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## Gap in Vaccination of Children

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### Why in News

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According to the '**Health in India**' report recently published by the **National Statistical Organisation** (NSO), the **full immunisation** programme is not completed among 40% of the children.

The report is based on the **75<sup>th</sup> round of the National Sample Survey (July 2017-June 2018)** on household social consumption related to health.

### Full Immunisation

It means that a **child receives a cocktail of eight vaccine doses** in the first year of life. This includes:

- **BCG Vaccine:** It is injected in a single dose shortly after birth, which protects against a childhood attack of **tuberculosis**.
- **Measles Vaccine:** **Measles** is a viral disease.
- **Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV):** It is given against **polio virus**. Its first dose is given at birth, followed by two more doses at intervals of four weeks.
- **DPT/Pentavalent Vaccine:** It is injected in three doses, which is meant to protect a child from **diphtheria, pertussis or whooping cough, tetanus, Hepatitis B**, and **meningitis** and **pneumonia** caused by **haemophilus influenzae type B**.

Booster doses for OPV and DPT are also given between 16 and 24 months.

### Key Points


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**Data Analysis:**

- Across the country, only 59.2% of children under five years are fully immunised.
- About 97% of children across the country received **at least one vaccination** — mostly **BCG** or the first dose of OPV at birth.
- Only 67% of children are protected against **measles**. Only 58% got their polio booster dose, while 54% got their DPT booster dose.

**More work needed** | The table depicts the percentage share of children below 71 months who received immunisation as per the NSS health survey conducted in July 2017-June 2018

|                           | % of children immunised |      |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------|
| BCG                       | 94.1                    |      |
| <b>Polio vaccine</b>      | Polio birth dose        | 93.9 |
|                           | OPV-1                   | 92.4 |
|                           | OPV-2                   | 87.8 |
|                           | OPV-3                   | 80.6 |
|                           | Booster dose            | 58.1 |
| <b>DPT / Pentavalent*</b> | DPT-1                   | 91   |
|                           | DPT-2                   | 86.5 |
|                           | DPT-3                   | 78   |
|                           | Booster dose            | 54   |
|                           | Measles                 | 67   |



\*Prevents five diseases—diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B and Hemophilus influenza type B (Hib)

**States/UTs Specific Data:**

- **Best Performance:** Manipur (75%), Andhra Pradesh (73.6%) and Mizoram (73.4%) recorded the highest rates of full immunisation.
- **Poor Performance:** Nagaland (12%), followed by Puducherry (34%) and Tripura (39.6%).
- In Delhi, less than half of all children are fully immunised.

- **Issues Involved:**

- The **Covid-19 pandemic** has already impacted the childhood vaccination programme.
- According to advocacy group **Child Rights and You** reports, **only half of Indian families with children under five years** were able to access immunisation services during the lockdown.

## **Way Forward**

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Immunisation is a **simple and effective way of protecting children** from serious diseases. It not only helps protect individuals, it also protects the broader community by minimising the spread of disease. Therefore the government needs to remove any gap in immunisation.

**Source: TH**