

INDIA POLIO COMMUNICATION UPDATE

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© Photo: Moira Dawa/UNICEF

On 13 January 2012, India achieved a significant milestone – one full year without recording any cases of polio. The last case was detected on 13 January 2011, in a two-year-old girl from Howrah in West Bengal. This giant leap towards stopping transmission of polio is an endorsement of India's tireless and persistent efforts to eradicate this disease.

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NEXT ISSUE: SPECIAL EDITION ON A POLIO-FREE INDIA

India's success reduces polio-endemic countries to historic low of three

ON Saturday, 25 February, 2012, India was officially struck off the list of polio-endemic countries by the World Health Organization, having gone more than one year without reporting any cases of wild poliovirus. India's success leaves only three countries remaining polio-endemic - meaning they have never stopped indigenous wild poliovirus transmission: Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The announcement was feted across India as arguably its greatest public health achievement, given that as recently as 2009, India accounted for nearly half the global cases of polio, and was long considered one of the most difficult places in the world to eradicate the crippling disease.

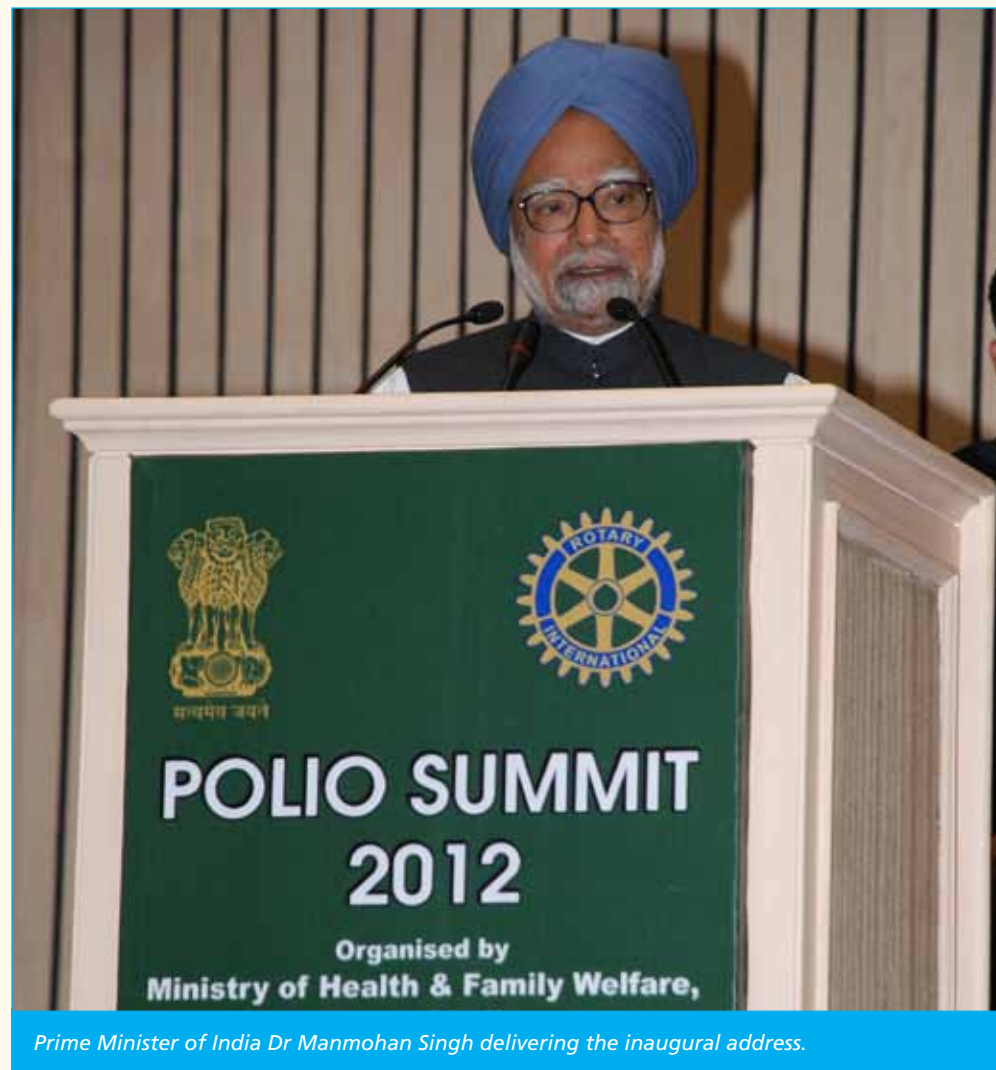
A letter written by WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan and delivered to the Indian Government on the morning of the Polio Summit 2012 in Delhi confirmed the news.

"It gives me great pleasure to announce that the World Health Organization has taken India's name off the list of polio-endemic countries in view of the remarkable progress that we have made during the past one year," India's Health Minister, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, declared at the inaugural address of the Summit.

Amidst thundering applause and a standing ovation by the 1400-plus participants from across the world, Mr Azad said: "We have won the battle but the war is not yet over. Let us today rededicate ourselves and resolve that we will continue our efforts with the same vigour, so that India can be declared (certified) polio-free by 2014."

