

# Updates on CDC's Polio Eradication Efforts

[www.cdc.gov/polio/updates](http://www.cdc.gov/polio/updates)

November 8, 2013

## **CDC Continues to Support the Global Polio Eradication Effort**

The eradication of [polio](#) is an important priority for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We are closer than we have ever been to eradicating polio and it is critical that we take advantage of this opportunity.

On December 2, 2011, CDC Director Thomas R. Frieden, MD, MPH, activated [CDC's Emergency Operations Center \(EOC\)](#) to strengthen the agency's partnership engagement through the [Global Polio Eradication Initiative \(GPEI\)](#), which is committed to completing the eradication of polio. On December 14, Dr. Frieden enlisted the support of the entire CDC community to become active participants in an intensified effort to eradicate polio worldwide.

## **CDC's Involvement**

In the final push toward global polio eradication, CDC continues its close collaboration with partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Rotary International, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to ensure a coordinated global and country-level response.

CDC polio eradication activities and staff have moved into the EOC operational structure to ensure maximum use of CDC resources to support polio eradication, and to scale up timely technical expertise and support for polio-infected countries (Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan) and for countries at risk of polio outbreaks (at-risk countries), in coordination with GPEI partners.

Since December 2, 2011, approximately 500 workers have supported CDC's polio eradication efforts in the EOC and in the field. Of these, 141 workers have completed 476 field deployments to Angola, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, and other areas. Each day an average of 60-70 people are working on polio eradication in CDC's EOC.

Activation of the EOC has provided enhanced capacity for CDC's [STOP Transmission of Polio \(STOP\)](#) program, which trains public health volunteers in the United States and globally to improve polio surveillance and help plan, implement, and evaluate vaccination campaigns. Since December 2, 2011, 640 individuals have been deployed to work with the STOP program in a number of countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya.

In addition, the EOC has provided enhanced capacity to scale up in-country technical expertise and support for – polio surveillance, planning, implementation, and monitoring of polio

vaccination campaigns – strengthening routine immunization, strengthening management and accountability.

A few additional examples of CDC polio eradication activities include:

- An in-depth review of priority countries' polio eradication plans to assess program gaps and training needs, and elaboration of plans for CDC's engagement in those countries.
- Publication of several joint World Health Organization Weekly Epidemiologic Record/CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports (MMWR) highlighting polio eradication progress in 2013 related to [Nigeria](#), [the STOP Program](#), [risk assessment for polio outbreaks](#), [global progress 2011-2013](#), and [surveillance indicators](#).
- Collaboration with GPEI partners on detailed country-plans for expanded technical and management support, including assistance with outbreak responses, surveillance reviews, vaccination campaign planning and monitoring, and data management.
- The development of indicators for monitoring polio vaccination campaign performance in the areas of planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Review of WHO proposed outbreak response protocols for all polio-affected and at risk countries

### **The Global Push toward the Finish Line**

Polio incidence has dropped more than 99.9 percent since the launch of global polio eradication efforts in 1988. According to global polio surveillance data from November 5, 2013, 328 polio cases have been reported from the following countries: Afghanistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, and Syrian Arab Republic. In 2012, a total of 223 polio cases were reported from five countries: Afghanistan, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Of the 2012 polio cases, 97% (217 of the 223 cases) were reported from the three remaining endemic countries.

We have made incredible progress in the three remaining endemic countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria.

- Cases in these countries are down 40% compared to this time last year, and program quality in all three countries is significantly improved.
- Polio has been all but restricted to just two areas: a region along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and several states in northern Nigeria.
- Afghanistan has not seen a single case in its traditionally endemic Southern Region since November 2012.

Ending polio is a critical step toward improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable children. We must continue our efforts until we end polio forever.

As Dr. Frieden has stated, "If we fail to get over the finish line, we will need to continue expensive control measures for the indefinite future...More importantly, without eradication, a

resurgence of polio could paralyze more than 200,000 children worldwide every year within a decade.” Now is the time, we must not fail.