, abductions and injuries. Most of these attacks resulted in casualties among police officers assigned to protect vaccination teams, and occasionally also caused the death or injury of polio and health workers, as well as civilians.

Vaccination campaigns face attacks mainly by militant groups, including particularly Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and affiliated groups. In some cases, the identified perpetrators were individuals not clearly affiliated with any specific group.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts to which individuals involved in polio vaccination activities could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. More precisely, health workers and accompanying security forces have reportedly been injured, threatened, harassed, ridiculed, and taunted.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for individuals involved in polio vaccination activities to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Geographical area of activity**: the risk is higher for individuals involved in polio vaccination campaigns taking place in areas where Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and affiliated groups operate, namely parts of KP and Northern Balochistan.

- **Location**: the risk is higher for individuals involved in polio vaccination campaigns taking place in schools or nearby schools. See also Education personnel.

- **Occupation**: as attacks resulted mostly in casualties amongst security personnel, individuals providing security to polio vaccination campaigns face a higher risk than health workers such as those administering the vaccine.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant falling under this profile, this is highly likely to be for **political opinion**, since extremist groups see polio vaccination campaigns as a Western influence, espionage, plot and, additionally, they seek to weaken authorities' impact on local communities. Persecution may also be for reasons of **religion**, as polio vaccines are seen by extremist groups as a Western plot to sterilise Muslim children and are religiously prohibited due to alleged pig-derived ingredients.

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