



Chairman's Address

Africa certification, what next- Enhanced advocacy.

It's five down and one to go. As the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) chipped away at the 6 regions endemic for polio since Rotary embarked on this journey 35 years ago, one region after the other has been certified polio free with the last region to be certified being the Africa Region and the little girl, Ya Fana being the last victim of the wild polio virus in the Africa region.

Now, our promise is to keep polio at zero in Africa and END POLIO NOW in the world. This last mile is going to be much more difficult than what is behind us because of tendency for all concerned to want to move on to new things and the competing needs and priorities that will need to be addressed from dwindling resources.

So, we need deliberate and coordinated advocacy plans to ensure we sustain the momentum to keep polio at zero in Africa and eradicate polio from the rest of the world. The ultimate focus of our advocacy is to ensure that every child below the age of 5 years continues to

receive the precious drops of the oral polio vaccine until the world is certified polio free. Who are our targets for this Advocacy? Rotarians and Rotaractors, governments, partners, traditional and religious leaders, corporate bodies, high networth individuals, the receiving communities and community influencers.

Our message is simple: all children below the age of 5 years must receive the polio vaccine. For this to happen, funds have to be made available, political will and leadership must be sustained

and continued creation of awareness of the need to continue putting in all the necessary resources until we fulfil our promise of a world free of the polio virus when no child will ever again be paralysed by the poliovirus again.

So let's roll up our sleeves, we have so many important achievements behind us but the most important milestone in the drive to world polio eradication is still ahead of us.



DR. TUNJI FUNSHO
Chairman NNPPC

FROM EDITOR'S DESK

TIME FOR A RESET

Nigeria is now wild poliovirus free. Hurray! We have been celebrating that for at least 2 months now and while it is a commendable achievement worthy of celebration, I am beginning to feel like the time is right for us to have a reset. This year's World Polio Day Celebration was rightly about our achievement and the need to give ourselves a pat on the back. I particularly like the fact that a polio-free Africa takes us that much closer to a polio-free world. Like the host of Rotary's virtual celebratory event, the Paralympian Ade Adepitan, I also can't wait to see a polio-free world. However, the words of Alhaji Aliko Dangote during the virtual ceremony marking the certification of the WHO Africa region as polio-free keep coming back to me. I look at the global poliovirus list and it screams at me with the same words, 'Today we celebrate but tomorrow we must get right back to work.'

What faces the global polio eradication initiative family right now is more than just a setback, it's a crisis. 4 cases after 2 years without a case of polio, that's a setback. 34 cases the year after registering just 22- the lowest totals in recorded history, that's a setback. The numbers we are currently seeing

constitute something far worse than that. 133 cases of the wild poliovirus in Pakistan and Afghanistan and 667 more cases of vaccine derived polio in 25 countries including Nigeria speaks to a crisis approaching a major disaster if care is not taken. The speed at which we have gotten to these new numbers in just a few years from an all time low of 22 cases frightens me and makes me recall the prediction that we could have as many as 200,000 cases of the poliovirus annually in just 10 years if we do not sustain our current levels of efforts.

Thankfully, Rotarians have never been known to quit. We simply aren't the sort that give up. We have come too far, committed far too much in terms of time, talent and treasure to simply pack up and give up. Almost 2 billion dollars in money and several million volunteer hours cannot and will not be allowed to go to waste. So, we are going to have a reset.

We are going to, like the snake shedding its skin to accommodate growth, drop the celebratory toga and embrace this next phase of a polio-free Africa but a world in peril. We are going to advocate like

it's going out of fashion for gatekeepers and responsible persons in government all over the world to support our programme with the resources needed to ensure a polio-free world. We are going to fundraise like we have never done. We are going to meet and surpass our fundraising targets for this and the next few years to ensure that our programme does not suffer from a lack of funds. We are going to mobilize our communities for the uptake of the OPV, the IPV and soon the nOPV. And we're going to volunteer and support vaccination teams in the field as they work to bring these lifesaving vaccines to the vulnerable children of the world. That's what we're going to do.

