

Saudi Arabia pledges \$500 M to protect children from polio

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New commitment will help vaccinate 370 million children against polio every year over five years



At the first-ever World Economic Forum (WEF) Special Meeting hosted in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has pledged \$500 million over the next five years to support the work of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

This announcement marks a significant increase in funding for the global effort to eradicate polio, a devastating virus that paralyzes and can be fatal for children but is preventable with vaccines.

The funds announced will enable GPEI partners – the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, Rotary International, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the World Health Organization (WHO) – spearheaded by national governments, to protect more than 370 million children with polio vaccines every year.

It will also facilitate the delivery of other life-saving interventions like nutritional supplements and bed nets to underserved communities and strengthen health systems to better prepare countries for emerging health threats.

The commitment was made as part of a broader more than \$620 million partnership by Saudi Arabia and BMGF to support polio eradication and contribute to other global health initiatives, including the Lives and Livelihoods Fund.