



# POLIO | GLOBAL ERADICATION INITIATIVE

## INVESTMENT CASE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

POLIOERADICATION.ORG

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## MAKING HISTORY, SAVING LIVES: THE WORLD FREE OF POLIO

The remarkable effort that started 30 years ago — to eradicate polio — has the opportunity to make history. By the turn of the decade, an incurable disease with the potential to kill and paralyse hundreds of thousands of children could be gone for good. There is now a chance to secure a better future for children everywhere. If we eradicate polio, it will join smallpox as the only other disease to be eradicated from the world.

As recently as the late 1980s, polio paralysed more than 350,000 children every year. In 1988, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), a public-private initiative that

forged partnerships between polio-affected countries, donors, and the leading global immunization stakeholders, started with one goal: to end polio. Through war zones, jungles, urban slums and distant villages, 20 million volunteers have over the past three decades, sought out children, fought and defeated the virus, and helped deliver much-needed hope. In 2015 there were fewer than 80 polio cases recorded in the world. In 2016, the number was further cut in half.

Volunteers have created a virtuous circle of immunization that has brought health and better life outcomes to millions.

## VIRTUOUS CIRCLE OF IMMUNIZATION

### THE CASE FOR POLIO ERADICATION

Polio eradication will rid the world of a terrible disease, improve people's health, and bring returns in perpetuity for communities, countries' economies, and the entire world



Today more than 16 million people, who would otherwise be paralysed, are able to walk thanks to these efforts. Along the way more than 2.5 billion children have been vaccinated. The wild poliovirus is now only found in three places on earth, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan.

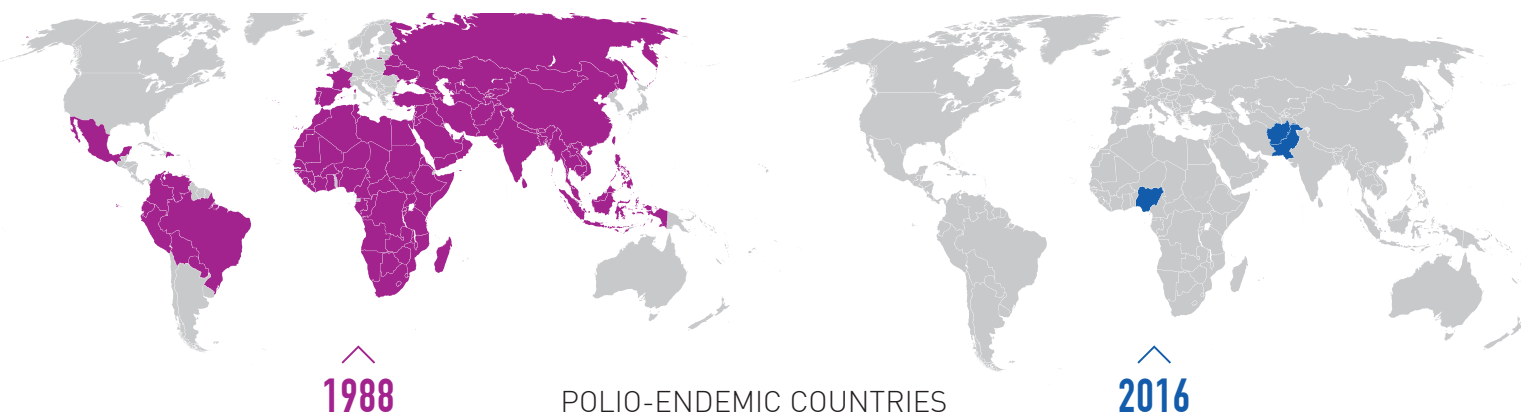
With the few cases detected in early 2017, it is possible to see the last case of polio in 2017. The world will then need to complete at least three years without a case of the disease in order to be certified polio free. The last push to beat polio will cost an additional US\$ 1.5 billion. If the eradication programme can count on the continued support of the global community, bring in new donors that are keen to be part of

this historic achievement, and the heroic health workers who are in the field striving to overcome the final challenges, there is the opportunity to wipe out polio forever. Failure to interrupt means that we also forgo the US\$ 50 billion in healthcare savings that a world without polio will bring by 2035.

But we risk much more than that. With the refugee crisis and the continuing transmission of the virus in Pakistan and Afghanistan, there will be an increased risk of exporting polio to regions that are now polio-free. Hundreds of thousands of children's lives would once again be in danger. To be so close and give up now is almost unthinkable.

## RESULTS

The polio programme has had a tremendous impact on children's lives and the global economy since 1988.







The good news is that the experiences of the past five years have confirmed that eradicating polio is possible and within reach. The innovative strategies that conquered polio in India and in many other parts of the world have allowed progress in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. This final push combines the use of complementary vaccines, higher quality vaccination campaigns and social mobilization to reach every child. It requires better surveillance in the short-term to create a firewall that stops the virus spreading. This work needs to be intensified in the next two years to finally eliminate the last remaining cases in the places where polio is still a threat.

Pakistan, Nigeria and increasingly Afghanistan, are implementing these strategies now. They have strong National Emergency Action Plans that have the support of their governments and Emergency Operation Centres that provide governments and partners with the operational structure needed to coordinate efforts. Cases are dropping in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the virus is retreating as more and more children are vaccinated.


## CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF GPEI SUPPORT



**450 MILLION CHILDREN**  
in up to **60 countries** immunized every year with OPV providing a platform for the delivery of vitamin A capsules, deworming tablets and other vaccines.



APPROXIMATELY  
**150,000 POLIO-FUNDED WORKERS**  
in up to **70 countries** working tirelessly to eradicate polio



INTRODUCTION OF THE  
**INACTIVATED POLIO VACCINE**  
in routine immunization in up to **126 countries**



ESSENTIAL  
**DISEASE SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES**  
in more than **70 countries**

## NEXT STEPS

More than half of the extra funds will go to vaccinate over 400 million children in the next few years and to reduce the number of missed children, primarily in the most challenging regions of Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The remainder of the requested funding will support risk mitigation and sustainability activities to ensure vaccination levels to keep the world polio-free. These activities are critical as countries graduate from being polio-free to becoming resilient to the risk of new outbreaks.



## REACHING EVERY CHILD

The guiding principle that underpins the eradication goal is the desire to reduce inequity by protecting every single child on the planet. Thanks to the leadership of implementing and donor countries, and the critical support of the polio programme, millions of children, in addition to receiving polio vaccinations, are now “on the grid” and can be helped with future health interventions, such as routine immunization.

The benefits of the polio programme will continue long after polio is eradicated, helping to reduce inequalities and better lives of children everywhere. Whether flooding in Pakistan, Ebola in West Africa, or an earthquake in Nepal, the polio programme’s assets can and have been mobilized in record time to help. Ebola in Nigeria was stopped because the programme’s operational structures and health workers were

leveraged to prioritize activities, undertake contact tracing visits and engage the population. Without the additional US\$1.5 billion funding to achieve eradication, it may not be possible to maintain routine immunization and other services that the polio programme indirectly supports in countries with some of the most vulnerable health systems.

The historic goal of eradication has attracted the generous support of a diverse base of government agencies and private donors, and needs their continued collaboration now. New and returning donors to the initiative can join forces to make it possible to rid the world of polio. We have the opportunity to reduce inequalities and better lives of children everywhere. We can all come together to finish the job.



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