



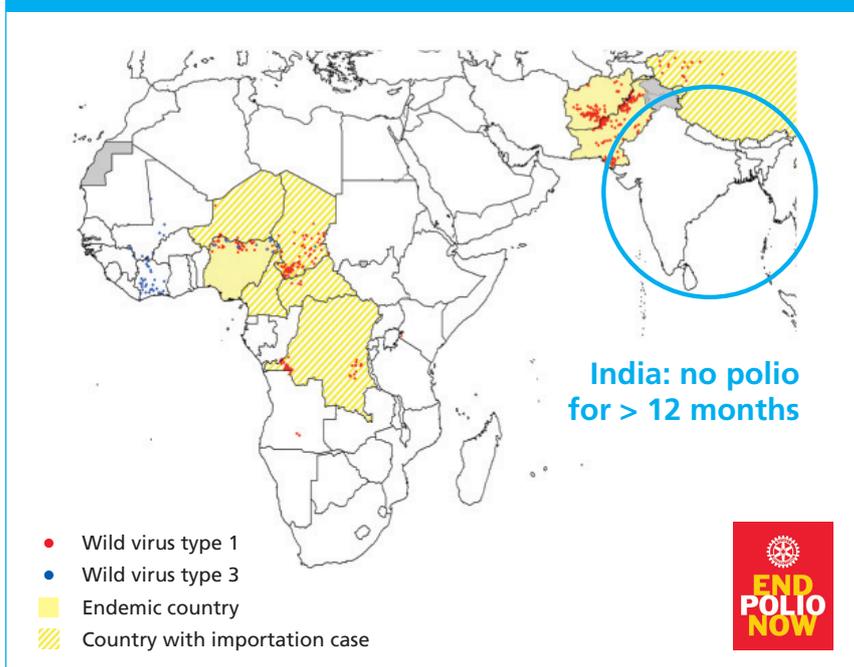
## India no longer polio endemic

On 25 February, 2012, India was struck off the list of polio-endemic countries by the World Health Organization, having completed more than one year without reporting any cases of wild poliovirus. India has not reported any case of polio since 13 January 2011.

A letter written by WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan was delivered to the government on the opening day of the Polio Summit 2012 in Delhi, confirming the news. "I am pleased to inform you that given this impressive achievement, the World Health Organization (WHO) will remove India from the list of countries with active endemic wild poliovirus transmission," Dr Chan said in the letter.

Now only three countries remain polio endemic - Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. The progress in India is a major boost to the global polio eradication initiative and highlights that the eradication strategies are effective when fully implemented with unwavering commitment. The two-day Polio Summit was organised by Rotary International in conjunction with the Government of India.

Polio cases: March 2011 - March 2012



## Prime Minister lauds your efforts

None other than the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, acknowledged your efforts in polio eradication at the Polio Summit in Delhi in February. After the announcement that India is no longer polio endemic, the Prime Minister said: "The real credit goes to the millions of volunteers ... I commend each one of them for their dedication, commitment and selfless service." The efforts of the polio frontline workers were appreciated by all speakers at the Polio Summit.

Health Minister Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "let us today re-dedicate ourselves and resolve that we will continue our efforts with the same vigour, so that India can be declared polio-free by 2014."



PM Singh commended the dedication and commitment of the volunteers in the field.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

- ◆ Though India has not reported any case of polio for over a year and has been removed from WHO's list of polio-endemic countries, India would be certified polio free only in 2014 if the country does not report any more cases of polio caused by indigenous poliovirus.
- ◆ India needs to continue efforts to ensure all children are protected against polio in the polio rounds and routine immunization, until polio is eradicated globally.

## Destination Delhi for CMCs

It was a dream come true for the 29 members of Bihar's SMNet, including 9 CMCs, who got an opportunity to participate in the Polio Summit inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, and attended by top officials of the Government of India, State governments and national and international representatives of partner organizations.

A jubilant Khushboo Kumari, a CMC from Saharsa, said, "This was a life time experience for us. We interacted with the top



Enthusiastic field level workers at the rotary Summit in Delhi.

leaders of the country and representatives of partner organizations. I feel proud to be associated with the polio programme."

## STAR MOBILIZER



Mamta counsels a mother on polio and routine immunization.

Mamta is a CMC from the polio high-risk area of Dharnidharpur in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. She joined the SMNet in 2004 and was appointed here when a type 1 polio case was reported in 2006. She was faced with two immediate challenges - to improve booth attendance and reach out to the 72 nomadic families originally from Birbhum in West Bengal who did not understand Hindi at all.

Not to be discouraged, Mamta identified male members from these nomadic families who understood Hindi and oriented them on the importance of polio and routine immunization. They in turn convinced pregnant women and mothers to attend meetings organized by Mamta, where she used a flip book to convey messages on health, hygiene and nutrition. She also identified key informers to track these nomadic families. As a result of her persistent efforts, and based on recommendations by the SMNet, the health department has initiated a special routine immunization plan for children of these families. Today, there are no resistant families and 85% of the children are fully immunized.

## QUOTABLE

"WHO 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. Let us today re-dedicate ourselves and resolve that we will continue our efforts with the same vigour, so that India can be declared (certified) polio-free by 2014."

Ghulam Nabi Azad  
Health Minister, India

## Polio survivor rallies with NCC

Upendra Yadav, 20-year-old polio survivor, led a rally by over 50 National Cadet Corps in 12 high-risk areas for polio in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. Carrying banners and shouting slogans, the cadets reminded parents that polio is still a threat. All children up to the age of 5 years should continue to be protected with OPV in the coming polio round and all ensuing rounds till the crippling virus is eradicated. The cadets interacted with parents and caregivers all along the route. The efforts of these young soldiers was commended by the community and the district administration.



The cadets carry banners and posters in support of polio immunization.

## Cementing the fight against polio in Dadri

Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) joined hands with the SMNet to boost polio eradication efforts and routine immunization in the high priority Dadri block of G.B Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. The ACF gave 100 vaccine carriers to the Community Health Centre (CHC) to improve routine immunization. They also helped organize polio rallies at the block level which led to an improvement of booth coverage.



School children wave flags and shout slogans in support of polio immunization.

## POLIO FACTS

- ◆ China has not reported any polio case this year. It had a total of 21 WPV1 cases in 2011 - the result of an importation from Pakistan. India must continue to immunize its children against polio to guard against an importation.
- ◆ The Routine Immunization schedule in India includes seven vaccine preventable diseases to protect children against Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Tetanus and Hepatitis B & 2 doses of Tetanus Toxoid for pregnant women.