



Dear polio eradication supporter,

When we look back to 2021, it may be seen as a [turning point for efforts to stop all forms of polio for good](#). In June, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) launched its new strategy to eradicate polio and protect against future health threats. Two months later, the WHO African Region celebrated one year since it was declared free from wild polio with countries’ recommitments to stopping all forms of poliovirus on the continent. And in Pakistan and Afghanistan – the final two countries endemic for wild poliovirus – transmission has fallen drastically in the past 12 months. Despite this fragile progress, circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPVs) continue to paralyze children in under-immunized communities, and financial contributions are needed to implement the new strategy. Building from the progress of 2021, the GPEI is ready to maintain this momentum and overcome final challenges in 2022.

### WHO Takes Five to Talk Polio

The polio programme has a long history of actively supporting other health initiatives to respond to emergencies. Though COVID-19 brought its own challenges to polio eradication, the infrastructures in place to end polio helped protect communities



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against the pandemic, offering disease surveillance, contact tracing, health education and more. Watch this [“Science in 5”](#) video to learn more with Sona Bari, External Relations Coordinator for Polio Eradication at the World Health Organization (WHO).

### Gender in Polio Eradication

Gender plays a role across every level of the polio programme, and in every location where the GPEI operates. While in some communities women are uniquely able to travel house to house to deliver polio vaccines, in others, gender barriers stand in the way of vaccinating every child against polio. Hear more in this interview with Heather Monnet of the WHO about how the GPEI’s gender strategy is built to better integrate women and provide support at all levels of the programme. [\[More\]](#)



Heather Monnet © Rotary

### POLIO IN NUMBERS

#### Wild Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)\*

**Global Total: 5 (138)**

#### Circulating Vaccine Derived Poliovirus in 2021 (2020)\*

**Global Total: 484 (809)**

\*Data as of 14 December 2021. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2020.

**Breakdown by country**  
[Polio this week](#)

### POLIO IN THE NEWS

[BMJ Global Health](#): Rethinking public health campaigns in the COVID-19 era: a call to improve effectiveness, equity and impact

[Gulf News](#): Japan announces \$4.35 million grant to support Pakistan’s polio virus eradication

[The Tribune](#): Afghanistan launches polio vaccination targeting 9.9 mn kids

[United Nations Foundation](#): How the polio program is helping the world tackle other diseases

## Programme progress in Pakistan

In November, George Laryea-Adjei (Regional Director for South Asia, UNICEF) and Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari (WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean) joined fellow GPEI leaders on a visit to Pakistan. The regional directors met with government stakeholders and health workers, and commended Pakistan on its impressive progress interrupting poliovirus transmission. See why the regional directors emphasized that there is no room for complacency on the path to a polio-free Pakistan. [\[More\]](#)



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## Critical polio vaccination resumes across Afghanistan

For the first time in more than three years, nationwide polio immunization campaigns resumed across Afghanistan reaching 8.5 million children, including 2.4 million children who were previously inaccessible. Campaigns were conducted nationwide in November and December. The December campaign was synchronized with the campaign in Pakistan to improve cross-border polio eradication efforts. [\[More\]](#)



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## DONOR UPDATES

WHO is grateful for **Turkey's** contribution of US\$ 20 000 and **Liechtenstein's** contribution of 25 000 Sw.fr.

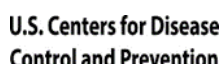
Global GPEI leaders, including [Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](#) (WHO Director-General) and [Bill Gates](#) (Co-chair, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), met with the His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates) and UAE officials to thank the **UAE** for its support to end polio, including the funds released in 2021. The GPEI partners are grateful for the Crown Prince's personal leadership on polio.

UNICEF is grateful for **Japan's** [contribution](#) of US\$ 4.35 million to support polio vaccine procurement in Pakistan.

## Photo of the Month



Dr Hamid Jafari: "This photo was taken #OnThisDay 7 years ago! 50 000 #Rotarians smashed the world record for the largest human flag after certification, literally flying the flag to keep #India polio-free. What a moment! Hope to see the same from all Rotarians for Afghanistan and Pakistan soon!" [\[More\]](#)  
Photo source Press Trust of India



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