India recorded only one case of polio throughout 2011, when a two-year-old girl in Howrah, West Bengal, was paralyzed on 13 January. The fact that it had not recorded a case for more than 12 months since, and that sensitive environmental testing for polio conducted monthly in sewage sites in Delhi, Mumbai and Patna had also tested negative for the virus throughout the past 12 months, led the WHO to deem that for the first time, India had successfully stopped transmission of polio.

Inaugurating the Summit, the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh, said the Government of India had coordinated a massive effort to rid the country of the terrible scourge of polio that scarred the lives of thousands of children in India and elsewhere. "The unprecedented progress gives us hope that we can eradicate polio not only from India but from the face of the earth," he said. *Continued...*



Dr Singh said that the success of India's efforts was proof that teamwork pays, adding that the Union and State Governments have worked in close partnership with many community, national and international organizations and partners including Rotary International, World Health Organization, UNICEF and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to eradicate polio.

"The real credit goes to the 2.3 million volunteers who repeatedly vaccinated children even in the most remote areas, often in very bad weather conditions," the Prime Minister said. "I commend each one of them for their dedication, commitment and selfless service."

Mr Azad said that since its launch in 1995, the polio eradication programme had made a tremendous effort to reach virtually every child in India. In recent years, as a result, the coverage in polio immunization rounds in the two traditionally endemic states – Uttar Pradesh and Bihar – had crossed 99 per cent. "This level of coverage is unprecedented - not witnessed anywhere in the world on such a large scale," he said.

Mr Azad attributed the milestone to the strong will and determination of the Government, which ensured there was never any shortage of resources or funds for the programme, the willingness to introduce innovations that delivered rich dividends, the unprecedented scale of the effort to reach every last child, and the preparedness to launch aggressive responses to wild poliovirus cases. The

Minister also recognized the tireless efforts of the frontline workers and the patient faith reposed by parents of 174 million children in the polio programme to secure the health of their children.

The Health Minister lauded the strong and effective polio partnership - with Rotary International at the forefront of espousing polio eradication, WHO setting new standards in surveillance and UNICEF helping prove that it is possible to overcome fears and resistance with highly imaginative communication and advocacy strategies.

However, the Minister said the Indian Government was "acutely aware" that it could not drop its guard. "We are excited and hopeful, at the same time, vigilant and alert. We are highly mindful of the risks that persist, not only on account of residual indigenous transmission but also from other countries."

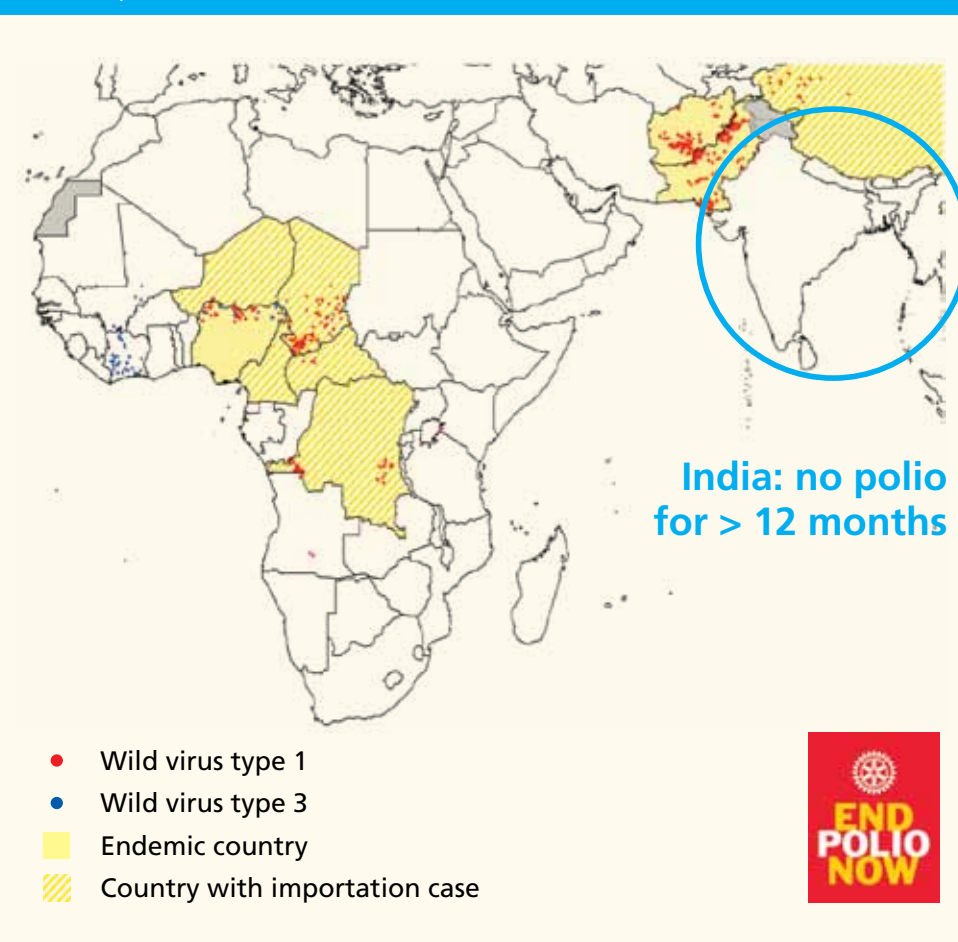
Stressing that "there is no room for complacency", Mr Azad said the programme needs to continue with "full force" until polio was eradicated globally.

