

»» Project Information

Implemented by:



Health – Nigeria

Ultimately eradicating polio

Until 2015 Nigeria was one of three countries where polio remained endemic. KfW has helped to temporarily interrupt the transmission of the polio virus in Nigeria. However, the eradication of polio in Nigeria has not yet been achieved as it is shown by two new polio cases registered in August 2016. It is more important than ever that the Nigerian vaccination programme will be consequently executed until at least 2018. KfW will continue to provide assistance in the fight against polio in Nigeria.

al community as this would be a major step towards eradicating this disease. As of today, polio is still considered endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In order to win the fight against polio WHO, UNICEF and national partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), thereby implementing the resolution to eradicate polio worldwide adopted at the 41st World Health Assembly in 1988. KfW's commitment in Northern Nigeria contributes to the vaccination of about 25 to 30 million children annually. This will remain crucial until at least 2018. The past country-wide vaccination campaigns have been implemented by up to 370,000 mostly local health aid workers.

Together with other donors such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation or the World Bank, on behalf of the

Context

In Nigeria the number of those infected with polio has declined in the past decade. The fact that the transmission of the polio virus has been interrupted between July 2014 and July 2016 is a great success of the Nigerian Government as well as the international donor community. In August 2016 however, two new polio cases were registered, exemplifying that the aim to eradicate polio in Nigeria is still far away. The risk of paralysis caused by the polio virus especially for children under the age of 5 continues to exist. Therefore, the need for these children to be vaccinated remains unchanged. The Nigerian government itself has taken on responsibility for vaccination in most parts of the country. Particular support is provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the north-east of the country, the region most affected by the disease. The region is also where terror groups, in particular "Boko Haram", have been spreading fear for several years. Those administering the vaccine have come under threat as well and have been subject of a number of deadly attacks.

Conquering polio in Nigeria is a goal for the entire glob-

Project name	Programme for Combating Polio
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Country/region	Nigeria
Lead executing agency	National Primary Health Care Development Agency





A bad security situation in Northern Nigeria limits access to children in need of vaccination against polio. Source: UNICEF/ Geoffrey Njoku

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), KfW is providing EUR 10 million for the 2016 vaccination programme. In addition to this, a further EUR 10 million are projected for 2017. Since 2002 KfW has granted a total of approx. EUR 100 million in funds from the German federal budget to the vaccination programme.

Project approach

The National Primary Health Care Development Agency, the WHO and UNICEF have developed a joint strategy for eradicating polio in Nigeria. At least until 2018, the strategy stipulates country-wide routine immunization campaigns as well as special immunization campaigns particularly in the eight Northern high-risk federal states. The focus is on 72 administrative districts where the vaccination coverage rates are too low up to now. However, it is precisely these areas that are suffering from insecurity mainly caused by attacks of the fundamentalist Muslim group Boko Haram.

That is why KfW is focusing its support on special immunization campaigns, which reach households in the poorly accessible areas at risk. In accordance with a "hit and run" strategy, the vaccination campaigns will be conducted on one or two days. Local medical teams are formed, comprising beside the medical staff a traditional opinion leader and other helpers in order to increase the acceptance for the immunization activities. The teams visit the families, supply them with medication and give general advice on staying healthy. Thus the vaccination against polio is only a part of the health care provided.

Local authorities and security personnel analyse the

security situation on a daily basis and decide on the right time for the vaccination campaigns on short notice. It is therefore important for local, regional and national leaders from politics, religion and business to be involved in the campaign.

Great store is set by avoiding discrimination and not favouring specific groups within the population. As the vaccinations are free of charge, poorer families are also reached. If access to certain areas is not possible a "vaccination protection belt" is created. At that moment vaccinations are increasingly administered on the fringe areas of inaccessible regions, for example at bus stations, markets and border crossings. The aim is to prevent the virus from spreading to the rest of the country.

Impact

The eradication of polio in Nigeria would be a milestone. It is the precondition for putting an end to polio worldwide over the next two to four years. As a result of this, the healthcare systems of all countries could save about USD 1 billion per year since there would no longer be any need for routine polio vaccinations and the treatment of those affected by the disease. Caring for the sick and disabled is a particular burden on poorer households. Combating polio thus improves the living conditions especially of poorer households, whose development prospects are in the focus of the Nigerian government elected in 2015.

Because children suffering from polio are generally cared for by their mothers, the eradication of the disease chiefly benefits women. The polio programme also has a positive impact on basic health care in disadvantaged areas, since vaccination against polio often goes hand in hand with the provision of other healthcare services.



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