I thank you for all that you have done and contributed to lead us to this point but I must remind you that we still have more to do. Our goal is for a world that is totally free of all forms of the poliovirus and we have not achieved that yet. We won't stop. We move

Revised Polio 2020 SIA Calendar

S/N	Round	Date of Implementation	No. of States	No. of LGAs	Details	Remarks
1	November	7 th to 10 th	1	2	Ogun state (Imeko Afon & Yewa North) synchronized OBR with Benin Republic	Pending
2		7 th to 10 th	2		Postponed SIPDS in 14 HR States in Kaduna and Kwara States	Pending
3		14 th to 17 th	2		OBR1 in Lagos (Apapa, Lagos Mainland, Mushin, Shomolu & Surulere) and Delta (Udu, Ughelli South, Uvwie, Warri South & Warri South West) States	Pending
4		21 st to 24 th	5		Postponed SIPDS in 14 HR States in Anambra, Kogi, Niger, Sokoto and Zamfara states	Pending
5	December	3 rd to 6 th December	1		Pending SIPDs in Delta state	Pending
6		12 th to 15 th December	8		SIPDS in 8 HR states namely Borno, Niger, Kano, Katsina, Kwara, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara	Pending
7		12 th to 15 th December	3		OBR2 in Lagos, Delta and Ogun states	Pending



ROTN. OLUGBENGA OLAYIWOLE
Editor PolioStop

Nigeria Polio Eradication - Remaining Challenges

Nigeria leading Africa to make history in Polio eradication which started on the 25 August 2020 following the certification of the WHO Africa Region as wild polio-free by the Africa Regional Certification Commission (ARCC) after a period of 4 years without a case. With this historic milestone, five of the six WHO regions – representing over 90% of the world's population – are now free of the wild poliovirus, moving the world closer to achieving global polio eradication.

Only two countries worldwide continue to witness wild Poliovirus transmission-Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Nigeria is currently affected by circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreaks even though no wild poliovirus type 2 has been detected in the country since 2016.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is focused on strengthening surveillance to find and respond to the virus, wherever it emerges, and closing immunity

gaps to protect the population and stop the virus from circulating. The programme is also committed to advocating for sustained political commitment and ensuring necessary financial resources and technical support for polio eradication at all levels.

As long as other countries are still transmitting Polio, Nigeria is still at risk. We need to continue to maintain certification standard AFP surveillance, conduct limited scope of SIAs, and continue the current drive of Routine Immunization to align fully with the NPHCDA's agenda of PHC system strengthening.

Rotarians need to continue advocacy, community mobilization and fundraising to ensure that the world is made a better place for future generations.

Current Challenges and Impact of Covid-19 on Polio Eradication

The current challenges to our programme include, poor awareness of community members on the importance and availability of vaccines in the country for routine

immunization activities and poor participation of community members in the planning and implementation of primary health care interventions. Others include, inadequacy of resources required for the conduct of planned RI activities, insecurity in the northeast and some northern and southern states, mass protest and civil unrest leading to the suspension of SIAs in some states and the emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns in many states in the country with non adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols in many states further exacerbating the situation.

Global Polio Update as at November 4 2020

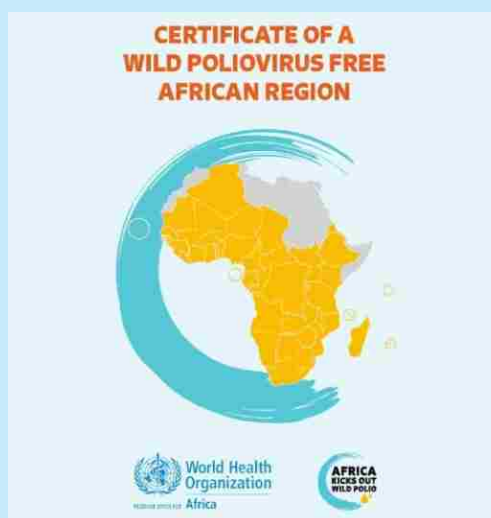
Wild Polio-virus (WPV)