The two-day Polio Summit was organised by Rotary International in conjunction with the Government of India to commemorate India's trailblazing effort, focus on the remaining risks and determine the way forward. The Union Ministers of State for Health and Family Welfare, Mr Sudip Bandyopadhyay and Mr S Gandhiselvan; Rotary International President Mr Kalyan Banerjee and The Rotary Foundation Chairman Mr. William Boyd joined senior health officials from

Pakistan, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Nepal, various Indian states, Principal Secretaries, Mission Directors of the National Rural Health Mission, State Immunization Officers, heads and representatives of key partner organisations, together with representatives of the huge polio workforce - the frontline workers, medical officers and community mobilisers, at the Summit.

The Summit deliberated on how to build synergies to ensure that the present momentum against polio is maintained until the disease is eradicated. It provided a platform for all the key players in the end game strategy for polio eradication – government, partners, donors and frontline workers – to renew and reinforce their commitment to eradicate polio in India. ■

Polio cases, last 12 months



For the first time ever, one year without polio cases in India

ON 13 January, 2012, India reached a major milestone in the history of polio eradication – a year without reporting any case of polio. The lone case of polio in 2011 was reported in a two-year-old girl in Howrah in West Bengal.

Acknowledging the commendable efforts that led to this unprecedented progress, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad said “We are excited and hopeful, at the same time, vigilant and alert.”



Rukhsar (in orange) – the last polio case reported in India in January 2011.

In a press statement to mark the occasion, the Minister said the progress is indeed remarkable considering that in 2009, India's 741 cases accounted for nearly half the global total. This giant leap in a short span of two years is an endorsement of India's tireless and persistent efforts.

India has set an example with the highest level of political commitment to the programme which reflects in its resource allocation (so far, the Government of India contributed \$ 2.42 billion - currency exchange rate as on 2 March, 2012 - to polio eradication), as well as continuous efforts to identify and reach the most vulnerable children with tailored strategies, optimum use of available vaccines under the guidance of top national and international experts, an extraordinary communication strategy and strong partnership, he said. The progress also results from focused and tailored strategies to vaccinate children in the highest risk areas, helping to ensure 99 per cent coverage in each vaccination round.

The strategies and program response have also become sharper in the last few years, with the Government of India determining that any case of polio, anywhere in the country, had to be responded to as a public health emergency. The lone case of polio in 2011 in Howrah is a good example of this rapid response – with the first immunization round being conducted within seven

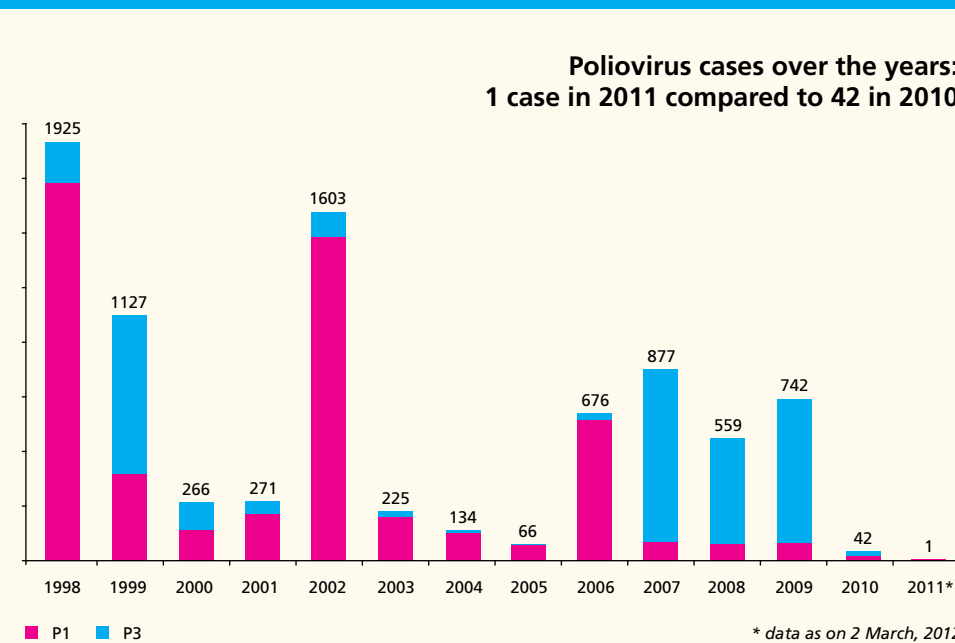
days of the case being confirmed, and three rounds completed in seven weeks. The India polio programme has benefited from a strong partnership between WHO-National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP), which provides technical support, UNICEF the communication lead and Rotary International focussed on advocacy and IEC support. The entire government machinery at all levels is geared towards pulse polio immunization.

