



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This month the independent Africa Regional Certification Commission (ARCC) accepted full documentation of wild polio-free status from the remaining four countries in the African Region, taking the region one step closer to being certified free of wild poliovirus. The final step is for the ARCC to review the final updated annual reports from the remaining 43 countries. The commission is expected to conclude its review and make its final decision by August 2020.

Whilst celebrating this step forward towards a polio-free Africa, conclusions from a [new paper](#) prepared by the programme underline the challenges we face over the coming months, especially in the context of COVID-19. Throughout June, the programme continued to plan for the safe resumption of polio immunization activities, alongside providing widespread support to pandemic response efforts.

Africa steps closer to wild polio-free status

Earlier this month the ARCC validated polio programme documentation from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Nigeria and South Sudan, paving the way for a final decision regarding the African Region's wild poliovirus status in August. Amid rising COVID-19 cases, this upcoming milestone demonstrates how by working together, leaders, health workers and communities can overcome any health challenge. [\[More\]](#)



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Supporting child health to end polio in Afghanistan



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Programme workers in Afghanistan have stepped up support to routine immunization activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. From providing accurate information to coordinating vaccination appointments at local health centers, polio mobilizers have increased routine immunization rates in their roles as vital community guides for local families. [\[More\]](#)

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POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 72 (37)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 168 (21)

*Data as of 23 June 2020. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2019.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[The New York Times](#): Slowing the Coronavirus Is Speeding the Spread of Other Diseases

[CNN](#): Will a Covid-19 vaccine signal an end to the anti-vaccine movement?

[The Guardian](#): World leaders must fund a Covid-19 vaccine plan before it's too late for millions

Combatting polio outbreaks and gender barriers

As the first female Immunization Team Lead for WHO Nigeria, Dr Fiona Braka has brought Africa's last polio-endemic country close to ending wild poliovirus. Read how Dr Braka increased immunization access for over 350 000 children and promoted women's professional development in public health along the way. [\[More\]](#)



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Global Vaccine Summit

The GPEI expresses gratitude to top donors, including the United Kingdom, Norway, the United States of America and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, who helped commit US\$ 8.8 billion at Gavi's Global Vaccine Summit towards protecting the next generation with vaccines. As one of the GPEI's six core partners, Gavi's support for the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) over the next five years is essential for the success of polio eradication efforts. [\[More\]](#)

DONOR UPDATES

WHO and UNICEF would like to thank **Germany** for its extraordinary contribution of €35 million to polio eradication. This represents part of the country's new pledge announced at the Reaching the Last Mile event in Abu Dhabi in November 2019.

WHO would like to extend thanks to the people of **Liechtenstein** for generously contributing Sw.fr. 25 000 to the programme, building on their historic commitment to polio eradication.

Picture of the Month



A member of the polio eradication programme takes temperatures in Pakistan. Polio programme staff continue to be fully engaged with the COVID-19 response. ©UNICEF Pakistan/2020