

Dear polio eradication supporter,

In the first weeks of 2016, we celebrate the incredible contributions and commitment that have brought us so far towards global polio eradication. We bid goodbye to Dr Hamid Jafari, Director of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative since 2012 and polio eradicator for over 20 years. We mark five years without a case of wild polio in India and two years since the last case in Syria. Nigeria is working hard to keep the country polio-free and planning for the future. These successes underpin the WHO Executive Board's recent assertion that strong progress is being made towards achieving our goal of a polio-free world.

In this issue:

- **A Farewell to Dr Hamid Jafari, Outgoing Director of GPEI**
- **India's Five-Year Polio-Free Anniversary**
- **Learning From Experience in Nigeria**
- **WHO Executive Board Meeting**

A FAREWELL TO DR HAMID JAFARI, OUTGOING DIRECTOR OF GPEI



Partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative extend their deepest gratitude to outgoing Director Dr Hamid Jafari. Under his leadership, the global polio campaign has seen tremendous progress. Here, Dr Jafari shares the lessons he has learned from his time in the programme, and his hopes for the future of the polio eradication. [\[Read more\]](#)

Dr Hamid Jafari in India in 2007, crossing a monsoon-swelled Ganges in Bihar to visit remote communities. © WHO

INDIA'S FIVE-YEAR POLIO-FREE ANNIVERSARY

Less than a decade ago, achieving a polio-free India seemed an impossible challenge. But with novel strategies and strong government ownership, the country reported its last case of wild polio on 13 January 2011. As India marks five years without a wild polio case, we



More than 170 million children are still regularly immunized to keep India polio-free. © UNICEF

are reminded that with the right level of commitment and ingenuity, we can end polio everywhere. We are also seeing India's polio infrastructure support routine immunisation, and lessons from India are helping stop polio in the remaining endemic countries. Watch UNICEF's film on India's five-year polio-free anniversary [here](#).

Welcoming Michel Zaffran to the GPEI

Incoming Director of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Michel Zaffran, talks to Rotary about the challenges and opportunities ahead. [More](#)

First-Ever Ministerial Conference on Immunization in Africa

During the first-ever [Ministerial Conference on Immunization in Africa](#) (24-25 February 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), a session will focus on how countries can harness investments in polio eradication to support other health interventions.

Two years without polio in Syria

Despite continuing conflict, ongoing vaccination campaigns have kept Syria polio-free for a second year. [More](#)

POLIO IN THE NEWS

The Guardian: [Pakistan success stories increase hopes of global polio eradication](#)

NPR: [Global Health Forecast For 2016: Which Diseases Will Rise ... Or Fall?](#)

The New York Times: [In Pakistan, a Final Push to Wipe Out Polio](#)

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild poliovirus in 2016

- Global Total: **0 (3)** ↓
- Global WPV1: **0 (3)** ↓
- Global WPV3: **0 (0)**

Endemic: **0 (3)** ↓

- Afghanistan: **0 (0)**
- Pakistan: **0 (3)** ↓

Importation Countries: **0 (0)**

Data as of **27 January 2016**. Numbers in brackets represent data at this time in 2015.

[Current case map](#)

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE IN NIGERIA

It has been 18 months since Nigeria reported a child paralysed by wild poliovirus, thanks to a surge in commitment from government and partners in the face of great challenges. Yet



this tremendous achievement is not the end of the road for Nigeria's polio programme. Now is the time to build resilience against the virus; and also to plan for how the polio infrastructure can make a sustainable difference to the health of some of the most vulnerable communities by strengthening routine immunization. [\[Read more\]](#)

Volunteer community mobilisers from the polio programme play an essential role in educating parents about the importance of taking children for all necessary doses of routine vaccines. ©WHO/L. Dore

WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

At its January meeting, members of the WHO Executive Board reviewed progress against polio and renewed their commitment to eradication and to meeting the remaining challenges. [\[Read more\]](#)

Isa is the last child to have been paralysed by wild polio in Nigeria in June 2014. Sustained global commitment from WHO Member States is needed to make all countries polio-free.

© WHO/L. Dore



THE SWITCH: ELEVEN WEEKS TO GO

Preparations are in full swing to prepare for the switch from trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV and bOPV) in April 2016. The focus is now on finalising:

- Finalising the procurement of bOPV stocks
- Implementing plans at the country level
- Planning for bOPV distribution and tOPV recall
- Planning orientation workshops at the local level for stakeholders

Over 80 % of the world's birth cohort now receive the inactivated polio vaccine through their routine immunization systems thanks to the largest coordinated vaccine introduction in history. The 20 countries where vaccination has been delayed due to supply issues are being prioritised for introduction based on their risk level.

[Find out more about the switch](#)



FUNDING UPDATES

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided US\$ 75 million to WHO for activities in the first part of 2016. The Foundation also provided US\$18 million to support UNICEF staffing in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Chad, DRC, Nigeria, and HQ. In addition, UNICEF is due to receive from BMGF US\$ 29.5 million to fill the gap for OPV.

Rotary International has announced US\$ 35 million in grants to support the global effort to end polio in Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as to build resilience in other vulnerable countries. [More](#)

Further to Prime Minister Turnbull's statement of Australia's commitment to polio eradication at the November 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, **Australia** concluded an agreement with the GPEI for a contribution of up to A\$ 36 million over 2015-2019. The first tranche of A\$ 15 million will be to purchase tOPV for a vaccine stockpile in advance of the tOPV-bOPV switch in April 2016.

Germany has contributed €20 million to polio activities in Afghanistan, frontloading their multi-year commitment to support stopping transmission in 2016. This is part of their €40 million pledge to Afghanistan announced at the Vaccine Summit in April 2013.

The **Carlos Slim Foundation** released a second tranche of US\$ 20 million out of the \$100 million planned for 2015-2019.

Further to the approval of the federal budget in December 2015, the **US Centers for Disease Control** has initially released US\$ 18.97 million to WHO for global polio activities.

The **United Arab Emirates** released US\$ 12 million to support polio eradication activities in Pakistan in early 2016. This contribution is part of the US\$ 120 million announced by His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the April 2013 Vaccine Summit.

ECHO's support to polio outbreak activities was once again materialized through a €1.5 million contribution to WHO & UNICEF polio outbreak operations in Ukraine.

United Nations Foundation provided US\$ 731,616 for OPV in Afghanistan for Q1 2016.

Estonia provided €100 000 for WHO's humanitarian operations in Ukraine. Part of these funds will cover polio outbreak operations.

Turkey's strong commitment to polio eradication has been reaffirmed with US\$ 60 000 contribution to worldwide polio operations.

Lithuania provided its first-ever contribution to the GPEI to support the outbreak response in the Ukraine.