While India has made unprecedented

progress, the threat of polio persists. The program now not only needs to continue to maintain its present thrust and force, but also further strengthen efforts and be more vigilant. The key challenge now is to ensure any residual or imported poliovirus in the country is rapidly detected and eliminated, while maintaining polio eradication as a key health priority in India until global eradication.

“There is no room for complacency,” the Minister said. ■

Poliovirus cases, India, 1998-2011



Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan launches new Polio Communication Campaign

LAUDING the remarkable progress against polio in 2011, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Polio Eradication, Mr Amitabh Bachchan, launched the new Communication Campaign for polio in Mumbai on 15 December, appealing to parents and caregivers to “make polio history in India”.

“As Goodwill Ambassador for Polio, I feel proud of the remarkable progress achieved this year. But at the same time, I would like to caution that the job is not finished yet. Polio remains a threat everywhere as long as the poliovirus continues to circulate anywhere in the world. We must continue to immunize all children up to 5

years until polio is eradicated in India and globally,” he said.

Mr Bachchan, who has been persuading and motivating parents to take their children to the polio booths in his nearly decade-long association with the programme as UNICEF Goodwill

Ambassador, continues to be the face of the new polio campaign.

The new campaign puts the onus on the parents to seek protection against polio for their children with the tag line “mere bachche ko do boond har bar” or “two drops for my child every time” and the new logo, depicting a couple and a child taking two drops of oral polio vaccine (OPV).

The campaign addresses three key issues: polio has no cure and can only be prevented by taking OPV each time it is offered; OPV should be taken multiple times up to five years of age, and that the highest-risk population - migrants and mobile populations - should take OPV wherever they go.

Mr Bachchan congratulated the program’s vaccinators, health workers, community mobilizers, parents and caregivers for overcoming multiple challenges and obstacles in the most difficult situations and hard-to-reach areas to protect children against polio.

“India is historically close to eradicating polio,” Mr Bachchan said. “We are on the edge of achieving our dream of ensuring no child in India is ever needlessly paralyzed by polio again.

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पूरा तभी आपका प्यार जब मिले बच्चे को पोलियो खुराक हर बार

पोरा तभी आप का प्यार जब मिले बच्चे को पोलियो खुराक हर बार

पहले 5 साल, अपने बच्चे को दो दो बूँद हर बार

World Health Organization CDC UNICEF

Your love is complete only when your child gets polio drops every time.

पोलियो का कोई इलाज नहीं दो बूँद हर बार हे बचाव सही

पोलियो का कोई इलाज नहीं दो बूँद हर बार हे बचाव सही

पहले 5 साल, अपने बच्चे को दो दो बूँद हर बार

World Health Organization CDC UNICEF

Polio has no cure, two drops every time is the only protection.

स्वस्थ कल की बुनियाद रवें आज

स्वस्थ کال کی بنیاد رے آج

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World Health Organization CDC UNICEF

Lay the foundation of a healthy future today.

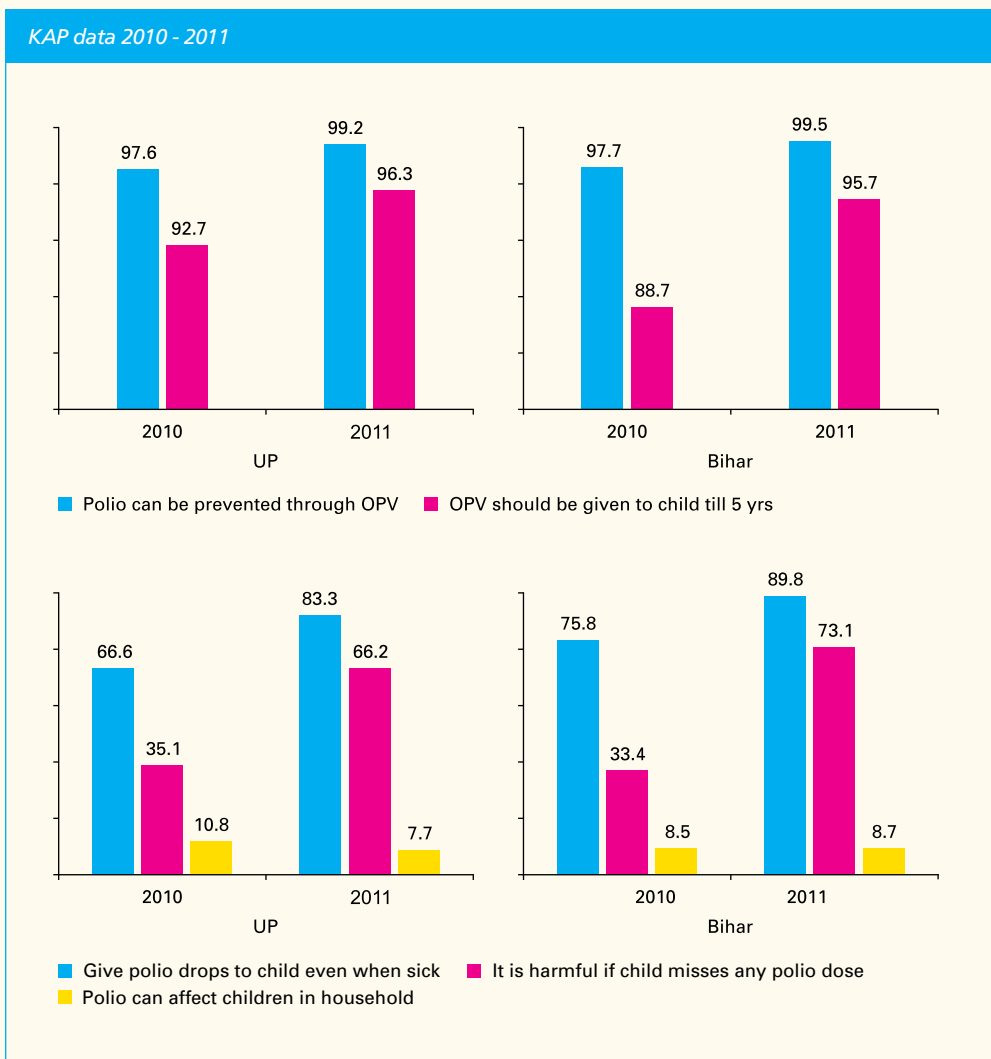
The world is watching and taking lessons from our effort. Let us together continue to work to make polio history in India."

