



Polio eradication project of the NGF

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, announced an 'Immunization Leadership Challenge' in September 2011 to stimulate the increased awareness and involvement of State Governors in polio eradication efforts. The overall objective of this Challenge is to fast track achievement of the global milestone of interrupting further transmission of the wild polio virus in Nigeria. The programme will recognise those Executive Governors whose states pass a pre-defined threshold to improve routine immunisation coverage and end polio. The states that meet the threshold criteria will be awarded a US\$500,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support their top health priorities.

First steps

In 2009 the NGF joined other stakeholders in efforts to eradicate polio – both in Nigeria and worldwide. The 'Abuja Commitment', signed by all 36 State Governors during the first visit to Nigeria of Mr Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has further committed the NGF to the fight against polio. The decline in the number of children paralysed as a result of polio in 2010 clearly demonstrates that an increased commitment by State Governors can make control of the polio virus possible.

“Nigeria's governors want to stop polio and improve routine immunisation to protect Nigeria's children against preventable diseases.”

Rt Hon Rotimi Amaechi, Chairman, NGF

Progress so far

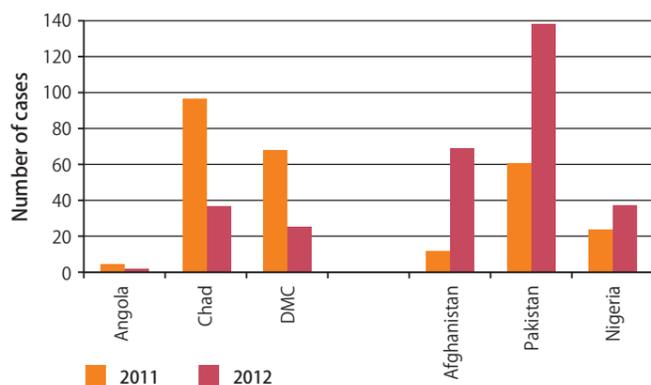
The NGF Secretariat has taken the following steps to ensure the commitment of State Governors to the eradication of polio:

- All 36 State Governors and the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory have personally signed up their states to the Immunization Leadership Challenge;
- In total, 75% of the Governors' quarterly Polio Awareness Days have been successfully implemented, with only 25% outstanding;
- Commissioners of health from the 19 Northern states have been briefed on the Challenge and are on side;
- Technical outreach, in the form of immunisation technical teams, has been provided to 8 states (Kaduna, Katsina, Kano, Zamfara, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe, and FCT) to brief them on the Challenge;

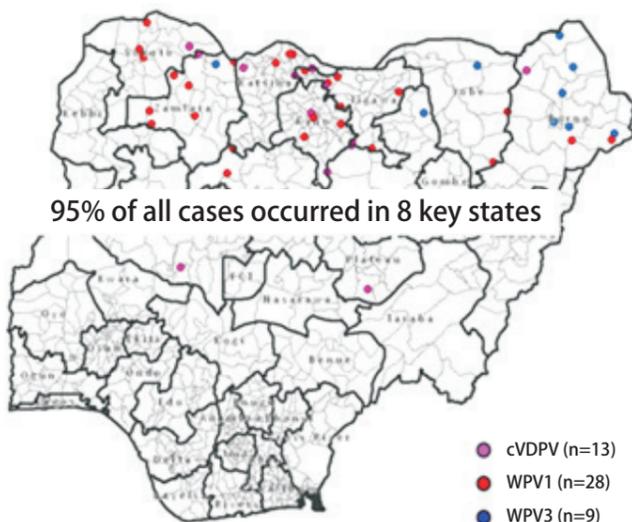
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Number of cases of polio in the world 2011/2012. In 2012, polio is endemic in only 3 countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria
DMC Democratic Republic of the Congo, Source: World Health Organization



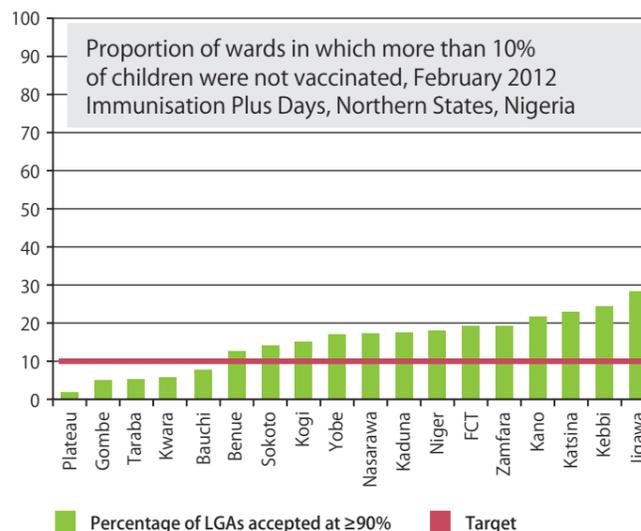
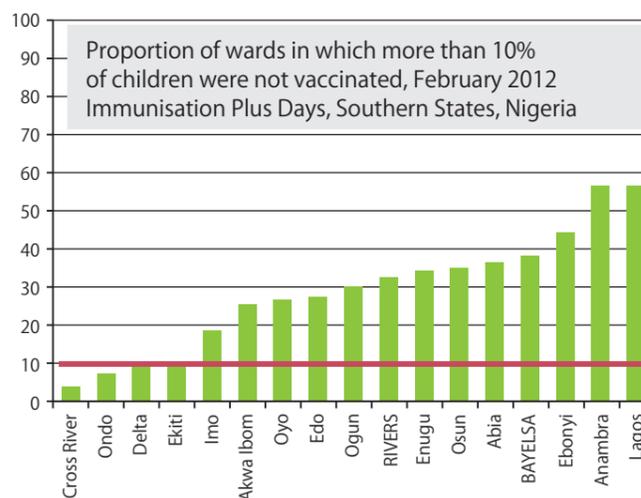
80% of all cases occurred in 5 states: Kano, Jigawa, Borno, Zamfara, Sokoto

Cases of polio in Nigerian States during October 2011 to March 2012
Source: World Health Organization

- An advocacy newsletter has been introduced which will help showcase and heighten the commitment of the State Governors;
- The Presidential Task Force on polio eradication, with the Director General of the NGF as a member, was inaugurated by the President, Dr Goodluck Jonathan;
- A National Polio Emergency Plan has been developed with an accountability framework component to ensure effective implementation of the plan to achieve the milestone of interrupting the spread of polio in Nigeria by the end of 2012.

Remaining challenges

There has been continued transmission of the wild polio virus in Nigeria during early 2012, with 14 children becoming paralysed following infection with the virus. This is a result of the continued immunity gap caused by low routine immunisation coverage and poor quality polio campaigns.



Outcome of 1st national polio campaign conducted in Nigeria in February 2012

LGA Local Government Area, Source: World Health Organization

Collaboration

There is a need to strengthen collaborative efforts between the NGF and the other technical polio partners. The Immunization Leadership Challenge Secretariat in the NGF Secretariat will continue to provide technical support to states, with the objective of interrupting the spread of polio in Nigeria by the end of 2012.

Contact for further information

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Design and layout by
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