



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This past month, Polio leaders travelled to Pakistan on an [extraordinary operations visit](#), meeting with newly-appointed Pakistan leaders committed to delivering polio-free country. Director of Polio Eradication at WHO Headquarters and Chair of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) Strategy Committee Aidan O’Leary from WHO and Richard Franka, Team Lead of the Pakistan Team at Polio Eradication Branch, CDC, met with Dr Nadeem Jan, newly-appointed interim Federal Health Minister, to discuss first-hand operations, latest developments and innovations of the country’s polio eradication effort. Also this past month, WHO hosted the [Seventy-third Regional Committee Meeting for Africa](#) in Gaborone, Botswana, where Ministers of Health from Member States pledged to intensify efforts to end polio—one year since the last confirmed detection of type one wild poliovirus on the continent. A [special event on polio](#) during the meeting sought to solidify plans to interrupt all polioviruses in the African region, with speakers including Hon Dr Edwin Dikoloti (Minister of Health and Wellness, Botswana), Dr Matshidiso Moeti (Regional Director, WHO AFRO), Dr Chris Elias (Polio Oversight Board Chair and President of Global Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), and Dr Jamal Ahmed (Polio Eradication Program Coordinator, WHO AFRO). Commitment from leaders outside of Africa remains high, too: earlier this month, [the G20](#) reaffirmed its support to the GPEI polio eradication. Commitments like these remain critical to ending polio.

Reaching “last-mile” children

Dr Asma Ali, Senior Program Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, takes part in critical behind-the-scenes work to ensure that frontline workers successfully deliver polio vaccines. On a recent trip to Somalia, Asma supported a groundbreaking



© Gates Archive/Ismail Taxta

initiative to help reach “last-mile” children, those who have not been reached by routine vaccinations, with nOPV2. Read further to hear Asma’s thoughts on the challenges involved and importance in bringing polio vaccines to Somalia. [\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2023 (2022)*

Global Total: 7 (21)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2023 (2022)*

Global Total: 232 (272)

*Data as of 30 August 2023. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2022.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

Join the MAKE POLIO HISTORY CAMPAIGN:

The GPEI is launching a digital campaign, [Make Polio History](#), to rally new and current champions to create a chorus of support for polio eradication. Through short, self-recorded videos, supporters from across the world will raise their voices and tell global leaders that eradicating polio is possible and urgently needed now. **Join us [here!](#)**

Detecting poliovirus amidst conflict

At early signs of conflict in Sudan, WHO's teams sprang into action to ensure that polio was not spreading undetected throughout the country. Speed and



coordination are key to successful surveillance – once health teams identify a child with acute flaccid paralysis (AFP), the race to testing begins to determine if polio is the culprit. With ongoing conflict impacting movement and security on the roads, creativity and problem solving are critical to ensuring samples make it to labs so that all traces of polio are tracked and stopped. [\[More\]](#)

Geo-tracking for polio response



Geospatial Tracking Systems (GTS) play a critical role in improving vaccination coverage during polio outbreak response campaigns. A new mobile app recently used during a campaign in Brazzaville tracks vaccinators' movements on a map, providing real-time geographic coverage information for teams to ensure no households are missed. Learn more about how GTS helps protect kids by ensuring no child is missed. [\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[Pakistan Polio Eradication](#)

[Programme:](#) Melinda French Gates meets women polio workers in virtual meeting (29 August 2023)

[The New York Times:](#) We thought we'd beat these three diseases, but they're still killing us. (Richard Conniff, 28 August 2023)

[Global Health NOW:](#) Polio Eradication Through Innovation (Walt Orenstein, 21 August 2023)

[Nature:](#) Can the world really stop wild polio by the end of 2023? (Clare Watson, 15 August 2023)

DONOR UPDATES

WHO would like to thank the **Republic of Korea** for its extraordinary support to polio eradication operations worldwide and for its financial contribution to WHO worth 1.125 billion Korean Won.

UNICEF is very grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the **Republic of Korea** for the generous contribution of 3.375 billion Korean Won in support of GPEI's polio outbreak response activities towards achieving Goal Two of the Polio Eradication Strategy 2022-2026 of stopping circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) transmission and preventing outbreaks in non-endemic countries.

Photo of the Month



A community health worker puts a mark on a child's finger after administering the polio vaccine during a door-to-door polio vaccination (nOPV2) campaign in Mogadishu, Somalia.
©Gates Archive/Ismael Taxta