



Dear polio eradication supporter,

Over the past couple of months, polio vaccination campaigns have resumed worldwide to tackle an immunity gap that [has widened](#) during the pandemic. To protect children who have missed out on vaccines, the polio programme has swiftly ramped up efforts, including by supporting governments to run COVID-19-safe campaigns and exploring opportunities to deliver other vital health interventions alongside polio vaccine. Alongside this work the programme continues to focus on understanding and addressing the remaining barriers to reach every child in Pakistan and Afghanistan, with an emphasis on operational change and building trust with communities.

Listening to the community and building trust

For Samreen, a polio worker in Pakistan, reducing vaccine refusals is more than just protecting every child against polio – she wants to make sure families everywhere understand why immunization is so important. By building strong rapport with local parents and caregivers, Samreen and her team are delivering polio-free futures to all the children in their community. [\[More\]](#)



Samreen delivers polio drops to children whose parents initially rejected vaccination. ©PEI/2020

Combatting COVID-19, polio and gender barriers all at once

Women in Afghanistan are central to the country's polio eradication effort. Today, they're critical in supporting pandemic response efforts too. Meet Nasrin, a district polio officer who has taken on additional responsibilities to protect her community against COVID-19 and set an example for her daughter. [\[More\]](#)



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POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 120 (82)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 406 (90)

*Data as of 22 September 2020. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2019.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[TIME](#): The 100 Most Influential People of 2020 – Tunji Funsho

[Financial Times](#): What the campaign to eradicate polio tells us about COVID-19

[Devex](#): Michel Zaffran reflects on polio lessons and the job ahead

The Call for Nomination for experts to serve on the Technical Advisory Group on polio eradication in Afghanistan and Pakistan has been extended to 9 October. Nominations can be submitted [here](#).

Supporting polio workers and bringing women to the table

From the CDC to the Gates Foundation, Dr Sue Gerber has spent decades supporting frontline health workers fighting not only polio, but other infectious diseases too. Read about Dr Gerber's career, rooted in listening to the needs of vaccinators, officers and mobilizers on the ground – whether developing guidance or elevating the role of women in the programme. [\[More\]](#)



Sue Gerber

Rotarian efforts to end polio recognized by TIME



Dr Tunji Funsho

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative would like to congratulate Dr Tunji Funsho (Chair, Nigeria's PolioPlus Committee, Rotary) for being named as one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People of 2020. His work coordinating National Immunization Days, to reach millions of children across Nigeria with OPV doses, was central to certifying the WHO African Region free of wild poliovirus last month. [\[More\]](#)

DONOR UPDATES

WHO would like to thank the Pakistan Assistance Program of the **United Arab Emirates**, who have released US\$ 17.9 million to support the resumption of immunization activities, including outbreak response, in high risk districts of Pakistan. Campaigns have resumed following a temporary pause during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNICEF would like to thank the **United Nations Foundation** for its contribution of US\$ 1 241 858, which will go towards purchasing essential vaccines.

Picture of the Month



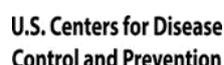
Six months after the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, the first polio immunization campaigns have been held in Somalia. Vaccinators and social mobilizers aimed to protect over 400 000 children against polio during the first campaign, opening the door for further campaigns to be conducted in a COVID-19 safe way. [Read more](#)
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