



Dear polio eradication supporter,

On 25 August 2021, one year after the WHO African Region (AFRO) was certified free of wild poliovirus (WPV), health ministers from across the Region [reaffirmed commitments to ending all forms of polio](#) during a special side session at the 71<sup>st</sup> WHO Regional Committee for Africa. To combat rising outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) in under-immunized communities, ministers discussed faster outbreak response as well as innovative tactics including integrated campaigns and the use of a new scorecard to track progress over the next few years. To mark the anniversary, the side session also featured [messages from global and regional programme leaders](#), updates on [the type 2 novel oral polio vaccine \(nOPV2\) rollout](#), and [stories from polio survivors](#).

At the same time, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) is [actively monitoring](#) the developing security situation in Afghanistan – one of two countries with active wild poliovirus transmission. The GPEI’s top priority continues to be the safety of its polio workforce in country, while [adapting to continue delivering polio vaccines](#) and other essential services to those in need. The polio programme has faced numerous challenges in the past, and remains steadfastly committed to protecting children against poliovirus and creating polio-free futures.

**Polio programme perseveres in period plagued by pandemic**

2020 tested the GPEI in new ways, but the programme’s response to COVID-19 demonstrated that an investment in polio prevention is an investment in stronger health systems everywhere. Read the GPEI Annual Report 2020 to learn about what was accomplished last year and what is next for building a polio-free world. [\[More\]](#)



**POLIO IN NUMBERS**

**Wild Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)\***

Global Total: 2 (102)

**Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)\***

Global Total: 249 (293)

\*Data as of 26 August 2021. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2020.

Breakdown by country  
[Polio this week](#)

**Stopping the spread of COVID-19 and polio in Kenya**



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When the pandemic caused lockdowns in Nairobi, community health workers had to move to protect against COVID-19 in addition to polio. See how local health workers educated community members on stopping the spread of

disease and strengthened polio surveillance efforts to keep communities safe amid crisis. [\[More\]](#)

## Battling vaccine misinformation in Liberia

Along with logistical challenges during vaccination campaigns, polio workers in Liberia are also facing a rise in vaccine misinformation triggered by the pandemic. To solve this growing problem, health workers are using new strategies to reach communities with accurate information in ways that serve them best. From building trust with mothers on their doorsteps to sharing messages via radio talk shows, learn about new vaccine acceptance efforts underway in Liberia. [[More](#)]



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## WHO CALL FOR VACCINE EXPERTS

The World Health Organization (WHO) is [seeking experts](#) to serve as members of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE). Members of SAGE help provide WHO with advice and recommendations regarding immunization policy and related strategies. Applications can be submitted [here](#) by 10 Sep 2021.

## DONOR UPDATES

UNICEF is grateful for the support and partnership of **Rotary International** for outbreak response with US\$ 3 685 228.

**UN Foundation** provided US\$ 1 654 208 additional funding for polio vaccine procurement (bOPV) for supplementary immunization activities (SIAs); UNICEF thanks the UN Foundation for their continued support.

WHO and UNICEF would like to thank **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, for his generous contribution of US\$ 13 million to support global polio activities. This funding compliments contributions through the UAE Pakistan Assistance Program for campaign activities in Pakistan.

## POLIO IN THE NEWS

[The Conversation](#): It's been a year since Africa was declared polio free. But a threat remains

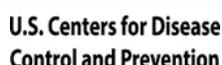
[Voice of America](#): African Governments Commit to Eradicating Poliovirus Type 2

[WIRED](#): Afghanistan Almost Beat Polio. Now the Future Is Uncertain

## Photo of the Month



Ummu Paasewe, a community mobilization officer with Liberia's Ministry of Health, speaks with a mother to encourage her to vaccinate her child against polio. ©UNICEF Liberia/2021/Hatcher-Moore



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