

POLIO IN INDIA: FACT SHEET

A YEAR WITHOUT POLIO

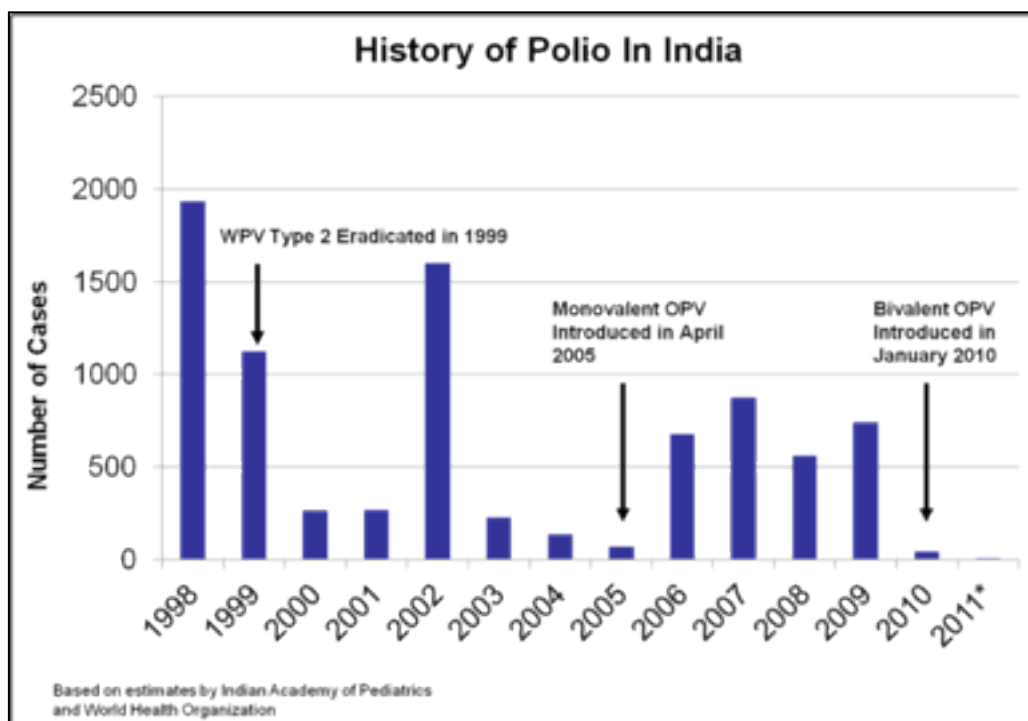
- On 13 January 2012, India will have surpassed one year without detecting a single case of wild poliovirus.
- India's last case was reported in West Bengal. The victim, an 18-month-old girl named Rukhsar from Howrah district, was infected with type-1 poliovirus.
- If India reaches the one year mark, it will no longer be considered "endemic," meaning that it will have successfully interrupted polio transmission.
- India had traditionally been considered one of the toughest places in the world to eradicate polio. In 2009, India reported 741 polio cases, more than any other country in the world. In 2010, India reported just 42 cases out of 1,352 cases reported globally.

THE SCALE OF VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS

- India conducted two National Immunization Days (NIDs) in 2011. During each NID, almost 2.5 million polio vaccinators seek to vaccinate roughly 172 million children under five throughout India's 35 states and union territories.
- In 2011, NIDs were followed up by seven smaller, more focused Subnational Immunization Days (SNIDs). During these immunization days, up to 2 million community health workers conduct massive mobilization drives and communications campaigns aimed at high-risk areas.
- The private sector contributes to the surveillance of cases of acute flaccid paralysis (children presenting polio-like symptoms), assists with Supplemental Immunization Activities and liaises with the Government, health agencies, NGOs and other professional bodies.
- The Government of India funds the majority of its polio program and devised many of the strategies that helped India surpass an entire year without a single case of wild poliovirus.

Each national immunization day in India involves:

225,000,000	Doses of polio vaccine
172,000,000	Children vaccinated
2,500,000	Vaccinators
2,000,000	Vaccine carriers
155,000	Supervisors



The introduction of the National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) in 1997 strengthened India's polio program and led to the eradication of wild poliovirus type 2 in 1999. Further innovations in the program, including introduction of monovalent and bivalent oral poliovirus vaccines helped reduce India's caseload.

