

Dear polio eradication supporter,

This new year, the goal of achieving polio eradication is closer than ever. In January, India marked six years since its last polio case, and innovative programmes and technologies are helping us reach the most difficult to access populations in the remaining endemic areas. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative and countries are stepping up momentum to deliver on our promise of protecting future generations from the threat of this devastating disease.

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INDIA MARKS SIX YEARS SINCE LAST POLIO CASE

January marks six years since the last case of polio was reported in India. This milestone, in a country once considered the most difficult to stop polio, demonstrates the importance of strong surveillance systems, robust vaccination and targeted social mobilization efforts. Some of the lessons learned in India, including strategies to reach high-risk populations and supporting child health initiatives beyond polio, are now being applied to other settings. But until the disease is eradicated, India must remain vigilant. That's why from 29 January, 172 million children were vaccinated across the country in National Immunization Days in a concerted effort to maintain high levels of childhood immunity.

[\[Read more\]](#)



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POLIO-AFFECTED COUNTRIES CLOSE THE GAPS

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is continuing to refine strategies in the final polio-endemic countries – Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria - to consistently identify and reduce missed children during and between polio vaccination campaigns. In Nigeria, polio vaccinators and social mobilizers are reaching children previously inaccessible due to conflict – and supporting other child health initiatives like [measles campaigns](#). In Pakistan, new strategies are being employed in the current low season to reach hard-to-access populations, [including families on the move](#). And in Afghanistan, female health workers are being mobilised to improve programme quality, win the trust of parents and improve immunisation rates. [\(Read more\)](#).

Communications for Polio Eradication

An online toolkit, Rhizome, has been released to help equip countries with strategies and tools to finish polio. [\(See more\)](#).

Social Media Takes on Polio

Twitter is helping to eradicate polio. Michael Sheldrick of the Global Poverty Project wants you to know how. [\[See more\]](#)

WHO Executive Board Meeting

Ministries of Health gathered in Geneva in January to review progress towards polio eradication. [\[See more\]](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[Al Jazeera](#): Cricket Beyond Boundaries

[The Scientist](#): Toward a Virus-Free Polio Vaccine

[Voice of America](#): In Fight Against Troubling Viruses, Vaccines Offer Hope

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild poliovirus in 2017

- Global Total: **0 (0)**
- Global WPV1: **0 (0)**
- Global WPV3: **0 (0)**

Endemic: **0 (0)**

- Afghanistan: **0 (0)**
- Pakistan: **0 (0)**
- Nigeria: **0 (0)**

Data as of **01 February 2017**. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2016.

[Current case map](#)



A female vaccinator delivers the oral polio vaccine in Afghanistan. © WHO Afghanistan/R.Akbar

FUNDING UPDATES

Rotary International announced the release of US\$ 35 million to WHO and UNICEF, with half of the funds supporting Nigeria and the Lake Chad region and bringing Rotary's support to US\$ 140 million since 2016. [Read more.](#)

The **US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** released US\$ 25 million to WHO in January 2017 for technical assistance (including the Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP) programme) and activities in priority countries. UNICEF also received \$3.4 million from the CDC, representing the first instalment in support of polio eradication activities in 2017.

With funds raised with an innovative financing mechanism, "The Global Disease Eradication Fund", the **Republic of Korea** has announced that it will provide US\$ 4 million to WHO and UNICEF for polio outbreak response and surveillance in 2016-2017. [Read more.](#)

The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** released US\$ 4.66 million as part of its contingency funding to WHO for activities in Pakistan.

UNICEF received US\$ 1.03 million from **EasyJet** as a result of the on board winter polio collection on flights throughout Europe, including the UK, Switzerland, France, Italy, Portugal, Netherlands, Germany and Spain.

As part of its continued support to polio eradication, the **LDS Charities** provided US\$ 300,000 to UNICEF for the 2017 Immunization Polio Campaign in Guinea.

ROBOTS OFFER A HELPING HAND TO STOP POLIO

INNOVATION FOR ERADICATION

Robots are helping CDC to end polio



Automated machines at the CDC are increasing the number of samples tested for polio and for immunity against it.

While effective and safe polio vaccines have been used for years, improvements in delivery and monitoring systems are helping bring polio to the brink of eradication. One such technology comes from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which has built [robots capable of testing blood samples](#) for polio antibodies at a faster rate and with greater accuracy than ever before. [Read more in the Innovation Series.](#)

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