Maharashtra State Immunisation Officer Dr V N Kulkarni, UNICEF Country

Office Deputy Representative Mr David Mcloughlin, senior Rotarian Mr Ashok Mahajan and Regional Team Leader World Health Organization – National Polio Surveillance Project Dr Ravindra Banpel, were among those present at the launch. ■



UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Polio Eradication, Mr Amitabh Bachchan, launching the new polio Communication Campaign in Mumbai.



KAP study shows the message is getting through

To determine the most effective ways for communicating with the highest-risk groups and areas (HRGs and HRAs), an extensive KAP (knowledge, attitude and practice) study was conducted in 2010 and 2011 in UP and Bihar, interviewing 9866 respondents, including families living in brick kilns, nomads, migrants, slum dwellers and construction workers.

Survey findings indicated a perfect 100% awareness of polio in both UP and Bihar, and a very high proportion of the respondents (98-99%) in both states knew that polio could be prevented through polio drops; that OPV should be given to children up to 5 years of age (96%); and said that they would get polio drops administered even if the child is sick (83-90%).

However, the perception of threat susceptibility remained very low, with only 7.7% of respondents in high-risk areas of UP and 8.7% in Bihar believing that polio

could affect children in their household. The new campaign thus focuses on building threat perception with the message that polio has no cure, but can be prevented.

Communication messages emphasizing the need for sustained polio doses to ensure protection against polio appears to have had an impact, with the number of respondents who said it was harmful if a child missed a polio dose any time rising from 35.1% to 66.2% in UP over the past year, and from 33.4% to 73.1% in Bihar.

The survey observed high reliability among the respondents on home-visits of the polio team to make up for missed doses. Hence, the new campaign included messages on the importance of getting children immunized during each polio round, as well as immunizing against all vaccine-preventable diseases, and actions to be taken in order to obtain missed doses such as visiting the Anganwadi Centre or nearest health centre.

Fighting poliovirus across borders in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar

MIGRANTS and mobile populations play a significant role in polio virus importations globally. With increased focus on these groups and in line with the recommendations the India Expert Advisory Group, UNICEF, along with its partners, has initiated efforts to identify, map and include all migrants and mobile communities for polio vaccination.

Nepal, with a long porous border with India and high in-and-out migration, reported six wild poliovirus type 1 cases in 2010, two of which were reported from districts bordering India following importations from Bihar.

The Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar Governments were quick in their response

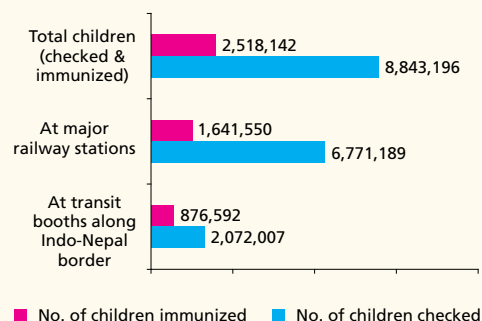
to set up transit immunization sites along the Indo-Nepal border and various railway stations to cover children moving in and out of the country. UNICEF provided communication and mobilization support and put up banners, posters and distributed handbills in Hindi and Nepalese. Mike announcements called upon parents to get their children vaccinated. Transit immunization activities were also carried out during religious festivals with massive population movement.

In Uttar Pradesh, 30 transit booths were set up in six border districts of Kheri, Bahraich, Shravasti, Balrampur, Siddharthnagar and Maharajganj, with 585,116 children immunized at these booths from April 2011 to December 2011. In Bihar, 2,518,142 children have been immunized for polio at

Continued...

Protecting the border

Immunization posts	No. of newborns identified	No. of teams deployed (all shifts)
At transit booths along Indo-Nepal border	4,768	19,592
At major railway stations	10,344	40,534
Total	15,112	60,126



Continuous Immunization Coverage Report – Bihar 242nd day (as on 3 February 2012)



Alert on the borders - transit vaccinators ensuring no child is missed.



Vaccinators at Muzaffarpur railway station in Bihar.

border booths and major railway stations since the initiative started in May 2011.

