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Bloomberg donating \$100M to help fight polio

Updated 9:30 pm, Wednesday, February 27, 2013

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SEATTLE (AP) — New York Mayor **Michael Bloomberg** has pledged \$100 million to help the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and others to fight polio around the world.

The Seattle-based Gates Foundation said Bloomberg was set to announce the donation to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative on Thursday. That organization has a six-year plan to

eliminate polio.

Polio is a vaccine-preventable disease that has been eradicated in most countries, but it still causes paralysis or death in some parts of the world, including Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. India was declared polio free in early 2012.

Fewer than 225 people had polio in 2012, the Gates Foundation said.

"It's unthinkable that polio still exists in the world when we have the tools and technology to protect children from this preventable, debilitating disease," Bloomberg said in a statement.

Bloomberg makes donations through his own foundation, which focuses on public health, the environment, government innovation, the arts and education. His website says he has donated \$2.4 billion to a variety of causes over the years, including \$330 million in 2011.

Bloomberg said in a written statement that his donation to help fight polio is a result of collaborations between Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Gates Foundation in the field of global health. Eradicating polio is one of the Gates Foundation's top priorities.

The two foundations have also worked together to reduce tobacco use, and to offer family planning services and modern birth control to women around the world.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative also includes the World Health Organization, Rotary International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and UNICEF.

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