POLIO GLOBAL ERADICATION INITIATIVE

March 2026

POLIO NEWS



Dear polio eradication supporter,

In celebration of International Women's Day this month, leaders and advocates from across the partnership recognized the essential role of women in the fight against polio. GPEI Gender Champions Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq (Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication, Pakistan), Svenja Schulze (Member of the German Parliament), and Dr Hanan Balkhy (WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean) reaffirmed their commitment to supporting women health workers. Across social media, partners including Rotary, UNICEF, and WHO Regional Office for Africa shared powerful new digital content highlighting the women driving progress toward a polio-free world. Team End Polio champions including Ramesh Ferris and Anne Wafula Strike also raised their voices, spotlighting the inspiring women of Team End Polio. Thanks to the dedication of these incredible women, we will protect children and end polio everywhere.

Meet the Women Leading Gaza's Response Efforts



Despite insecurity and ongoing conflict, women health workers in Gaza are leading polio response efforts. After a 10-month-old was paralyzed by the virus in 2024, health workers mobilized under extraordinary circumstances to deliver vaccines to hundreds of thousands of children. Behind this complex operation were four dedicated women leading the way. [More]

POLIO IN NUMBERS

Wild Poliovirus in 2026 (2025)*

Global Total: 1 (7)

Circulating Variant (Vaccine Derived) Poliovirus in 2026 (2025)*

Global Total: 18 (16)

*Data as of 24 March 2026. Numbers in brackets represent data this time in 2025.

Breakdown by country

Polio this week

DONOR UPDATES

WHO would like to thank Kuwait for its generous US$ 2.5 million contribution to polio eradication operations and for its unwavering political support to end this disease forever.

Pakistan's Integrated Vaccination Campaign



A WHO-supported measles-rubella vaccination drive in Pakistan integrated polio drops into campaign activities, protecting 34 million children from measles-rubella nationwide and over 19 million children from polio across 88 high-risk districts. By integrating response efforts, health workers are strengthening collaboration between routine immunization and polio programs and reaching more children to ensure every child is protected from preventable diseases. [More]

POLIO IN THE NEWS

The Telegraph: We are one step from eradicating polio. Britain must not walk away

The Guardian: Polio virus detected in London days before ministers cut global eradication funding

CNN: What to know about CDC's new polio alert

USA Today: CDC warns travelers of polio before trips to Spain, UK and more

Forbes: After almost 3 years, a tiny window to vaccinate zero-dose kids in Sudan

Strengthening Vaccination Coverage in Tanzania



A subnational polio vaccination campaign recently launched in Tanzania, aims to reach over 6.7 million children in high-risk areas to boost population immunity. Led by the Ministry of Health with support from GPEI partners, the campaign underscores Tanzania's continued commitment to protecting children and ensuring high-quality vaccination, strong surveillance, and resilient health care systems. [More]

Photo of the Month



A health worker in Tanzania administers polio drops to a child during the country's subnational polio vaccination campaign. ©WHO