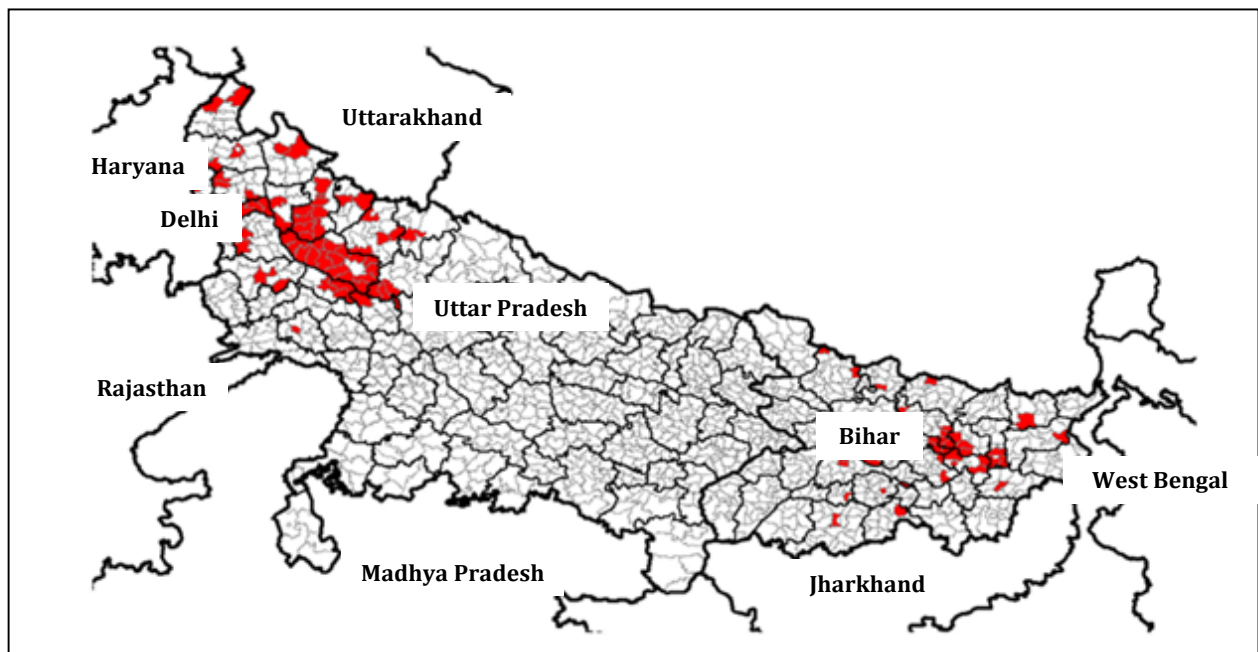
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INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

- Health workers target mobile families at bus stations, construction sites and on trains as well as use motorbikes and trek by foot to immunize children in India's most remote regions.
- In Muslim communities, clerics, imams, madarsa teachers and physicians work together to urge parents to immunize their children, greatly reducing the number of people refusing vaccines.
- Environmental sampling of sewage in high-risk areas allows the Government to track the spread of the virus before new cases are reported.
- In recent years, India has targeted 107 high-risk blocks in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. This "107 block" strategy is a multipronged approach that aims to ensure high-quality polio vaccination campaigns, routine immunization, and prevention and control of diarrhea through sanitation, availability of clean water and hygienic practices.
- India's polio program holds health workers to high standards—workers are personally accountable during vaccination campaigns; strict action is taken for any laxity in vaccine delivery.

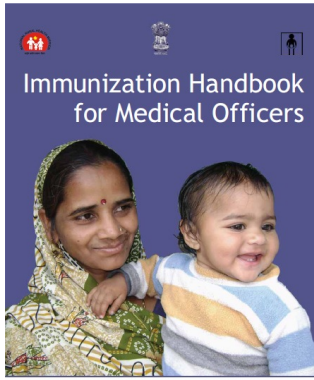


A baby gets vaccinated on a train in India.



The 107 highest risk blocks in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

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An example of a training module for Medical Officers on Routine Immunization.

INDIA'S POLIO ERADICATION PROGRAM

- The World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, The US Center for Disease Control and Rotary International play critical roles in supporting India's polio program. The National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) was founded in 1997 by the Government of India and WHO.
 - NPSP's support to the Government has improved the quality and coverage of NIDs and SNIDs and built capacity for India's polio program.
 - Additionally, NPSP implements, monitors and builds capacity for other vital health programs, such as measles and Japanese Encephalitis vaccinations, and for India's Universal Immunization Program.
- Lessons from India's polio program have helped establish surveillance systems for other life-threatening diseases, including measles.
 - NPSP's effective training and program monitoring have improved cold chain handling capabilities, which helped in the introduction of Hepatitis B and Japanese Encephalitis vaccines to the Universal Immunization Program.

THE WORK MUST CONTINUE

- Polio remains a threat in a number of countries, particularly in neighboring Pakistan.
- India needs to sustain its high-quality efforts to prevent re-introduction of polio, and to ensure all children are protected from the disease.
- The network that has been established for polio can continue to be used to immunize children against other preventable diseases and support additional health services that ensure even the most vulnerable children have a healthy start to life.



Young girls participate in house-to-house campaigns in Uttar Pradesh.