Total global WPV1 cases in 2020: 133 (compared with 100 for the same period in 2019)

Total global WPV1 cases in 2019: 176
Circulating vaccine-derived Polio-virus (cVDPV)

Total global cVDPV cases in 2020: 667 (compared with 122 for the same period in 2019)

Total global cVDPV cases in 2019: 378



AMINU MUHAMMAD

NATIONAL PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

Nigerian states keep pressure on vaccine-derived polio



Health workers and survivors in Nigeria celebrated the end of wild poliovirus in the country. They joined the entire Africa region in a joyous online event in August to mark the continent's wild polio-free status, a historic moment in the global fight against the disease.

But despite the victory, the fight against other forms of the poliovirus is not over. Cases of vaccine-derived polio caused by low and infrequent immunization are still being recorded in the West African country, including in major states like Lagos and Sokoto, highlighting the need for continued vigilance to nip a possible outbreak in the bud.

Following the discovery of a case of Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) in the northwestern agrarian state of Sokoto in early 2020, health authorities there are unrelenting in their actions to vaccinate all children under five years, the age at which the vaccine-derived polio disease is likely to set in.

"We continue to do this work because it is important for the children's future," says 26-year-old Amina Ibrahim, a vaccinator in Sokoto who works in communities despite the COVID-19 pandemic. "What we do is make sure we wash our hands, wear our face masks and maintain two-meters physical distance as we go from house to house."

First discovered in Madagascar in 2001, circulating vaccine-derived polio often occurs when a child who has been vaccinated with the oral polio vaccine (OPV) and who is in an area with poor sanitation passes the virus into the environment. The weakened live virus could then find its way into the systems of other under-immunized kids through contaminated water or food and mutate, becoming infectious and causing life-long paralysis and in some cases, death.

Circulating vaccine-derived polio poses risks to children everywhere because of its highly infectious nature. Nigeria has been experiencing outbreaks since

2008. One case from an AFP was found in Sokoto in 2020 and last year, the state recorded 14 cases. It is worthy to note that five healthy children were found with the virus during investigation of the current case in Sokoto. The disease is fought in the same way wild polio is: with vaccines that provide the most important protection for children.

To boost immunity against type 2 polio virus, Sokoto state authorities are pushing a massive statewide inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) vaccination campaign targeting about 1.5 million children. Across the state, children are feeling the tiny pinch of a needle that will help protect them from the disease.

As with wild poliovirus in Nigeria, vaccine-derived polio disease is warded off with a combination of immunization activities, including the use of IPV. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends routine vaccination with IPV for children below one year old, to prevent risks of polio virus infection. WHO has issued further interim guidance to countries to prepare for the introduction of a second dose IPV in the routine immunization programme. Nigeria has submitted a proposal for support to Gavi in this regard.

Sokoto State health authorities are also intensifying surveillance with the help of community informants to identify and isolate possible cases of vaccine-derived polio disease in the various local government areas.

Supported substantially by WHO, health officers regularly monitor the environment, examining sewer samples in at-risk communities to detect the virus, a method that has proved useful in finding and isolating wild poliovirus cases in the past years.

The surveillance and vaccination efforts are crucial for Sokoto and her 5.3 million population of mostly farmers and cattle herders. The state's geography makes it an easy target for infections. Situated on the Nigerian border with Niger Republic (which recorded three cases of vaccine-derived polio in October 2020), Sokoto is additionally vulnerable to polio cases that could be imported from other countries. The borders in the West African region are widely known to be porous and polioviruses are themselves highly infectious. In 2008, cases of wild polio spread from Nigeria to several countries

including as far as Yemen.

