

1 in 10 infants received no vaccinations last year: UN

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Credit: National Cancer Institute

Nearly one in 10 infants received no vaccinations in 2016, meaning that they missed the first inoculation against three lethal diseases, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Monday.

A full 12.9 million infants received no vaccinations last year, WHO found in a joint report with the UN's children's agency, UNICEF.

As a result, they missed the first dose of a triple vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, also called pertussis.

Another 6.6 million who received the first dose of the so-called DTP vaccination did not complete the immunisation course last year.

Since 1980, the UN's health agency has tracked the percentage of infants given the DTP vaccination.

"Since 2010, the percentage of children who received their full course of routine immunisations has stalled at 86 percent," WHO said in a statement.

The figure fell short of the agency's 90 percent [coverage](#) target.

"These children most likely have also not received any of the other basic health services," WHO's immunisation, Jean-Marie Okwo-Bele, said in a statement.

"If we are to raise the bar on global immunisation coverage, [health services](#) must reach the unreached."

Only 130 of WHO's 194 member-states have hit the 90 percent target, with the worst coverage recorded in countries gripped by conflict.

Eight countries in 2016 had a sub-50 percent coverage rate for all three DTP shots, including Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syrian and Ukraine.

Of that list, only the small west African nation of Equatorial Guinea is not seen as suffering from an active conflict, although its government has been fiercely condemned by rights groups over widespread abuses.

WHO estimates that vaccinations prevent between two and three million deaths each year.

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