



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This month partners and champions from over 30 countries, from every region of the world, came together to join the [Make Polio History](#) campaign and celebrate World Polio Day, telling global partners, donors, and polio-affected country governments, that eradication is possible and urgently needed now. The GPEI's [Polio Oversight Board members](#) responded to the global support, expressing their confidence in the feasibility of eradication. In addition, on World Polio Day, [Ministers of Health of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar](#), emphasized the shared responsibility of all Eastern Mediterranean Region member states to end polio, and [Rotary](#) called for continued funding towards eradication efforts. Other partners highlighted the [importance of polio vaccines](#), as well as the importance of [learning from past successes](#), in the fight to end polio. This year's World Polio Day served as a critical reminder that by continuing to work together, we can end polio everywhere.

Reflecting on polio's past



Photography by Nicole Craine.

As polio was sweeping the American South in the 1940s, the Tuskegee Institute's Infantile Paralysis Center was committed to treating Black children with polio – and was the only facility at the time specifically built to do so. Most are not familiar with this important history, but in Alabama, Rotary District 6880 is working to change that. Read on to learn more about the history of Tuskegee's critical role in

the development of the polio vaccine and present-day eradication efforts. [\[More\]](#)

Innovative financing to deliver a polio-free world

The European Commission, the European Investment Bank, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have announced a new €500 million financing partnership to support polio eradication efforts and strengthen healthcare systems. This new commitment from European leaders comes at a critical time – funds will allow vaccinators to reach nearly 370 million children annually and are an important reminder that through finding innovative ways to partner together, we can achieve a polio-free world. [\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2023 (2022)*

Global Total: 10 (28)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2023 (2022)*

Global Total: 324 (449)

*Data as of 24 October 2023. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2022.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[Forbes](#): How Stories of Resilience Inspire Hope In The Face of Crisis (Michael Sheldrick, 23 October)

[Proto.life](#): Let's eradicate polio this winter (Michael Sheldrick, 19 October)

[Le Monde](#): Poliomyelitis : the last challenges before complete eradication (Julien Lemaigen, 18 October)

Reaching the unreached



Pakistan has made great strides towards polio eradication, but challenges persist in the region of southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where wild polio remains endemic. In response, this year, health agencies have employed a new campaign, “Reaching the Unreached,” aimed to halt transmission of polio, while also boosting immunity against other

vaccine-preventable diseases, through vaccinating children who have not been reached. Although not over yet, early indicators suggest this integration strategy is paying off – approximately 27 000 children under two years of age received overdue or missed routine vaccines during the first two phases of the campaign, and immunity against several pathogens is rising as a result. Through continuing to identify and target vulnerable children, we will put an end to this devastating disease. [\[More\]](#)

DONOR UPDATES

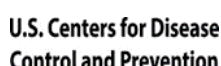
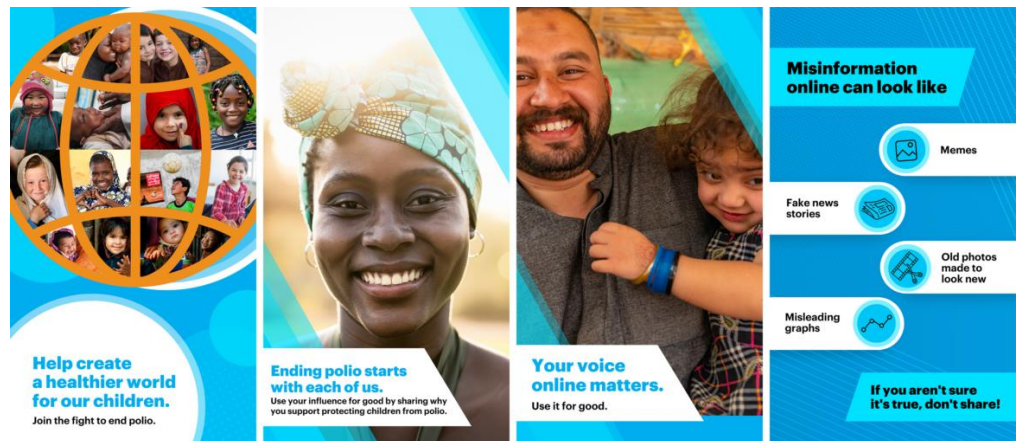
Through an innovative financing partnership announced on 11 October 2023 with the European Investment Bank, the European Commission and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, €500 million in new funding will go to WHO and UNICEF to support vaccine procurement and outbreak response activities, with the first tranche disbursed in late 2023/early2024.

WHO would like to thank **Luxembourg** for its decades-long support to polio eradication operations worldwide and for its recent contribution of €700 000.

