



No.21 – April 26, 2024

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24-30 April: World Immunization Week

The GPEI (Global Polio Eradication Initiative) estimates that polio vaccines have saved approximately 20 million children from paralysis globally.

When Rotary initiated the GPEI in 1988, polio paralyzed over 1,000 people worldwide daily, mostly young children.

Since then, Rotary and its partners have reduced polio cases by 99%.

In 2021, there were only six cases caused by the wild poliovirus, with Afghanistan and Pakistan being the remaining endemic countries.

This progress is thanks to the efforts of countless volunteers and health workers who immunize children in hard-to-reach communities and establish real-time global surveillance and outbreak response mechanisms.

The polio eradication infrastructure has also been repurposed to combat other infectious diseases and support COVID-19 prevention and vaccination efforts.

Leveraging decades of experience, Rotary has emphasized the power and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines.

Rotary members have actively disseminated lifesaving information, countered misinformation, and advocated for equitable vaccine access since the pandemic began in 2020.