Bright yellow polio kiosks and vaccinators in their yellow vests gave high visibility to the intervention. But there were myriad challenges too with booths in far-flung areas making supervision difficult. In Jogiabari, a small village in Maharajganj district of UP, the booth is located at the banks of a small rivulet separating the two countries, with people crossing over in small boats. In Sunauli, the transit booth is at the border gate with vaccinators moving in 'no man's land'.

The Nepalese and Indian army at the border posts actively support this initiative. They assist vaccination teams in checking vehicles for children on-board and help counsel families to get their children vaccinated.

At the Bihar-Nepal border in East Champaran district, Maitrey – a Nepalese NGO working against trafficking – has also pitched in. These mobilisers, speaking the native language, support transit teams during polio rounds. 18-year-old Ganesh Kumar Soni, a transit vaccinator at the Bihar-Nepal border says, "The work is challenging but the thought that I have contributed in saving a child's life gives immense satisfaction."

The unified response and use of innovative strategies has shown impressive results – UP and Bihar have not reported any polio case in 2011. As put by Jones Itombra Okoro, Polio Programme Manager, UNICEF Bihar, "These children constitute a majority of <1% children missed during polio campaigns in Bihar. Hence, efforts are being made to reach them through every possible strategy." ■

Nepalese women mobilisers raise polio awareness beyond borders

Along the Indo-Nepal border, a major challenge for mobilisers has been convincing parents from across the border to get their children vaccinated for polio, given many visiting families only speak Nepalese. To address this language barrier, 18 Nepalese women have been deployed as transit mobilisers at the Jogbani border in Purnea, Bihar. These women were given a day-long training on communication skills and polio messages and oriented on their roles and responsibilities as transit mobilisers, before being deployed to the border.

Prior experience of working in the polio programme in their native Nepal further helped in their understanding of polio and related issues. Parmila Basnet, a Nepalese mobiliser said Nepalese parents quickly warmed to her. "I speak their language, hence, parents trust me more than other mobilisers." This initiative has increased polio immunization coverage by 25% at the Jogbani border and is being replicated at all major transit points along the Indo-Nepal border. ■



Rozi Khadaka, a Nepalese mobiliser, counsels parents for polio vaccination at a border transit booth.

Tackling resistance in Agra and Varanasi

THE Social Mobilization Network of UNICEF has worked for 10 years to spread awareness on the benefits and the need for polio vaccination and to make polio vaccination acceptable to families opposing it due to rumours, myths or to bargain for better facilities.

As a result, oral polio vaccine (OPV) is now widely accepted and resistance is at an all time low in the high-risk districts of Uttar Pradesh. However, a few pockets of resistance remain in central and east UP, mainly in Agra and Varanasi.

In January 2011, refusals in Agra were 22.9% and in Varanasi 15.1%. These two districts also recorded the highest migration rates in the state, making it imperative that all children up to the age of five years took OPV at every available opportunity.

To address refusals in these two districts, UNICEF, in consultation with the district administration and partners, stepped up social mobilization activities and enhanced media engagement. NPSP/WHO increased monitoring support by mobilizing staff from neighboring districts.

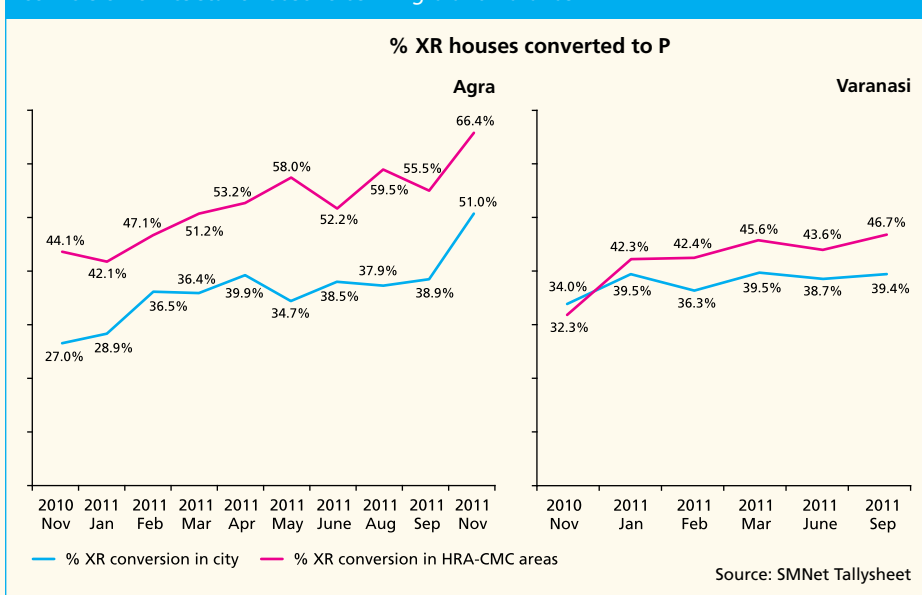
Both in Agra and Varanasi, UNICEF engaged additional mobilisers at district and block levels. Additionally in Varanasi, male mobilisers were deployed to counsel refusal families. In both districts, UNICEF's Social Mobilization Network recorded refusal (XR) households and shared this data with district authorities and local influencers. Intensive counseling sessions were held with these resistant families along with Imams, Ulemas (religious leaders) and during Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi.

