



Dear polio eradication supporter,

Thank you for joining us to celebrate World Polio Day on 24 October 2026! From Kenya to Germany to the United Arab Emirates, health leaders, vaccinators and communities showed their support for a polio-free world and committed to finishing the job together.

In Williamsburg, Virginia, Team End Polio member and breakdancer Junior Bosila Banya joined the Gates Foundation's [Chris Elias](#) and former Rotary International President John Germ to highlight the decades-long partnership between Rotary and the Gates Foundation. Meanwhile, in Essen, Germany, [Rotary Germany](#) members organized a walk-a-thon to celebrate the completion of the [Team End Polio Strava challenge](#). More than 100 000 people took part in the challenge and logged 150 million minutes of activity—two and a half times the original 60-million-minute goal—in solidarity with the health workers globally who move mountains to vaccinate every child.

The celebrations continued online, where health leaders across the world highlighted progress against polio—and made clear what's at stake if support falls short. [Bill Gates](#) shared the powerful story of Ramesh Ferris, a polio survivor from India who has crisscrossed the globe, including on a handcycle, to advocate for a world free from polio. In Africa, [UNICEF](#) paid tribute to the tireless health workers behind every vaccination campaign, and WHO Regional Director for Africa [Professor Mohamed Janabi](#) celebrated the 168 million children across 22 African countries vaccinated so far in 2026.

The [Mohamed bin Zayed Foundation for Humanity](#) marked the delivery of 850 million vaccines to Pakistan, including in the country's hardest-to-reach communities. In [Canada](#) and the [United Kingdom](#), government leaders reiterated their belief in securing a polio-free world, urging international cooperation and solidarity to finish the job. Rotary International [President Yinka Babalola](#), meanwhile, looked back at Rotary's partnerships with country governments by sharing the story of the first-ever children to receive the polio vaccine during Rotary's 1979 immunization campaign in the Philippines.

Speaking out for a polio-free future shouldn't end with World Polio Day. Amplify these stories within your networks, celebrate the health workers leading the way and help sustain the support needed to make sure no child suffers from polio ever again

The Beginning of Rotary's Mission
to End Polio –  watch the video



In this episode of @Rotary Voices, Chris Wolff, the new @WHO polio eradication director, shares why the final push toward a polio-free world is so important and why he remains optimistic that we will #EndPolio for good.

 [Watch now](#)



The story behind two drops

Giving a child two drops of a polio vaccine in Tanzania may take only a few seconds, but the journey to get there can be long and complicated. WHO's Regional Office for Africa speaks with a network of health workers, government leaders, community mobilizers, family members and international partners working to make sure every child in Tanzania is protected against polio. [\[More\]](#)



Partnering with Rotary to end polio in Pakistan



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Polio workers like Fareeda, Mubashira and Nausheen are leading the final push to end polio in Pakistan, one of only two countries where wild polio remains endemic. Backed by the Pakistani government and supported by Rotary

International, they are among the country's 400 000 polio workers who go door to door to vaccinate millions of children and form the backbone of Pakistan's polio eradication effort. [\[More\]](#)

6 Things to Know This World Polio Day

In his latest blog for GatesNotes, Bill Gates reflects on how far the world has come in its effort to end polio and what it will take to finish the job. With global polio cases down 99% since 1988 and promising gains in Africa and South Asia, eradication is within reach. Sustained investment will help protect those gains and carry the world across the finish line. [\[More\]](#)

Courtesy Gates Foundation

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2026 (2025)*

Global Total: 48 (38)

Circulating Variant (Vaccine Derived) Poliovirus in 2026 (2025)*

Global Total: 200 (160)

*Data as of 20 October 2026. Numbers in brackets represent data this time in 2025.

Breakdown by country Polio this week



In case you missed it

POB Approves 2027 Budget: The GPEI's Polio Oversight Board (POB) [approved](#) the program's 2027 budget, sustaining significant cost reductions introduced in 2026. The new budget prioritizes directing available resources toward the activities most critical to stopping polio but leaves limited flexibility to respond to new or growing risks.

New SAGE Recommendations on the Use of IPV: The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) [recommended](#) that countries switch to a three-dose inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) schedule. The 6-in-1 hexavalent vaccine, now part of Gavi's offerings to countries, provides one route to do so.

Reaffirming Commitment to Polio Eradication in the Eastern Mediterranean: During the [73rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean](#), the United Arab Emirates joined other Member States in [renewing](#) their commitment to end polio and to work with international partners to strengthen their disease surveillance, primary healthcare and immunization systems.

POLIO IN THE NEWS

Daily Trust: [No child left behind: Nigeria's critical role in ending polio](#) (23 October)

Health Policy Watch: [From the Heart of a Doctor: Why Must We End Polio Now](#) (23 October)

Le Figaro: [In Chad, the polio vaccination campaign relies on young people to combat anti-vaxxers.](#) (21 October)

Devex: [Polio eradication is within reach. Can the funding keep up?](#) (14 October)

Rotary GB&I Magazine: [Mary Berry interview - Rotary GBI Magazine - October 2026](#)

Le Monde: ["We forget about polio because vaccination works, but it is not eradicated in the world"](#) (9 October)

Forbes: [What 100 Million Prevented Infections Tell Us About Vaccines](#) (8 October)

DONOR UPDATES

WHO thanks the **Gates Foundation** for two contributions totaling US\$ 32.5 million to support polio outbreak response campaigns.

Photo of the Month



To the ends of the earth: At minus 26°C, with the sun already below the horizon, Dr Minh-Ly Pham – a former WHO colleague now serving as medical officer aboard a [polar research vessel](#) – marked World Polio Day in her Rotary End Polio T-shirt. Her message: "May we soon have no further need for a World Polio Day, only a Polio Eradication Day!" Photo courtesy: Dr Minh-Ly Pham