The thoughts of life-time paralysis have made Sokoto parents especially eager to see their kids protected with vaccines. While years ago, parents saw many cases of children affected by polio growing up, the difference is clear now, with fewer children having to go through the pain of paralysis. Nigeria's polio success also boosted confidence in vaccines, a significant feat in a population that is often wary of medical services seen as foreign.

"I no longer have fear in attending gatherings because my children are now protected from polio," says Rabi Isyaku, a Sokoto resident whose child was recently vaccinated.

But despite the vaccination push, health workers say they face hurdles in reaching some populations, meaning that vaccination coverage in Sokoto is only moderate. For instance, Penta3 coverage for Sokoto is very sub-optimal at 17.9% (SMART Survey 2018) and only 7.2% (NDHS, 2018).

Parts of the state are insecure due to activities of armed groups, and rumours around vaccines are rife, with one rumour saying they cause infertility in children. It is also challenging to reach nomadic cattle-herding groups who make up a significant population in Nigeria's north.

Crucially, because of inadequate education, many do not believe in the need to be vaccinated after the wild poliovirus has been declared eradicated and are shunning ongoing vaccinations against both wild and vaccine-derived polio.

These factors have resulted in the state recording 8 outbreaks of vaccine-derived polio between 2019 and 2020 alone. Authorities declared a state of emergency on routine immunization in 2017, created state and local emergency routine immunization coordination centers, and directed more state resources towards delivering vaccines.

"There has been a resurgence of vaccine-derived poliovirus over the years because there's a significant proportion of under-immunized children," says Dr Habibu Yahaya, WHO State coordinator for Sokoto. "WHO will continue to support the state with experienced personnel in conducting effective immunization drives particularly in the outbreak areas. Currently, the state is implementing vaccination campaigns in all the 23 LGAs to shore up the population immunity, and we are hopeful because we've seen the same

response successfully deployed to control outbreaks in Jigawa, Kaduna and Borno states in 2019.” Dr Habibu says the outbreak areas are Sokoto North, Sokoto South, Dange Shuni, Tureta, Rabah and Wurno local government areas.

Despite the challenges, health workers continue to deliver vaccines—and hop—door-to-door, and help parents understand the benefits of vaccines. Nomad trails are tracked with geo-information mapping systems so that vaccinators always know where families are. Once vaccinated, migrant families get a yellow card for easy identification. In communities with poor health infrastructure, state authorities and WHO are supplying drugs for minor ailments to build trust. And there is a productive collaboration between security agencies and local security groups that is helping health workers deliver vaccines safely to conflict-affected communities. Health authorities are also employing the wisdom of highly revered community and religious leaders, including the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, who help quell the myths surrounding vaccines. “We always tell parents to let the vaccinators do their work,” says Aminu Ibrahim, 35, a youth leader in Dange Shuni area. “Our leader, the Sultan of Sokoto immunized children himself, so people now appreciate it more.” Religious sermons and advocacy have helped drive higher numbers of vaccinated children, leaders say, although community members who are also worried about other diseases like malaria seek more incentives from authorities, such as mosquito nets. “We want a society of healthy mothers and children,” added the Sarkin Fulani, Alhaji Nasiru Muhammad.

State authorities acknowledge these gaps and say they are working to do more. “We will leverage the wild poliovirus eradication gains and we will develop strategies towards improving our immunisation coverage,” says the Executive Secretary of Sokoto State Primary Health Care Development Agency, Mr Adamu Abdullahi Romo. “We have already reached a substantial percentage of the population, and with time, people will start to see the results.”

Source: WHO

Polio Certification-sustaining victory with increased vaccination and surveillance in security compromised areas



Despite Nigeria having achieved the wild polio-free certification, the Federal Government with the collaboration of other partners is leaving no stones unturned in making sure that all forms of poliovirus are no longer circulating in the country.

