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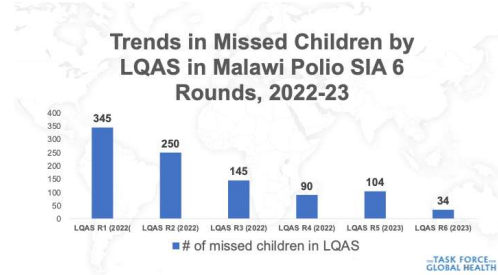
This poster describes the critical contributions made by the Taskforce For Global Health's Polio Surge Capacity Program in Polio Eradication in the Africa Region

BACKGROUND

Outbreaks of wild polioviruses (WPV) and circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses constitute a public health emergency of international concern due to the irreversible paralysis and death they cause, especially in children. In 1988, at the World Health Assembly, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was established to eradicate polio by ensuring every child at risk of polio infection is fully immunized against the disease.

DESCRIPTION

Since its establishment, the GPEI has recorded significant progress in eradicating WPV serotypes 2 and 3, with > 99.9% reduction in the number of cases globally. The U.S CDC Polio Eradication branch collaborated with the Task Force for Global Health to establish the Polio Surge Capacity Program (PSCP) in 2019. The objectives of the PSCP were to rapidly deploy Senior Epidemiologists and recruit National Consultants in countries where polio outbreaks were declared for long-term technical oversight as part of the GPEI's Rapid Response Team (RRT). The RRT was mandated to work with Ministries of Health to set up Polio Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) to increase the demand for vaccination, strengthen surveillance, and improve the quality of supplementary immunization activities



LQAS Demonstrating Progressive Improvement in Polio SIA rounds, Zambia

IMPACTS & LESSONS

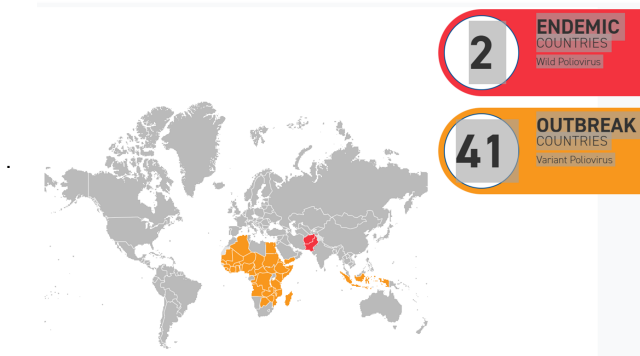
The PSCP team, in coordination with GPEI partners, played a critical role in helping countries to rapidly respond to several outbreaks of polioviruses in Africa. Despite challenges with shortfalls in funding, insecurity, and non-compliance with vaccination, tremendous successes have been achieved. Global efforts to allocate more resources to sustain these gains should be prioritized to achieve the goal of polio eradication.



Polio Vaccination in DRC



Polio Vaccination in Nigeria



Global Incidence of WPV and cVDPV cases

OUTCOMES

The PSCP supported sixteen outbreak countries. Most of these cases were in countries experiencing insecurity and internal conflict, like Somalia and Nigeria. The deployment of the PSCP team, who generally are graduates of the Field Epidemiology Training Program, led to the early detection of polioviruses and increased the number of vaccinated children. In close coordination with GPEI partners in these countries, over 200 million children were vaccinated. The number of missed children has progressively declined by 5% in some countries, as witnessed most recently in Malawi, with the Southeastern WPV outbreak response. In contrast, others have reported an interruption in their outbreaks, like Sierra Leone and Liberia.

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