

Dear polio eradication supporter,

As we continue to make progress toward polio eradication, there are new milestones to mark each month. This March, we celebrated International Women's Day by recognizing the central role women play around the world in ending polio, Bangladesh introduced the inactivated polio vaccine into its routine immunization program, and TED-Ed released a short animated video illustrating why disease eradication is the ultimate gift we can give to children today and to every future generation.

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## WOMEN AT THE CENTRE OF POLIO ERADICATION

On March 8, we celebrated International Women's Day and the tremendous contributions women have made to progress against polio. Thanks to the work of women as vaccinators, community ambassadors and children's advocates, we've been able to eliminate 99.9% of the world's polio. Health workers play a [heroic role](#) in reaching every child with polio vaccines, and eighty percent of polio vaccinators worldwide are women. The theme for International Women's Day this year was "Making it Happen" – and women are certainly

crucial in making polio eradication happen. [\[Read more\]](#)



Dr Luna Unnekamrun plays an essential role in reaching children with vaccines in Dhaka's slums. In Bangladesh, the majority of doctors are women. © Gavi

## AN ANIMATED LESSON ON HOW TO ERADICATE A DISEASE

A new animated video from TED-Ed illustrates the history of vaccination, how disease eradication works, and why polio is next in line. Created in partnership with polio expert Walt Orenstein, the video explains why it's so important to finish the job and end polio forever. [\[Watch Here\]](#)



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## POLIO IN THE NEWS

CNN: [Crawling in a 'polio-free' country](#)

## POLIO IN NUMBERS

### Wild poliovirus in 2015

- Global Total: 21 (51) ↓
- Global WPV1: 21 (51) ↓
- Global WPV3: 0 (0)

### Endemic: 21 (44) ↓

- Afghanistan: 1 (4) ↓
- Nigeria: 0 (1) ↓
- Pakistan: 20 (39) ↓

### Importation Countries: 0 (7) ↓

Data as of 1 April 2015. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2014.

[Current case map](#)

### Countries Introducing the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) into Routine Immunization systems this month

Bangladesh and the Maldives both introduced IPV in March.

82 countries have introduced IPV to date (42% of the global total).

Read the [monthly message](#) from Polio Oversight Board chair Dr Tom Frieden.

## BANGLADESH INTRODUCES IPV



On March 21, Bangladesh introduced the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) into its routine immunization programme to give its children extra protection against the disease, as part of global efforts to prepare for the switch from trivalent oral polio vaccine (OPV) to bivalent OPV in 2016. Bangladesh has a strong Extended Program on Immunization, having incorporated staff, lessons and experiences from the polio eradication program to strengthen the entire system. The vaccine introduction coincides with an important anniversary: next month marks sixty years since IPV was first launched. This year, Bangladesh builds on that legacy as one of 126 countries introducing IPV, a critical step in the polio eradication endgame. [\[Read more\]](#)

*Children across Bangladesh now will be routinely reached with inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) and the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV). © Gavi*



## FUNDING UPDATES

Canada has made a major contribution of C\$ 20 million for the introduction of inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) in up to 25 non-Gavi-eligible countries. This is part of the globally-coordinated project to introduce IPV in more than 126 countries ahead of the phased removal of oral polio vaccines (OPV), in efforts to secure and maintain a lasting polio-free world.

The Saudi Fund for Development provided US\$ 1.5 million to WHO as part of their 2013 confirmed pledge of US\$ 15 million to GPEI. These funds will help critical eradication activities in Ethiopia, Somalia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Kenya and Sudan.

This month Luxembourg has made a contribution of €500 000 to polio eradication efforts worldwide. Luxembourg has been supporting polio eradication activities since 2001 and in October 2006 Rotary International presented Grand Duc Henri of Luxembourg with its prestigious Polio Champion Award. Luxembourg's recent financial support to polio outbreak response activities in Syria has been decisive to control the Middle East polio outbreak.

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