

Dear polio eradication supporter,

In July, Nigeria marked two years since its last case of wild poliovirus, a major milestone for the polio eradication programme. This highlighted the need for continued efforts across the continent to protect this progress. At the same time, efforts to end polio transmission are ongoing in the world's two remaining endemic countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan, which both recently underwent progress reviews by Technical Advisory Groups. Ending polio in these areas will require sustained political and financial commitments from all stakeholders, as well as continued dedication from thousands of health workers, who are playing a critical role in getting the right vaccines to every last child.

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TWO YEARS SINCE LAST WILD POLIO CASE IN NIGERIA

As of 24 July, two years have passed since the last child was paralysed by wild polio in Nigeria. This is the longest the country has ever gone without the disease. This incredible progress is due to the commitment of tens of thousands of people, including the government, traditional and community leaders, health workers, donors and other partners. If the rest of Africa can also maintain strong surveillance and vaccination coverage, the



No child has been paralysed in Nigeria since 24 July 2014. There is much that still needs to be done to keep children protected. © BMGF

region could be certified polio-free as early as next year. In addition to sustained political and financial commitments at all levels of government, Nigeria and other African countries will need to improve routine immunisation, strengthen surveillance systems, and enhance the quality of polio vaccination campaigns in order to reach every last child. [\[Read more\]](#)

REVIEWING PROGRESS IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

In June and July, the Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) of Pakistan and Afghanistan – the only countries where polio has never been stopped – met to assess progress toward ending polio transmission. In Afghanistan, the TAG commended the government's commitment to end polio under challenging circumstances, and urged intensified efforts to engage religious and community leaders to reach all children with polio vaccines. In addition, a [surveillance review](#) noted improvements in the country's ability to find and report every last virus. In



A child is given the bivalent oral polio vaccine in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. © UNICEF/C. Walther

WEBSITE

The GPEI will launch a new version of the [website](#) next month. Check back for a new and improved site full of data visualisations, interactive graphics, and regular updates on the polio programme.

POLIO TAKE TWO

A new [video](#) shows the incredible progress made and the potential consequences of missing this window of opportunity to end polio for good.

AFRICA RCC

Last month, the **Africa Regional Certification Commission (RCC)** [met to review progress](#) toward polio-free certification of the WHO African Region.

POLIO IN THE NEWS

AFP: [Nigeria hails major step towards polio-free Africa](#)

The Guardian: [Only complacency can stop Nigeria – and Africa – from finally conquering polio](#)

National Geographic: [How Technology is Reaching Pakistan's Children with the Polio Vaccine in Photos](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild poliovirus in 2016

- Global Total: **19 (34)** ↓
- Global WPV1: **19 (34)** ↓
- Global WPV3: **0 (0)**

Endemic: 19 (34) ↓

- Afghanistan: **6 (6)**
- Pakistan: **13 (28)** ↓

Importation Countries: 0 (0)

Data as of **27 July 2016**. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2015.

[Current case map](#)

Pakistan, the TAG recommended sustaining political commitment and making operational improvements – recommendations that have been incorporated into Pakistan's 2016-2017 National Emergency Action Plan for polio eradication. [Read More on [Afghanistan](#) and [Pakistan](#) TAGs]

FUNDING UPDATES

The **United Arab Emirates** Pakistan Assistance Programme has signed an agreement with WHO for US\$ 8.58 million, bringing its total support in 2016 to almost US\$ 17 million. This latest support is part of the UAE's partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Since January 2014, the United Arab Emirates has supplied more than 116 million polio vaccines to Pakistan, and continues to be an important partner in the global effort to eradicate polio. [More](#)

Easy Jet, in partnership with the **UK UNICEF National Committee**, has contributed US\$ 473 753.42 to UNICEF polio eradication efforts. Easy Jet is a long standing corporate supporter of polio eradication activities, particularly vaccine procurement and outbreak response.

The GPEI partners have provided input into international aid reviews currently being undertaken by **Ireland** and **Canada**. It offered an opportunity to underscore how critical their investments in polio eradication have been and how those investments have contributed to broader health and development goals.

THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT VACCINES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POLIO



A woman brings her child to be vaccinated with IPV in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. © WHO/S. Mughal

Both the oral polio vaccine (OPV) and the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) protect children in different ways and have complimentary roles in ending polio for good. Studies have shown that combining OPV with one dose of IPV can better protect children from contracting or spreading the disease. Pakistan introduced IPV into routine immunisation systems last year, and is [using both vaccines hand in hand](#) to boost immunity and accelerate

progress against polio. As well as its use in routine immunization, IPV can also be used in campaigns; in Hyderabad, India, where a vaccine-derived poliovirus strain was detected in environmental samples last month, the country quickly launched a campaign using fractional dose IPV to boost immunity. Research has also shown that two fractional doses of IPV delivered intradermally can generate a stronger immunity than a full dose delivered intramuscularly, providing a potential solution for the global shortage of IPV. [\[Read more\]](#)

WOMEN: THE HEROES OF THE POLIO PROGRAMME

Women are the face of the polio eradication programme in local communities around the globe. Malalai, a female polio campaign monitor in Afghanistan, is one such woman who has dedicated her life to ensuring every child is vaccinated against polio. She and thousands of other female health workers work tirelessly as vaccinators, logistical coordinators, campaign monitors, community mobilisers and many other roles to protect all children from this disease. Their relentless efforts are critical to build trust in the polio programme, as women are often able to more easily engage mothers, build trust and explain the importance of polio vaccination. [\[Read more\]](#)



Malalai works with the polio vaccination teams in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan. © WHO

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