The last case of wild poliovirus (WPV) in the country was reported in Borno state in August 2016. On 25th August 2020, Nigeria, through the sustained and concerted efforts of the government, World Health Organisation (WHO) and other partners, joined the leagues of countries certified wild polio-free which culminated in a wild polio-free African Region. However, the battle against all forms of polioviruses in the country is yet to be over as Nigeria is still battling with the circulating Vaccine Derived Polio Virus type 2 (cVDPV2) and there is need to sustain the immunization coverage all over the country to halt transmission.

To sustain the gains of polio eradication in the country, WHO has been working with Borno State Government in implementing vaccination and surveillance activities in hard to access, security-compromised areas of the state. The effort is to sustain the momentum gained from the polio eradication programme and maintain vaccine availability to the children in the area as vaccination and surveillance accessibility was the main issue in 2016 when the wild polio cases were detected in the state.

In Borno state, especially during the COVID-19 lockdown, the teams - comprising personnel from WHO as well as State and Community Informants in Inaccessible Areas - continued immunization and surveillance activities in the hard to access settlements in the state. Through these efforts, the teams have been able to ensure that AFP cases are identified and children vaccinated against polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

Although there have been cases of AFP reported from insecure areas in the state, they were, however, classified as negative for wild polio and cVDPV2 after investigations and processing of stool samples by the WHO accredited national laboratories. The epidemiological report showed that at the end of week 42, 2020, a total of 117 AFP cases have been notified and investigated from 64 security compromised wards of 20 LGAs.

The inability to access some settlements in Borno state due to the conflict had presented a challenge to the immunization programme. However, based on the new grounds covered in the past few months, there has been increase in surveillance and vaccine reach in the insecure areas.

The surveillance report from the state shows that Community Informants from Inaccessible Areas (CIAs) have reached 6,123 security compromised geo locations with valid geo evidence; 1,212 of these geo-locations were previously unreached for surveillance and by any other intervention.

Also, 1,009 of the 1,212 previously unreached locations were reached with polio vaccines in addition to polio surveillance through vaccination activities by CIA. Among the newly reached areas in the last three months (July-September 2020), seventy-two (72) of the settlements are in Bama LGA.

Commenting on the improvement in surveillance and vaccination reach in the state, the WHO State Coordinator in Borno, Dr Musa Audu, says: “Bearing in mind that Borno was the last sanctuary of wild polio transmission in Africa, they are leaving no stone unturned to ensure the state and Nigeria at large remain polio-free and this is being done by consolidating on all innovations that were implemented that led to the eventual eradication of polio”.

Dr Audu said they have been able to gain access to new grounds through the efforts of the informant network in insecure areas.

“We have made progress in establishing sustained surveillance in insecure areas: as at 16th October 387 (36%) settlements out of the previously unreached 1,083 settlements as at the time of ARCC visit to the state in March 2020 have been accessed by the program with valid geo evidence. This is a testament that we are not relenting in our efforts despite being certified polio-free,” he said.

Source: WHO

Nigeria's Feat of Eradicating Wild Polio Virus



Nigeria has recently been declared Wild Polio Virus free. However, the country should not rest on its oars and must do all it possibly can to prevent a comeback.

According to historical records, the first successful polio vaccine was discovered by Jonas Edward Salk, an American virologist and medical researcher. He worked with a team at the University of Pittsburgh with Julius Youngner, Byron Bennett, L. James Lewis, and Lorraine Friedman.

It's partly as a result of this noble deed, the world that Nigeria and indeed Africa is celebrating success in terminating the WPV after the havoc it had wreaked in the country. Africa was proclaimed WPV free in August 2020 and the hope is that it stays that way permanently.

