September 2015

POLIO GLOBAL ERADICATION INITIATIVE

NEWS

Dear polio eradication supporter,

This September, we took several important steps forwards towards polio eradication. Three polio endemic countries became two, with Nigeria's removal from the list of polio-endemic countries. Furthermore, three types of wild poliovirus became two, with type two declared officially eradicated. These historic achievements in polio eradication set the stage for the Polio Oversight Board, who met to celebrate progress and make plans to tackle the major challenges that stand in our path to achieving this goal.

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NIGERIA REMOVED FROM LIST OF POLIO-ENDEMIC COUNTRIES

Just three years ago, Nigeria accounted for more than half of wild polio cases worldwide. But this month, Nigeria was removed from the dwindling list of polio-endemic countries, following more than a year with no reported cases of wild polio. This is a remarkable success; but the country, as well as the rest of the African continent, must maintain vigilance and momentum for at least the next two years before the World Health Organization's African region can be officially certified polio-free. This photo story on the daily life of a surveillance officer in Kenya illustrates one important piece of what needs to be done in order to protect the fragile gains across Africa. [Read More]

For the first time in history, no child has been paralyzed by wild poliovirus for a year in Nigeria.
© WHO/T.Moran

POLIO OVERSIGHT BOARD REVIEWS THE STATUS OF POLIO ERADICATION

The Polio Oversight Board (POB) convened on 25 September to conclude a review of the GPEI's Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018, half way through the plan. Incredible progress has been made, but conflict and increasing insecurity have made it increasingly difficult for health workers to reach children with polio vaccines. With adequate financing and full implementation of the eradication strategies that have proven successful, the POB determined that we could stop transmission of the virus in the two remaining endemic countries – Afghanistan and Pakistan – and achieve certification of global eradication by 2019. [Read More]

Global Citizen Festival

At the Global Citizen Festival on 26 September in New York, global citizens came together with world leaders and celebrities to help fight extreme poverty and inequality around the world, and support approaches that will make life more sustainable for people and the planet. The Prime Minister of Malta announced that polio eradication will be on the agenda of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November this year, and the Prime Minister of Luxembourg announced a contribution of €500 000 to polio eradication operations worldwide.

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

Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Dominica, Guyana, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Seychelles introduced IPV this month.

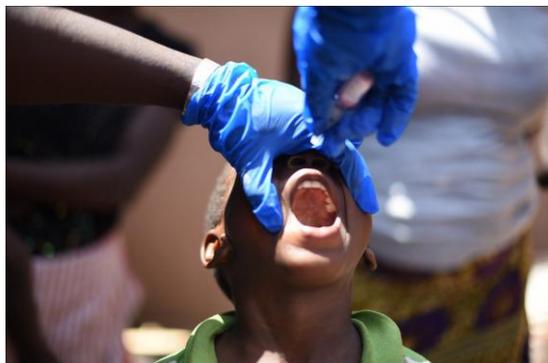All polio endemic countries have now introduced IPV.

More than half of the world's birth cohort is now receiving at least one dose of IPV.

Twenty three countries are due to introduce IPV in October.

The monthly statement from Polio Oversight Board chair Dr Tom Frieden focusses on the importance of robust surveillance, high levels of vaccination and rapid outbreak response to tackle outbreaks of both wild poliovirus and vaccine derived poliovirus.

ONE DOWN, TWO TO GO: WILD POLIOVIRUS TYPE 2 OFFICIALLY DECLARED ERADICATED

On 20 September, the Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis formally concluded that WPV2 has been eradicated for good, after not being detected anywhere in the world since 1999. This declaration will support the final decision on whether the switch from trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccine will be made as scheduled in April 2016, which will be decided by the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization next month. This month, the programme moved quickly to roll out urgent outbreak responses in Mali and

Ukraine following reports of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPV). Both outbreaks were the result of low vaccination coverage. Eradicating polio for good necessitates phasing out the use of oral polio vaccine (OPV), which can, on rare occasions where levels of immunity are very low, cause cVDPVs. [Read More]

Thierno Sylla from Guinea, age 5, receives a dose of oral polio vaccine. © UNICEF

LOW-SEASON PUSH IN PAKISTAN

Taking advantage of the current "low season" for polio transmission, Pakistan has launched the first of nine nationwide polio vaccination campaigns, with the goal of reaching more than 35 million children across 163 districts. [Read More]

Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication, Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq administers polio drops to a child in Islamabad during the first day of the nationwide immunization campaign.
© Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative

FUNDING UPDATES

Norway has granted 50 million Norwegian Kroner to WHO for polio eradication. As part of their pledge to GPEI, Norway is also funding the introduction of IPV in Gavi-eligible countries.

POLIO IN THE NEWS

BBC: Nigeria reaches polio 'milestone'

Forbes: Polio Outbreak In Ukraine Is Grim Reminder Of Need For Continued Vigilance

Quartz: New outbreaks of polio are "vaccine-derived"—but that doesn't mean vaccines caused polio

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild poliovirus in 2015

- Global Total: **41 (200)** ↓
- Global WPV1: **41 (200)** ↓
- Global WPV3: **0 (0)**

Endemic: 42 (181) ↓

- Afghanistan: **9 (10)** ↑
- Nigeria: **0 (6)** ↓
- Pakistan: **32 (165)** ↓

Importation Countries: 0 (19) ↓

Data as of **23 September 2015**. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2014.

Current case map

[DONATE] [END POLIO NOW]

every last child