In both districts, the administration assigned special nodal officers for blocks with high refusals. In Agra alone, 40 medical officers were temporarily deployed to the resistant areas and health camps organized in resistant pockets. In Varanasi, a media workshop was organized prior to the March polio round.

Sustained mobilization and operational efforts helped reduce substantially the number of resistant families, with refusals coming down to 6.0% in Agra (November 2011) and 10.0% in Varanasi (September 2011).

Joint efforts of the Government and partners have made it possible for the programme to overcome these challenges

Conversion of resistant households in Agra and Varanasi



Medical students swap stethoscopes for social mobilization

One of the most effective initiatives in the polio-endemic district of Agra in west Uttar Pradesh has been the involvement of medical students for community mobilization during polio vaccination rounds. There is community resistance in some pockets, coupled with a high incidence of sickness in children. Surrounded by Ferozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Aligarh districts, the traditional polio reservoir areas, Agra continues to be the focus of intense community mobilization efforts.

In view of the challenges, the Social Mobilization Network engaged students of S.N. Medical College, Agra, to support house-to-house vaccination teams in resistant pockets. The students interacted with families, talked about the safety and compelling need for OPV immunization, and advised families on preventive and curative measures for sickness. This counseling by the young, enthusiastic students has been extremely effective in converting resistant families. Their support has helped further instill the local community's confidence and trust in the polio eradication programme.



Medical students in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, join the polio eradication campaign – seen here counseling parents.

Ferrari F1 star Fernando Alonso promotes polio eradication in India

“POLIO is a terrible, crippling disease of children, which we can and should eradicate from the planet,” said Fernando Alonso during a visit to the Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya Paediatric Hospital in late October.

Mr Alonso, a two-time world champion Formula One Ferrari driver and UNICEF National Ambassador for Spain, toured the



Speedy support - Fernando Alonso, champion Formula One driver and UNICEF Ambassador, administering oral polio vaccine during a visit to a pediatric hospital in New Delhi.

hospital to draw attention to the country's polio eradication efforts. In India for the country's inaugural F1 race, Fernando spent almost an hour interacting with children in the hospital. He distributed Diwali gifts to the children in the wards and to those undergoing physiotherapy for paralysis.

During his visit, Mr Alonso also immunized five infants with oral polio vaccine, and spoke forcefully about the importance of ensuring all children are vaccinated.

“It is critical that all Indian children continue to be immunized against polio until this disease has been eradicated all over the world. We all hope that happens soon,” he said.

As a UNICEF National Ambassador, Mr Alonso has worked extensively for the cause of children around the world. He said he was honored to raise awareness of the need to vaccinate all children against polio. “You know you're doing an important job - there have been some impressive advances thanks to help from UNICEF, its partners and the parents who have brought their children in to be vaccinated,” Mr Alonso said. “Everything here is being directed to eradicate polio which is a terrible disease which needlessly leaves children paralyzed.”

Sehwag, Sammy aim to Bowl Out Polio

“EVERY child has the right to live a healthy and polio-free life,” Indian cricketer Virender Sehwag and West Indies captain Darren Sammy said, joining forces with UNICEF's 'Bowl Out Polio' campaign in Kolkata on 13 November. On the day before the West Indies Vs India Test match, also the opening day of the week-long polio campaign, the cricketers administered oral polio vaccine to children and urged parents and caregivers to 'Bowl Out' the poliovirus from India forever.

“Your child could be the country's future champion, don't deprive your child of this opportunity. Make sure your child takes

oral polio vaccine in each polio campaign up to 5 years of age,” Sehwag said.

West Indies captain Sammy added his support: “India is on the brink of making history. It is important that all children up to the age of five years continue to be immunized with OPV until the disease is eradicated. We all hope that India wins this intense and tough match against polio.”

The 'Bowl Out Polio' campaign is supported by a number of national and international cricketers, to ensure a polio-free future for children. Team members of India, Pakistan, South Africa, Australia and the Kolkata Knight Riders have lent support to the campaign. ■



Bowl Out Polio campaign in Kolkata kick-started with Indian opener Virender Sehwag and West Indies captain Darren Sammy administering polio drops to children.

Radio jockeys, announcers turn polio advocates

AS India inches closer to stopping transmission of polio, initiatives are being scaled up to effectively engage media to spread the message of polio immunization and associated risk factors. Tapping the strength of electronic media – particularly radio – in mobilizing listeners, UNICEF on behalf of the Government of India and partners organized a series of workshops for Radio Jockeys and Presenters of FM and Primary Channels. These workshops trained 114 radio jockeys from 14 private and 2 primary channels in weaving messages on polio and associated health issues into the programmes of commercial radio channels.

The initiative began with an interactive meeting with Programme Heads of FM and Primary channels on 10 June, 2011

in New Delhi, which focused on the need for engaging FM channels in the intensified polio eradication drive to step up awareness among the community. The meeting evoked a good response from senior programmers who committed their active support in the last mile effort to eradicate polio from India.

