

Subject: Message from International PolioPlus Chair Michael K. McGovern on Nigeria reaching three years without a case of wild poliovirus

Date: August 21, 2019 at 11:55:29 AM EDT



My fellow Rotarians:

I'm pleased to share the important news that as of today, 21 August 2019, it has been three years since a child in Nigeria was paralyzed by the wild poliovirus. This means that the entire World Health Organization (WHO) African region could be certified as wild poliovirus-free as soon as mid-2020.

Along with our Global Polio Eradication Initiative partners and the Nigerian government, we've strengthened immunization and disease detection systems, and we are now reaching more children than ever in some of the hardest-to-reach places in Nigeria.

We can take pride in this progress, but it is not time to celebrate quite yet. We still have work to do and we must continue making it a priority to reach every child in Nigeria—and other polio-threatened countries—with the polio vaccine, and build strong levels of immunity to fully protect the entire population against polio.

In part because of the hard work and dedication of Rotarians in Nigeria and around the world, we will soon be able to check another country off of the polio-endemic list. Rotary members in Nigeria have been hard at work raising awareness for polio eradication, advocating with the government and addressing other basic health needs to complement polio eradication efforts, like providing clean water to vulnerable communities.

After the African region is certified wild poliovirus-free later next year, 5 out of the 6 WHO regions in the world will be considered polio-free. As the first organization to dream of – and promise to deliver – a polio-free world, Rotary is committed to fulfilling our promise. Our progress in Nigeria is a big step toward that goal, but we need to maintain momentum so that Pakistan and Afghanistan see the same level of progress.

It's crucial that Rotarians continue to support polio eradication as we overcome the final hurdles in the fight to end the disease forever. You can support PolioPlus by making a [donation](#), or raise awareness by holding an event or fundraiser on [World Polio Day](#) on 24 October.

I look forward to joining with Rotarians as soon as mid-2020 to celebrate a wild poliovirus-free Africa.

Michael K. McGovern, International PolioPlus Chair