



25 Years Polio-Free in the Region of the Americas

Cristina Pedreira and Elizabeth Thrush, PAHO-Washington, DC

23 August 2016 marked 25 years since the last case of wild poliovirus (WPV) in the Region of the Americas.

The world is now closer than ever to being polio-free and despite so many years since the last case in the Americas, all countries in the Region have been steadily working hard towards keeping the Americas polio-free and achieving the objectives outlined in the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan.

The years 2015-2016 have resulted in many accomplishments:

- Between February 2015 and April 2016, 32 countries in the Americas introduced at least one dose of the inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) into their routine schedules and now all countries in the Region are using IPV.
- The 36 countries in the Americas that use the oral polio vaccine (OPV) participated in the global “switch” from the trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) to the bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV).
- All countries have been progressing with the containment of all WPV, vaccine-derived polioviruses (VDPV), and Sabin 2 polioviruses.

These achievements are the result of dedication from governments, health care workers and partner agencies at national, regional, and global levels.

The world is closer than ever to achieving polio eradication and the Americas are committed to working with all of the regions in the world to achieve global polio eradication.



The last case of polio in the Region of the Americas, 23 August 1991. Photo credit: PAHO/WHO.