The medical director, General Hospital, Zango Kataf, Kaduna State, Dr Sheyin David Madaki in an interview stated, "Well I think it's a historic feat it's an achievement in the history of global health for Nigeria to have achieved that. If you remember very well, being just in 2012 or thereabouts the WHO had reported that Nigeria accounted for more than half the polio cases worldwide. "And for Nigeria to have achieved that barely eight years or less than the years after that, I think that's commendable. Polio virus is no longer endemic in Nigeria so it's actually elating. It's something we should be happy about. A lot of efforts have actually gone in over the years on this and as we know polio is a vaccine preventable disease, that can cause acute paralysis in children. "So, the immunisation has actually helped a lot in widespread eradication of the virus. Nigeria has now left the list of polio endemic countries which contains just Pakistan and Afghanistan. I think it's something for which we need to commend all the major actors involved in its defeat."

WPV is prevented by two types of polio vaccines, the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) and the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV).

WPV has been in Nigeria for decades and the country has faced quite a lot of challenges and complexities in its eradication process. Dr Madaki points out the extreme scale of the challenges experienced in the eradication of the virus.

"The challenges were so enormous. One of the challenges is in the enlightenment, the awareness of what polio is really all about and how to prevent it. In certain communities you find out that getting people to accept the vaccines was also challenging.

"People either want to bring up a lot of conspiracy theories about what the vaccines are for and what have you. So even in some enlightened communities you find people that were rejecting that vaccine to be given to their children, that's one of the challenges."

"The other challenge was funding. Thankfully the Global Polio Eradication Initiative played a key role in actually funding and helping the country because Nigeria on its own couldn't have been able to achieve that. So many of the partners helped to achieve this."

A Nigerian, Epidemiology doctoral student at the University of Miami in Florida, Dr Kemi Ogunsina MBBS, MPH, who played a part in the eradication of the virus while in Nigeria, shared thoughts on the process pointing out the hard work the federal government had put into fighting the virus.

She said in an interview, "A lot of effort has been put into the eradication of polio in Nigeria over the years. I am pleased that all the efforts put into polio eradication in Nigeria have finally yielded results.

"Back in the year 2013, we put in so much to revamping the vaccine supply chain system and strengthening accountability from the government, while navigating security challenges that prevented access to children in polio-endemic states.

"Finally, Nigeria has been free from the Wild Polio Virus for four years. It is a pleasure to have been a part of the whole process."

In terms of stumbling blocks met in the process, Dr Ogunsina indicates that they were mainly in forms of: political, geographical and insecurity coupled with outright refusal of the vaccine.

"The challenges faced in eradicating Wild Polio Virus from Nigeria are diverse. They include factors resulting in failed vaccination attempts due to geographic

isolation, hazardous terrains, issues of insecurity, and sporadic refusal of vaccines in the northern part of Nigeria.

"Additionally, political challenges, persistently poor-performing vaccination teams and local governments, the rare occurrence of vaccine-derived polio virus, failure of cold chain resulting in sub-optimal potency vaccines, and weak health systems.

"As part of the polio eradication initiative, certain strategies were developed to counter these challenges such as; demanding accountability from the government and other partners in the polio eradication effort, strengthening the supply chain and cold chain to maintain the potency of the vaccines, education, and awareness campaigns to increase uptake and correct misconceptions about the polio vaccine.

"Others were the training of local community members at different levels to administer vaccines, collect, analyse and interpret data, working with geographic information systems to track vaccinations, working with communities to ensure the security of vaccination teams," she explained.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative which has been superintending the eradication effort is a public-private global partnership which involves national governments, Rotary International (the originator of the dream who provided the initial funding), World Health Organisation, the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, United Nations Children's Fund, and lately the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and others.

To keep Nigeria WPV-free Dr Madaki agrees that insecurity would have to be nipped in the bud.

"The issue about insecurity is actually also a challenge in keeping it at bay. It prevents volunteers and vaccination teams from accessing some of these troubled areas. As a result, some of those children that actually need this vaccine through immunisation would not be able to get it.