UNICEF and partners fighting polio vaccine misinformation

UNICEF and partners are increasingly turning to digital platforms to help combat vaccine misinformation and build trust for vaccines and vaccination services. Effectively, UNICEF is setting up polio ‘listening posts’, known as the Digital Community Engagement (DCE) initiative

to help track false rumours online, and develop accurate messaging and strategies to counter the rumours. “Social listening is like a disease surveillance system, but instead of the virus, we track and analyze misinformation,” said Adnan Shahzad, Digital Communication Manager of the UNICEF Polio Eradication Team. “This helps strengthen already-existing networks and strategies.” In 2022, these efforts resulted in more than 5 million online social listening results being analysed from 41 countries, in more than 100 languages. An incredible achievement. [\[More\]](#)



@GPEI

@WHO

@EndPolioNow

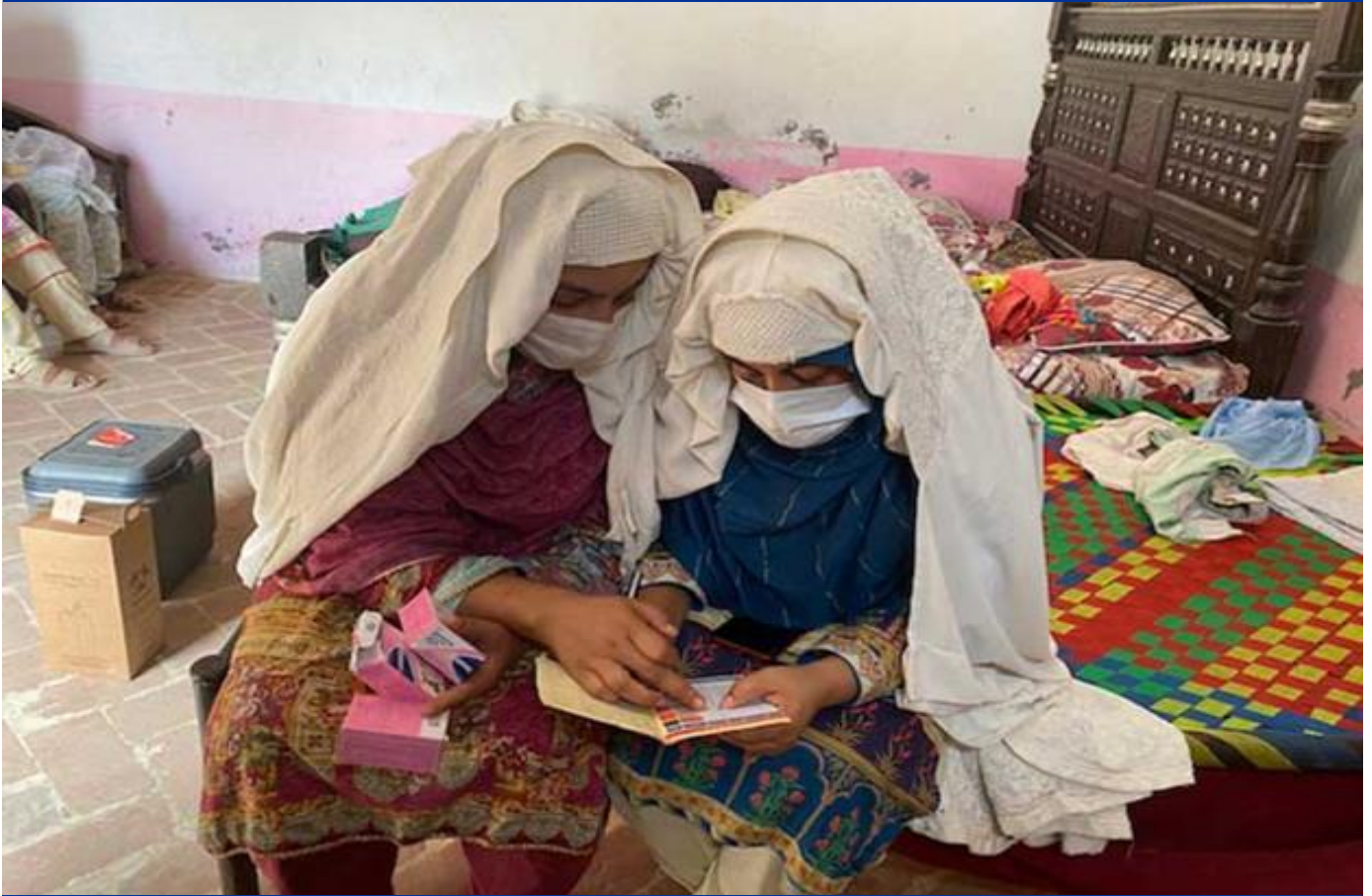
@CDCGlobal

@UNICEF

@GatesFoundation

@Gavi

Photo of the Month



Female health workers filling in information after a Reaching the Unreached vaccination session © Huma Khawar