



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This month, in Abu Dhabi, global leaders pledged [US\\$ 1.9 billion](#) to end polio and protect children worldwide. The global pledging event, 'Investing in Humanity: United to End Polio' was hosted by the Mohamed bin Zayed Foundation for Humanity in partnership with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The commitment includes US\$ 1.2 billion from the [Gates Foundation](#), US\$ 140 million from the Mohamed bin Zayed Foundation for Humanity, US\$ 450 million from Rotary International, and US \$100 million from [Bloomberg Philanthropies](#). Donors including Germany, Japan, and the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America, also contributed significant commitments. This historic investment will help reach millions of children with life-saving vaccines and strengthen health systems, moving us one step-closer to a polio-free world. As we reflect on [progress throughout 2025](#) and look ahead to 2026, it is clear that continued partnership remains essential to deliver a polio-free future.

The GPEI is excited to [welcome](#) Michael McGovern, Chair of the International PolioPlus Committee, Rotary International, as the next Chair of the Polio Oversight Board (POB), effective 1 January 2026. Mr. McGovern brings decades of experience and passion for polio eradication. Thank you to Dr. Chris Elias, President of Global Development, Gates Foundation, for unwavering commitment and strategic leadership during his time as POB Chair.

### African Footballers Unite to Kick Out Polio



On the sidelines of the Africa Cup of Nations 2025, six renowned African footballers have teamed up with the GPEI to launch the [“Kick Out Polio” campaign](#), urging the continent to kick the disease out of Africa. The campaign calls on families, government leaders, and community and civil society leaders across the continent to rally together to step up efforts to vaccinate every child against polio. Learn more about the campaign and how you can join the Kick Out Polio challenge. [\[More\]](#)

### POLIO IN NUMBERS

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

Global Total: 39 (93)

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

Global Total: 202 (255)

\*Data as of 6 January 2026. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2024.

Breakdown by country  
**Polio this week**

## GPEI and Gavi Boards Convene in Second Joint Session



The boards of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the GPEI convened for their second joint session to strengthen collaboration and accelerate progress toward shared goals: reaching zero-dose and under-immunized children with lifesaving vaccines and ending polio worldwide. Discussions focused on enhancing integration efforts during and

outside of campaigns, and country representatives from Nigeria and Pakistan shared updates on how integrated vaccination is helping strengthen routine immunization systems while responding to polio outbreaks in some of the world's most challenging operating environments. Learn more about how this partnership is driving progress toward a polio-free future. [\[More\]](#)

## Protecting Children in Afghanistan



Dr Arsala delivering training for the fIPV campaign.  
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In Afghanistan, health workers are introducing innovative strategies to reach more children stop virus transmission faster. From August to October 2025, Afghanistan launched a three-phase fractional Inactivated Polio Vaccine (fIPV) campaign across the eastern region, aiming to protect more than 1.2 million children. Children received both the fractional IPV dose and the oral vaccine – two tools working together to help communities build stronger, longer-lasting protection. [\[More\]](#)

## POLIO IN THE NEWS

**Devex:** [Polio eradication secures nearly \\$2B in pledges at Abu Dhabi summit.](#)

**Forbes:** [New \\$1.9 Billion Pledge For Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#)

**The Conversation:** [The world risks forgetting one of humanity's greatest triumphs as polio nears global eradication – 70 years after Jonas Salk developed the vaccine in a Pittsburgh lab.](#)

**The Associated Press:** [Pakistan begins last anti-polio vaccination drive of the year after surge in new cases.](#)

## DONOR UPDATES

UNICEF and WHO thank the Board of Trustees of the **Rotary Foundation** for the approval of US\$ 50 million in new grants announced at their December 2025 meeting. These grants will support our work in Afghanistan, Pakistan, the global outbreak response effort and research activities.

UNICEF and WHO are grateful to **His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**, President of the United Arab Emirates, and the **Mohamed bin Zayed Foundation for Humanity**, for the contribution of US\$ 20 million to support polio eradication efforts in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and wider outbreak response activities.

UNICEF is thankful for the **US State Department's** contribution of US\$ 15.6 million to support vaccine procurement, social behavior change, integrated service delivery and outbreak response activities in Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider Eastern and Southern Africa region.



## Photo of the Month



A vaccinator is vaccinating a child with a jet injector during the fIPV campaign ©WHO/EMRO