"How else do we keep the virus at bay? With ongoing surveillance. Surveillance must continue. immunisations also must be sustained, this is one of the ways we can actually prevent it from coming back. If that is done, I think I see it being long lasting." "All hands must be on deck to really ensure that this is sustained and long lasting. We pray that should be the case," he averred.

Adapted from the writing of Bukola Ogunsina for leadership.ng

Africa's Major achievement is focus of Rotary's World Polio Day event

Rotary's 2020 World Polio Day Online Global Update programme on 24 October hails this year's historic achievement in polio eradication: Africa being declared free of the wild poliovirus.

Paralympic medalist and TV presenter Ade Adepitan, who was co-host of this year's programme, says that the eradication of wild polio in Africa was personal for him. "Since I was born in Nigeria, this achievement is close to my heart," says Adepitan, a polio survivor who contracted the disease as a child. "I've been waiting for this day since I was young."

He notes that, just a decade ago, three-quarters of all of the world's polio cases caused by the wild virus were contracted in Africa. Now, more than a billion Africans are safe from the disease. "But we're not done," Adepitan cautions. "We're in pursuit of an even greater triumph --- a world without polio. And I can't wait."



Ade Adepitan- Co-Host

Rotary Foundation Trustee Geeta Manek, who was co-host with Adepitan, says that World Polio Day is an opportunity for Rotary members to be motivated to "continue this fight."



Geeta Manek- Rotary Foundation Trustee and cohost

She adds, "Rotarians around the world are working tirelessly to support the global effort to end polio."

Now that the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared that its African region is free of the wild poliovirus, five of the WHO's six regions, representing more than 90 percent of the world's population, are now free of the disease. It is still endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan, both in the WHO's Eastern Mediterranean region.

"This effort required incredible coordination and cooperation between governments, UN agencies, civil organizations, health workers, and parents," says Manek, a member of the Rotary Club of Muthaiga, Kenya. "I'm proud of what we've accomplished."



Tunji Funsho- Chair Nigeria National PolioPlus Committee

Dr. Tunji Funsho, chair of Rotary's Nigeria PolioPlus Committee and a member of the Rotary Club of Lekki Phase I, Lagos State, Nigeria, tells online viewers that the milestone couldn't have been reached without the efforts of Rotary members and leaders in Africa and around the world.

Funsho, who was recently named one of TIME magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2020, says countless Rotarians helped by holding events to raise awareness and to raise funds or by working with governments to secure funding and other support for polio eradication.

"Polio eradication is truly a collective effort. This accomplishment belongs to all of us," says Funsho.

Rotary and its members have contributed nearly \$890 million toward polio eradication efforts in the African region. The funds have allowed Rotary to award PolioPlus grants to fund polio surveillance, transportation, awareness campaigns, and National Immunization Days.

This year's World Polio Day Online Global Update was streamed on Facebook in several languages and in a number of time zones around the world. The programme, which is sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, featured Jeffrey Kluger, editor at large for TIME magazine; Mark Wright, TV news host and member of the Rotary Club of Seattle, Washington, USA; and Angélique Kidjo, a Grammy Award-winning singer who performed her song "M'Baamba."



Angélique Kidjo- Rotary Polio Ambassador

It's impossible to talk about 2020 without mentioning the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than a million people and devastated economies around the world.

In the programme, a panel of global health experts from Rotary's partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) discuss how the infrastructure that Rotary and the GPEI have built to eradicate polio has helped communities tackle needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic too.

"The infrastructure we built through polio in terms of how to engage communities, how to work with communities, how to rapidly teach communities to actually deliver health interventions, do disease surveillance, et cetera, has been an extremely important part of the effort to tackle so many other diseases," says Dr. Bruce Aylward, Senior Adviser to the Director General at the WHO.

