

# POLIO NEWS



Dear polio eradication supporter,  
Over the past month, frontline workers have used innovative approaches to overcome challenges to reach more children during immunization campaigns, and environmental surveillance networks are expanding to detect where the poliovirus may still be circulating. These strategies are enabling the programme to safeguard the progress that has been made and bring us closer than ever to eradication.

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## Wild Poliovirus in Numbers



Data as of 27 September 2017, compared to the same point in 2016.



Vaccinators visiting an IDP camp in Raqqa. © WHO Syria

### Polio Vaccines Reach Children in Syria

To stop an outbreak of vaccine-derived poliovirus in Syria, partners are using unique methods to reach all children with the polio vaccine, including working with a local ice cream factory to freeze ice packs for vaccinator cold boxes. Three mass immunization rounds were successfully carried out in July and August, with two taking place in the Deir Ez-Zor governorate and one taking place in Raqqa. [\[Read more\]](#)



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### Social Mobilization: A Driving Force in the Eradication Effort

In Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan, the line between vaccinator and social mobiliser is blurring. The GPEI has trained thousands of vaccinators in interpersonal communication and thousands of social mobilisers to carry and deliver vaccines in order to utilize every available opportunity to vaccinate missed children. In both cases, the local frontline worker – well-trained, motivated and equipped with appropriate tools – stands at the centre of the programme, generating support for immunization. [\[Read more\]](#)



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## The Crucial Role of Environmental Surveillance

Environmental surveillance, which involves testing sewage samples for poliovirus, is a key strategy for pinpointing where the virus continues to circulate. The lessons learned through the establishment of environmental surveillance systems in Pakistan and Afghanistan are being used to strengthen efforts across the Eastern Mediterranean Region. And because surveillance is the critical component in detecting disease, the infrastructure being built has the potential to leave a lasting impact on health systems throughout the region. [[Read more](#)]

### Inspiring story of a polio survivor to be released in theaters around the world

The movie [Breathe](#) tells the true story of Robin Cavendish, who was paralysed by polio at age 28 and went on to become a pioneering advocate for people with disabilities. [[Read more](#)]

### Polio staff help combat cholera in Nigeria

See how social mobilisers worked to educate communities on Nigeria's cholera outbreak and how to seek medical care. [[Read more](#)]

### Afghanistan looks back on a critical year

The 2016 Afghanistan Polio Eradication Initiative Annual Report reviews progress and challenges, and discusses the improved strategies being implemented in 2017. [[Read more](#)]

### Circulating vaccine derived poliovirus type 2 cases 2017\*

- Democratic Republic of the Congo: 9 (0)
- Syria: 40 (0)

\*Data as of 27 September 2017, compared to the same point in 2016.

## POLIO IN THE NEWS

ABC News: [Pakistan kicks off nationwide polio drive, citing success](#)

The News International: [Islamic scholars reiterate support for polio eradication](#)

## FUNDING UPDATES

**The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** provided US\$ 37.7 million to UNICEF to support critical polio eradication activities in 17 countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. Additionally, WHO received US\$ 19.9 million for supplementary immunization activities and technical assistance in the African and Eastern Mediterranean regions.

**The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** allocated US\$ 24.4 million to WHO for surveillance and technical assistance.

## Picture of the Month



A vaccinator protects a child against polio while a social mobiliser adds color and cheer with balloons during an immunization campaign in Nahri Siraj, Helmand, Afghanistan. © Abdul Ali Afghan.

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