



Dear polio eradication supporter,

This month, five African countries—Burundi, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, the Republic of Congo, and Uganda—[stopped outbreaks](#) of variant polio, protecting children and their communities from the threat of disease. The milestone reflects sustained commitment, strong surveillance, and effective vaccination campaigns, led by country governments and supported by GPEI partners and donors. This is a powerful display of progress, but the job is not done—sustaining these gains will require continued vigilance and high population immunity to guard against the reintroduction of poliovirus.

Long-term success will require strong, country-led programs to prevent, find and respond to any outbreak of polio. As a key step toward making this possible, health ministers [adopted](#) a new ten-year framework for polio transition and sustainability at the Seventy-sixth session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. With more than 180 polio detections reported across the region so far this year, the framework sets out how countries will maintain surveillance, protect laboratory and outbreak response capacity, and integrate polio functions into national health systems over the next decade.

We are already seeing how these investments can pay off—Cameroon, which recently expanded the capacity of its national polio lab, joined Niger in marking 15 months without a reported case of variant poliovirus type 2. Both countries [joined others](#) in the Lake Chad Basin in reaffirming their commitment to ending polio at the Regional Committee meeting.

UNICEF's Catherine Russell on Reaching Every Child



Polio vaccination campaigns can open the door to other lifesaving health services for children who may otherwise be missed. In the latest GPEI High-Level Interview, UNICEF Executive Director

Catherine Russell talks about what she's seen on recent visits to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Somalia, and how tools like Polio Pulse help catch vaccine misinformation before it spreads.

[\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2026 (2025)*

Global Total: 22 (24)

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

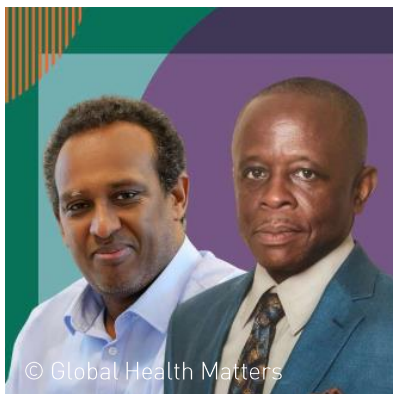
Global Total: 130 (129)

*Data as of 26 August 2026. Numbers in brackets represent data this time in 2025.

Breakdown by country
Polio this week

What it Takes to Reach Zero

Eradicating a disease requires a different kind of leadership than controlling it. In this episode of the Global Health Matters podcast, Dr Jamal Ahmed, WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office Director for Polio Eradication, and Dr Stephen Vreden, who chairs Suriname's committee for preventing the reestablishment of malaria, compare notes on reaching remote and mobile populations—from training gold miners in Suriname's interior to test for malaria to the local task forces eradicating polio at the village level in Pakistan and Afghanistan. [\[More\]](#)



A Vaccinator's Dune Buggy and the Final Push to End Polio



Each morning in southern Pakistan, Khalida Nasreen climbs into a dune buggy with a cooler of vaccines and heads into remote, conflict-affected terrain to find children that house-to-house campaigns can't reach—nomadic families who move with the seasons and have no fixed address. What makes her

efforts successful? Her extreme dedication, paired with a robust cold chain and solar-powered infrastructure that are the result of years of investment in polio eradication. [\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

The Guardian: [‘The payment is small and the paths are steep’: the women saving India’s remotest people from polio](#)

Kabul Now: [New Polio Vaccination Campaign Launched in Afghanistan as Cases Rise](#)

PUNCH (Nigeria): [Polio Can Return in 10 Years If Vaccination Stops](#)

The Express (UK): [Polio ‘could return’ after vaccination funding cut](#)

The Conversation: [Conflicts can spread infectious diseases while making outbreaks harder to detect](#)

DONOR UPDATES

UNICEF is thankful for the **US CDC**’s core funding of US\$ 40.2 million to support vaccine procurement, integrated service delivery in Afghanistan and Pakistan; S.T.O.P deployments, polio outbreak response efforts and global Social and Behavior Change initiatives.

UNICEF is deeply grateful to **Jerudong International School (JIS)** for its longstanding support for polio eradication efforts over more than a decade, including its most recent generous contribution of US\$ 10 517 through the school’s Polio Points scheme. The continued engagement and commitment of JIS students demonstrate the meaningful difference young people can make as we work together towards a polio-free world.

WHO thanks the Government of **Australia** for its generous contribution of Aus\$ 8.25 million to support polio eradication operations worldwide.

Photo of the Month



In order to travel to homes in her volatile neighborhood known for violence in Orangi Town, polio vaccinator Khalida Nasreen owns a dune buggy on which she makes her rounds. Karachi, Pakistan, 24th April 2019. (Image © Gates Philanthropy)