Panelists also include Dr. Christopher Elias, President of the Global Development Division of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Henrietta H. Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF; and Rebecca Martin, Director of the Center for Global Health at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

World Polio Day 2020: Kano State emerge champions of Para-Soccer competition for a record 6th time

The programme discussed several pandemic response tactics that rely on polio eradication infrastructure: Polio surveillance teams in Ethiopia are reporting COVID-19 cases, and emergency operation centers in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan that are usually used to fight polio are now also being used as coordination centers for COVID-19 response.

The online programme also included a video of brave volunteer health workers immunizing children in the restive state of Borno, Nigeria, and profiles a community mobilizer in Afghanistan who works tirelessly to ensure that children are protected from polio.

Kluger speaks with several people, including three Rotary members, about their childhood experiences as "Polio Pioneers" --- they were among more than a million children who took part in a huge trial of Jonas Salk's polio vaccine in the 1950s.

Rotary's challenge now is to eradicate the wild poliovirus in the two countries where the disease has never been stopped: Afghanistan and Pakistan. Routine immunizations must also be strengthened in Africa to keep the virus from returning there. The polio partnership is working to rid the world of all strains of poliovirus, so that no child is affected by polio paralysis ever again.

To eradicate polio, multiple high-quality immunization campaigns must be carried out each year in polio-affected and high-risk countries. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to maintain populations' immunity against polio while also protecting health workers from the coronavirus and making sure they don't transmit it.

Rotary has contributed more than \$2.1 billion to polio eradication since it launched the PolioPlus programme in 1985, and it's committed to raising \$50 million each year for polio eradication activities. Because of a 2-to-1 matching agreement with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, each year, \$150 million goes toward fulfilling Rotary's promise to the children of the world: No child will ever again suffer the devastating effects of polio. Source:



In commemoration of the World Polio Day celebration and in spite of the End SARS Protest and security challenges, the members of Nigeria Polio Survivors Association under the leadership of Musbahi Lawal Didi celebrated as part of activities marking 2020 World Polio day the eighth edition of the World Polio Day National Para-Soccer Championship which started on Wednesday 21 October ended on Saturday 24 October 2020 with Kano state taking the first Position Trophy for the 6th Time.

Kano State Para-soccer team maintained their dominance as they clinched their 6th crown in the 2020 edition of the National Para-Soccer Championship held at the Old Parade Ground, Area 10, Abuja. The Kano team defeated their Nasarawa state counterpart 1-0 in a pulsating clash to record their 6th triumph at the national competition.

In the third-place match played earlier, last year's runner up, Katsina state defeated Yobe state 2-1 in a penalty shoot-out to win bronze in the 2020 edition of the competition. After 4 days of hostilities among the 8-participating states, Kano team

became the most successful state in the competition which is meant to commemorate World Polio Day in the country.

Eight out of the expected 12 teams took part in the competition. Meanwhile, President of Nigeria Para-Soccer Federation (NPF), Lawal Misbahu Didi, has revealed that the federation has engaged more than 2,000 polio survival in the polio eradication advocacy and partnership with UNICEF and others donors. According to him, "we thank all development agencies who have been partnering in polio eradication for many years under our collaboration and partnership we have engaged more than 2000 polio survival in the polio eradication advocacy and partnership with UNICEF and others donors." "So far, so good, we thank God for giving us the privilege to end this year's edition well, we have started peacefully and ended peacefully and as you can see teams are happy, I am using this medium to thank those who have supported us to have this success especially the Nigeria National PolioPlus Committee of Rotary International that has been our partner for 8 years as well as other donors."

He, however, appealed to private organizations, philanthropists who have been contributing to the well-being of people living with disabilities to own a Para soccer team that will give privilege to more people living with disabilities to be employed

Source: Amaechi Agbo

COMMISSIONING OF ROTARY MOTORIZED BOREHOLE IN ESSIEN OWONG ULE, AKWA IBOM STATE



2020 WORLD POLIO DAY CELEBRATIONS







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