

POLIO: THE FIGHT CONTINUES

Polio is a crippling and potentially fatal infectious disease affecting mainly children under five years of age. Although there is no cure for polio, it can be easily prevented by safe and effective vaccines that can protect a child for life. Preventing infection by immunizing every child until transmission stops would result in a polio-free world.

Since 1988, polio cases have decreased by more than 99 percent, from an estimated 350,000 cases in more than 125 endemic countries to 406 reported cases in 2013. Today, only three countries in the world—Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria—remain endemic for the disease, the smallest geographic area in history.

Canada continues to be a world leader in the global push to eradicate polio and to save lives through immunization. Through Canada's partnership with the World Health Organization, other donors and the Government of Nigeria, approximately 4.8 million children received polio vaccination in Nigeria, which contributed to the reduction of cases from 103 in 2012–2013 to 37 in 2013–2014.

In April 2013 world leaders gathered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, at the Global Vaccine Summit, declaring the intention to eradicate polio by 2018. During the summit, Canada announced a commitment of \$250 million between 2013 and 2018 to support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a public-private partnership that implements strategies and programs to eradicate polio and strengthen health systems.



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