



Dear polio eradication supporter,

As the world marks a year since the emergence of COVID-19, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) is reflecting upon its support of the pandemic response. A new report from WHO detailing the GPEI’s COVID-19 response efforts has underscored that sustaining polio programme infrastructure moving forward is essential to prepare for the next global health threat. GPEI partners are now lending a hand to the global COVID-19 vaccine rollout as well. Rotary International President Holger Knaack sat down with Polio News to talk about the pandemic’s impact on polio eradication and how Rotary is now mobilizing its extensive global Rotarian network to support COVID-19 vaccination in local communities and combat vaccine hesitancy.

New report highlights GPEI critical pandemic response support



©WHO / Blink

Looking at how polio programme infrastructure played an invaluable role in countries’ COVID-19 response efforts, [a new WHO report](#) argues that GPEI assets must be sustained to tackle future health emergencies. To continue strengthening global health

security, key polio programme functions must be permanently integrated into national health systems. [\[More\]](#)

Rotary supports COVID-19 vaccination

As global COVID-19 vaccination rollout begins, Rotary is ready to lend its support by mobilizing its members worldwide. Leaning on decades of experience both supporting the delivery of polio vaccines, advocating for the vaccine’s importance and organizing within their communities, Rotarians are supporting their local COVID-19 response efforts by helping coordination of vaccine distribution and encouraging people in their communities to get vaccinated. [\[More\]](#)



©Dawn Rochelle

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)*

Global Total: 2 (17)

Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)*

Global Total: 9 (8)

*Data as of 23 February 2021. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2020.

Breakdown by country
[Polio this week](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

[NPR](#): Pakistan's Polio Fight Provides Structure — And Concern — For COVID Vaccination

[Quartz Africa](#): African countries have an advantage in rolling out Covid-19 vaccines

[The Wall Street Journal](#): Covid-19 Deals Blow to Polio Eradication Effort

Rotary President Holger Knaack on COVID-19 lessons-learned



©Rotary International

Rotary President, Holger Knaack, spoke with Polio News about the importance of robust health systems and disease prevention knowledge, and how GPEI has an opportunity to come back stronger in the wake of COVID-19. With the 'Plus' in PolioPlus now including COVID-19 vaccination support, read about Knaack's thoughts on finishing the fight against polio as well as strengthening broader public health efforts. [[More](#)]

Celebrating women in global health



Ahead of International Women's Day next month, GPEI is sharing stories on the women who have been central to polio programme success and global health

progress everywhere. Learn about [Dr Folake Olayinka's](#) support of frontline health workers in Nigeria, [Dr Alda Morais Pedro De Sousa's](#) career stopping outbreaks in Angola and two women



who helped pioneer the field of global health – [Henrietta Lacks](#) and [Margaret C. Snyder](#).



DONOR UPDATES

UNICEF would like to thank **National Philanthropic Trust**, for generous contribution of US\$ 6.4 million to support vaccine purchase, social mobilization activities for planned activities and outbreak response, and the critical work of the Community Based Vaccination Programme in Pakistan.

UNICEF is grateful to the Government of **Japan** for its generous contribution of US\$ 4.5 million, which will support the procurement of vaccines for high-risk communities in Pakistan.

UNICEF would like to thank its partner, the **US Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**, for its generous contribution of US\$ 19.2 million, which will go to support critical staffing needs, emergency outbreak response activities, social mobilization, Communication for Development, the Community Based Vaccination Programme in Pakistan and vaccine procurement.

Further to the Abu Dhabi Pledging Moment, the Government of Pakistan has signed an agreement with WHO to provide US\$ 40 million from the **Islamic Development Bank**. The funds will support Pakistan's immunization campaign activities.

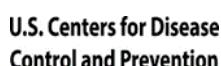
Photo of the Month



The Regional Polio Eradication Officer for Banadir, Somalia, participates in an integrated immunization campaign held in September 2020 with strict COVID-19 safety measures in place. ©WHO/Somalia

The Polio Research Committee is calling for research proposals supporting the strategic plan [[More](#)]

The deadline for submission is 29 March 2021.



@WHO

@EndPolioNow

@CDCGlobal

@UNICEF

@GatesFoundation

@Gavi