The Polio Eradication Initiative in the Americas: Current situation and the way forward

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BACKGROUND

History of Polio

- **1955**
  - Dr. Jonas Salk – First vaccine against polio – inactivated (killed) polio vaccine (IPV)

- **1961**
  - Dr. Albert Sabin – A “live” oral vaccine against polio (OPV)

- **1970 – 1980**
  - Introduction of routine immunization with OPV
  - **1974**
    - Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI)

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- **1986**
  - Bolivia, La Paz
  - Vaccination campaign

- **1991**
  - Peru, Junín
  - Last case of poliomyelitis recorded in the Americas.

- **1994**
  - The WHO region of the Americas is certified polio-free

**1970s**, **routine immunization was introduced worldwide** as part of national immunization programmes, **helping to control the disease in many countries**.

**Sources:**
- [https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/history-of-polio/](https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/history-of-polio/)
Where the Vision Became Action.

"I am here because Rotary takes ordinary men and gives them extraordinary opportunities to do with their lives what they never dreamed possible. I'm here because Rotary cares about people..."

Sir Clem Renouf
Rotary International President 1978 – 1979

Launching of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative – GPEI

1988
> 350,000 cases of paralytic poliomyelitis
125 endemic countries
3 poliovirus serotypes: 1, 2, 3

World Health Assembly established the GPEI to achieve polio eradication by the year 2000

Global eradication of wild poliovirus (WPV) type 2 was certified on September 20, 2015 and of WPV3 on October 24, 2019.

https://polioeradication.org
Nigeria | 2012.
The last case of wild polio type 3 is recorded in Nigeria in November.

https://polioeradication.org
Global WPV1 & circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) Cases\(^1\), Previous 12 Months\(^2\)

- **WPV1 cases (latest onset)**
  - Pakistan: 7 cases, latest onset 20 Feb 2024
  - Afghanistan: 6 cases, latest onset 20 Feb 2024

- **cVDPV1 cases (latest onset)**
  - DR Congo: 63 cases, latest onset 20 Feb 2024
  - Mozambique: 1 case, latest onset 06 Nov 2023
  - Madagascar: 13 cases, latest onset 16 Sep 2023

- **cVDPV2 cases (latest onset)**
  - Chad: 46 cases, latest onset 15 Feb 2024
  - Nigeria: 87 cases, latest onset 13 Feb 2024
  - South Sudan: 4 cases, latest onset 07 Feb 2024
  - Somalia: 7 cases, latest onset 20 Jan 2024
  - Yemen: 9 cases, latest onset 17 Jan 2024
  - Guinea: 48 cases, latest onset 13 Jan 2024
  - Mali: 14 cases, latest onset 02 Jan 2024
  - Niger: 2 cases, latest onset 11 Dec 2023
  - Indonesia: 3 cases, latest onset 05 Dec 2023
  - Zimbabwe: 1 case, latest onset 02 Dec 2023
  - Côte d'Ivoire: 5 cases, latest onset 22 Nov 2023
  - DR Congo: 42 cases, latest onset 19 Nov 2023
  - Mauritania: 1 case, latest onset 07 Oct 2023
  - CAR: 7 cases, latest onset 07 Oct 2023
  - Mozambique: 1 case, latest onset 28 Sep 2023
  - Kenya: 8 cases, latest onset 21 Aug 2023
  - Tanzania: 2 cases, latest onset 14 Jul 2023
  - Burundi: 1 case, latest onset 15 Jun 2023
  - Burkina Faso: 3 cases, latest onset 04 Jun 2023

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\(^1\) Excludes viruses detected from environmental surveillance;  
\(^2\) Onset of paralysis: 17 Apr 2023 to 16 Apr 2024

Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026:
1. Permanently interrupt all poliovirus transmission in endemic countries
2. Stop cVDPV transmission and prevent outbreaks in non-endemic countries
Global WPV1 & cVDPV Cases\(^1\), Previous 6 Months\(^2\)

1. Permanently interrupt all poliovirus transmission in endemic countries
2. Stop cVDPV transmission and prevent outbreaks in non-endemic countries

\(^1\)Excludes viruses detected from environmental surveillance;
\(^2\)Onset of paralysis: 17 Oct. 2023 to 16 Apr. 2024
Summary of the situation in the Americas Region
First time in 21 years that a person was paralyzed in the region by a cVDPV

- **An unvaccinated young adult** in Rockland County, **New York**, was diagnosed with **paralytic polio caused by vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2** on July 21, 2022.

- **Peru** IHR National Focal Point notified PAHO/WHO, on the 21st of March 2023 of a **confirmed case of vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1** – **Unvaccinated 16-month-old boy** (age at onset date).
Polio3 Vaccination Coverage in Children <1 year:
Region of the Americas, 2018–2022

Source: Country reports through the electronic PAHO-WHO/UNICEF Joint Reporting Form (eJRF).
Key outcomes of the Regional Certification Commission for the Polio Endgame in the Region of the Americas – RCC meetings

Updated risk assessment of countries: 2023*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Risk score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
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<td>Virgin Islands (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
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*Risk Assessment for 2023 was prepared with data from 2022.

Source: Country annual reports; Meetings of the RCC for the Polio Endgame in the Region of the Americas.

The risk assessment was based on indicators of immunization coverage, surveillance, containment status, health determinants, and outbreak preparedness and response as well as RCC’s expert opinion.
Conclusions

• The world is one step away from making history:
  • A polio-free world for future generations.

• The Region of the Americas has remained polio-free for more than 30 years.
  • However, the work is not yet finished.
Thank you!
Merci!
¡Gracias!
Obrigada!

#GetVax
EXTRA SLIDES

#GetVax
Immunization coverage with IPV 1 in infants, 2022*

IA 2030 Zero Dose Agenda
Big Catch-Up in 2023

*These are national estimates with significant subnational variance
  • Countries on 2 or more doses of IPV (152 countries or 78%)
  • Countries on 1 dose only of IPV (42 countries or 22%)
Active surveillance of Acute Flaccid Paralysis – AFP – cases
Rate of AFP cases in children under 15 years of age

January 2023 – December 2023
Region, Rate: 1.33

Last 52 Weeks*
Region, Rate: 1.28

*Last 52 Weeks epi. (Data up to EPI Week 5)
Source: Country report to PAHO;