



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This month, partners came together at the 2025 World Health Assembly (WHA) to celebrate progress and renew commitment to ending polio. At the [Outsmarting Outbreaks](#) side-event, [GPEI leaders](#) reaffirmed dedication to protecting progress and preventing future outbreaks, and celebrated Madagascar's recent variant polio [outbreak closure](#). Also at WHA, Professor Helen Rees, Chair of WHO's International Health Regulation Polio Emergency Committee, and longstanding polio eradication champion, was awarded the [Dr LEE Jong-wook Memorial Prize](#) for Public Health – a testament to her significant contributions to the field. Lastly, the [Team End Polio Strava Rise Together challenge](#) officially closed at the end of the month, with over 120+ million minutes of activity and 86 000+ participants. Before the challenge's end, parliamentarians, advocates, influencers, and Rotarians in the UK gathered for a "parkrun" event, a powerful demonstration of the UK public's belief in a polio-free world.

The GPEI pays tribute to [Sebastião Salgado](#), the legendary Brazilian photographer whose work illuminated the fight against polio. Salgado sadly passed away last week at the age of 81. Through his powerful imagery, he documented not only the devastating effects of polio but also the relentless efforts of health workers and communities striving to create a world free of the disease.



© WHO

## Polio Outbreak in Madagascar Closed



© WHO

Madagascar successfully stopped an outbreak of type 1 variant poliovirus, after more than a year with no detections. Since the outbreak began in 2020, 43 children and two adults have been

paralyzed across the country. In response, the Madagascar government, backed by communities and global partners, successfully delivered lifesaving vaccines to over 19 million people. Thanks to dedication at all levels to vaccination and intensified surveillance efforts, Madagascar stopped the virus in its tracks and is now focused on sustaining immunity to prevent any future outbreaks. Learn more about Madagascar's efforts to end polio [here](#).

## POLIO IN NUMBERS

### Wild Poliovirus in 2025 (2024)\*

Global Total: 12 (6)

### Circulating Variant (Vaccine Derived) Poliovirus in 2025 (2024)\*

Global Total: 55 (61)

\*Data as of 27 May 2025. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2024.

Breakdown by country  
**Polio this week**

## Horn of Africa Unites to End Polio



After nearly a decade of persistent outbreaks of variant poliovirus, health ministers from countries in the Horn of Africa renewed their commitment to ending polio and agreed to establish an inter-

ministerial coordination body. This coordination effort will include synchronized vaccination campaigns, enhanced cross-border surveillance, and real-time data sharing to prevent missed cases. Already demonstrating the power of this multi-country coordination, more than 18 million children were vaccinated across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia between February and April 2025. Continued collaboration will be key to sustaining progress, especially in high-risk areas where transmission of the virus persists. [[More](#)]

## POLIO IN THE NEWS

AllAfrica: [Outbreak Of Variant Type 1 Polio in Madagascar Declared Over](#)

The International News: [Refusals drop sharply in Karachi as polio teams expand outreach, influence](#)

BBC: [WHO declares polio outbreak in Papua New Guinea.](#)

Reuters: [WHO says vaccine-derived poliovirus detected in Papua New Guinea](#)

Nature Africa: [Nigeria's polio battleground.](#)

## A Look Inside Gaza's Polio Response



UNICEF's upcoming documentary captures the extraordinary courage and commitment of Dr Younis R. Awadallah, who led one of the most urgent health missions in Gaza last year: vaccinating over 600 000 children against polio. Dr Younis and his team delivered lifesaving care to families across Gaza, while navigating conflict, supply shortages, and blocked access. He has received global recognition for his leadership in this effort, earning him a place

on the [TIME100](#) list of the most influential people in health in 2025, alongside [WHO's Dr Tedros](#). The documentary is expected to be released later this year, but you can watch the [trailer](#) now. [[More](#)].

## DONOR UPDATES

WHO expresses its sincere gratitude to the **Gates Foundation** for its generous contribution of US\$ 17.7 million in support of polio eradication efforts in Afghanistan, including technical assistance, surveillance, and immunization activities, and for the contribution of US\$ 16.5 million to support polio outbreak response campaigns.

## Photo of the Month



A child receives a polio vaccine in Madagascar. © WHO African Region