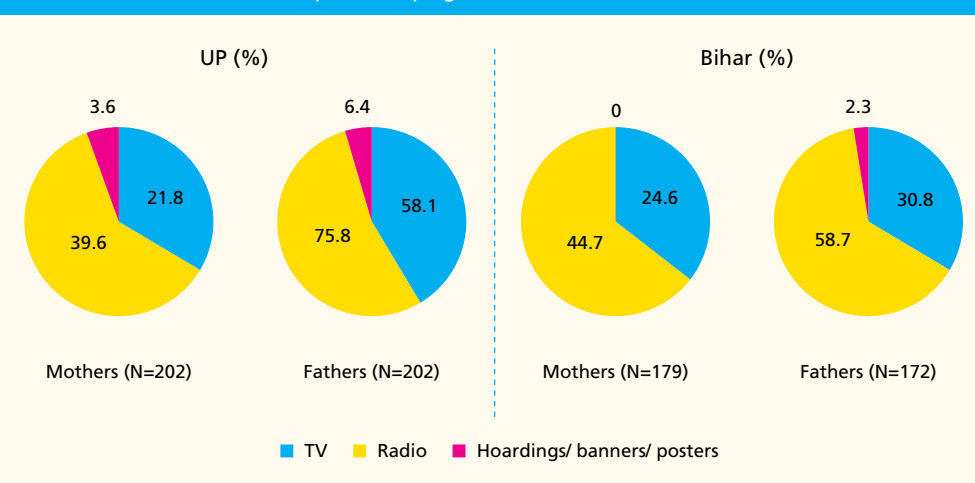
The intervention is in line with KAP study findings of 2011 covering the highest-risk populations. The study showed that radio was the main source of information for 58.7 per cent of fathers and 44.7 per cent of mothers (in Bihar), and 75.8 per cent of fathers and 39.6 per cent of mothers (in Uttar Pradesh).

Six radio workshops in five states followed in 2011, with all workshops held in states



Radio Jockeys at a recording session during the Chennai workshop on 5-7 December 2011.

Sources of information about polio campaign - Brick Kiln Workers (2011)



with large migrant and mobile populations. Ahead of the peak polio transmission season, radio channels of northern states of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu & Kashmir were covered in a workshop in June, followed by another in August with western states Maharashtra and Gujarat, which host a sizeable migrant population. In September and November, similar interventions were held across Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal and in December the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Pondicherry.

The workshops oriented the participants on polio and polio-plus issues through

technical sessions, interaction with experts and visits to the community. The participants also went through 'live radio narration', weaving in messages encouraging parents to get their children immunized with OPV each time it was offered. The messages also focused on protecting children against life threatening diseases by taking vaccines under routine immunization, diarrhea management with ORS and zinc, promoting exclusive breastfeeding, and sanitation and hygiene.

Competing with TV and cable, radio remains a popular medium of entertainment in India, especially among people on the move - both within and outside the endemic states. ■

Engaging youth for polio advocacy

UNICEF has embarked on a new initiative in 2011 engaging youth for advocating for polio and associated issues. As part of the initiative, partnerships have been initiated with national level youth bodies such as the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS). The NSS and NYKS units of various universities in polio high-risk states organized a number of activities including sensitization drives/events in urban slums and villages, issue-based rallies, debates, and art competitions.

NSS volunteers from Delhi University organized story-telling in Bhalasva slum cluster in Delhi, in which young children were engaged through Rotary's comic books on polio prevention. Comic characters came alive during interesting story-telling sessions, anchored by active NSS volunteers. The stories focused on the importance of polio vaccination for all children under 5 years, modes of transmission of the virus and its prevention. Colourful and attractive posters with messages on polio, routine

immunization and sanitation were also displayed at vantage points in the slum cluster.

A massive cycle rally was organized by the NSS Unit of DAV College for Men in Amritsar, Punjab. Waving bright yellow flags, more than 100 participants traversed the city on bicycles, carrying posters and placards with messages on the importance of polio vaccination and routine immunization.

Art competitions were organized in two schools of Delhi and Haryana, where students made colorful posters highlighting the importance of polio vaccination. This event helped generate awareness among school students on polio and related health issues.

Harnessing the power of social media in connecting with the youth, a Facebook page of Youth for Polio Eradication (Y4PE) was designed and uploaded with the latest polio-related news, pictures, videos and links. This page is connected to various other youth networks, thus helping create a larger on-line youth network in support of polio eradication and associated health issues.

In an effort to reach out to the youth, encouraging them to participate in the polio eradication programme, a short Video-News-Reel was recorded with the



Story-telling session - an NSS volunteer from Delhi University engaging with children on polio prevention.



Tapping the power of social media - a snapshot of the Facebook page of Youth for Polio Eradication. To access, go to <http://www.facebook.com/youth.for.polio.eradication>.

famous Bollywood fusion band, 'Indian Ocean' in the month of November. It is being shared with various universities and NSS Units for wider use during youth festivals, events and debates. This Youth-Icon VNR is also being up-loaded on the Y4PE facebook page, fostering a new dimension of online interaction with the youth (<http://www.facebook.com/youth.for.polio.eradication>).

For more information contact: ldesomer@unicef.org