



Dear polio eradication supporter,

During this year's [World Immunization Week](#) (WIW), Polio Oversight Board (POB) Chair and WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [used his quarterly letter](#) to highlight the critical importance of essential immunization amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The POB also emphasized the increased need for commitments to ensure children will have access to vaccines once this crisis subsides. The polio programme is actively preparing to ramp up vaccination activities once it's safe to do so, and in the meantime is lending its tools, workforce and surveillance network to support the COVID-19 response in countries around the world.

Call 1166 for COVID-19 advice

As COVID-19 began to spread, the polio programme helpline center in Pakistan responded by expanding capacity to listen to people's concerns, convey accurate information on the pandemic and provide medical advice from onsite



©UNICEFPakistan/2020/Sharmin

doctors. Read how answering more than 70 000 calls a day has turned this polio programme resource into a vital support system for Pakistan's COVID-19 response. [\[More\]](#)

Taking action for Afghanistan's vulnerable communities

In response to COVID-19, polio community workers took to the streets to deliver soap bars, safety advice and information on



©UNICEF/Afghanistan

routine immunization during the pandemic to families in Kandahar. See how the distribution has helped lay the groundwork to protect families from COVID-19 and prevent cases of vaccine-preventable diseases including polio. [\[More\]](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 46 (15)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2020 (2019)*

Global Total: 95 (9)

*Data as of 28 April 2020. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2019.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[WHO EMRO](#): Statement by WHO Regional Director Dr Ahmed AL-Mandhari on polio programme contributions to COVID-19 response

[OZY](#): The Final Frontier in the Fight Against Polio? Sewers

[The Telegraph](#): Pakistan braces for spike in polio cases as health workers shift focus to coronavirus

[The Washington Post](#): Prepare for collateral damage as devastating as the virus

Parental trust in vaccines



©WHO/Pakistan

Only when siblings Safia and Masood contracted polio last December did their father and other neighbours in the community fully realize the need for immunizations and begin to welcome health workers delivering the polio vaccine. Read why the

global pandemic has further emphasized the importance of building vaccine trust within communities. [\[More\]](#)

Celebrating United Arab Emirates (UAE) leadership to end polio

This World Immunization Week (WIW), the polio programme expresses gratitude to the UAE for their continued dedication to bringing us closer to a polio-free world. In November, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan hosted the Reaching the Last Mile Forum in Abu Dhabi and pledged US\$ 160 million to polio eradication. This WIW, we are thankful to UAE leadership for their continued support in our efforts to end polio for good. [\[More\]](#)

© courtesy UAE-Pakistan Assistabce Program



DONOR UPDATES

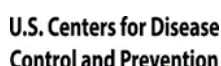
Thank you to the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** for their generous contribution of US\$ 11.5 million in supplemental funding for research activities in support of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

The **USA** is a founding and long-standing partner of the global effort to eradicate polio and we look forward to continuing our joint collaboration. For more information on the history of US support for polio eradication, please [click here](#).

Picture of the Month



When the Government of Nigeria announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the country, Polio Eradication veteran Dr Rosemary Onyibe (right) was ready to report for duty. Dr Onyibe, who has worked with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative for over ten years, is the WHO South West Nigeria Zonal Coordinator for polio eradication. "Once I heard the news, I instantly thought: Duty is calling. My expertise is needed to serve my community," said Dr Onyibe. [\[More\]](#)



@WHO

@EndPolioNow

@CDCGlobal

@UNICEF

@GatesFoundation

@Gavi