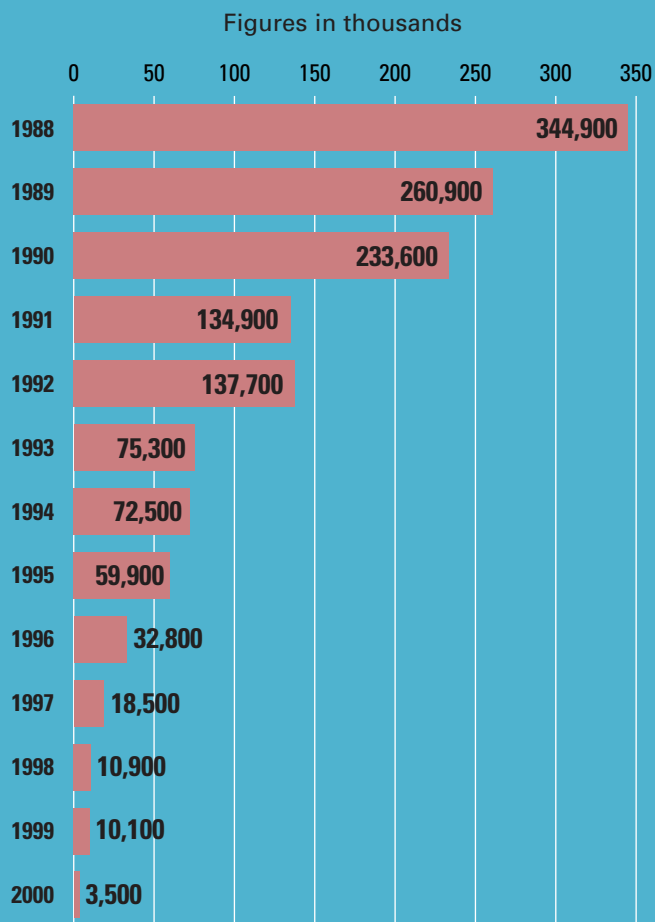


Polio cases drop by 99 per cent from 1988 to 2000

Estimated number of polio cases



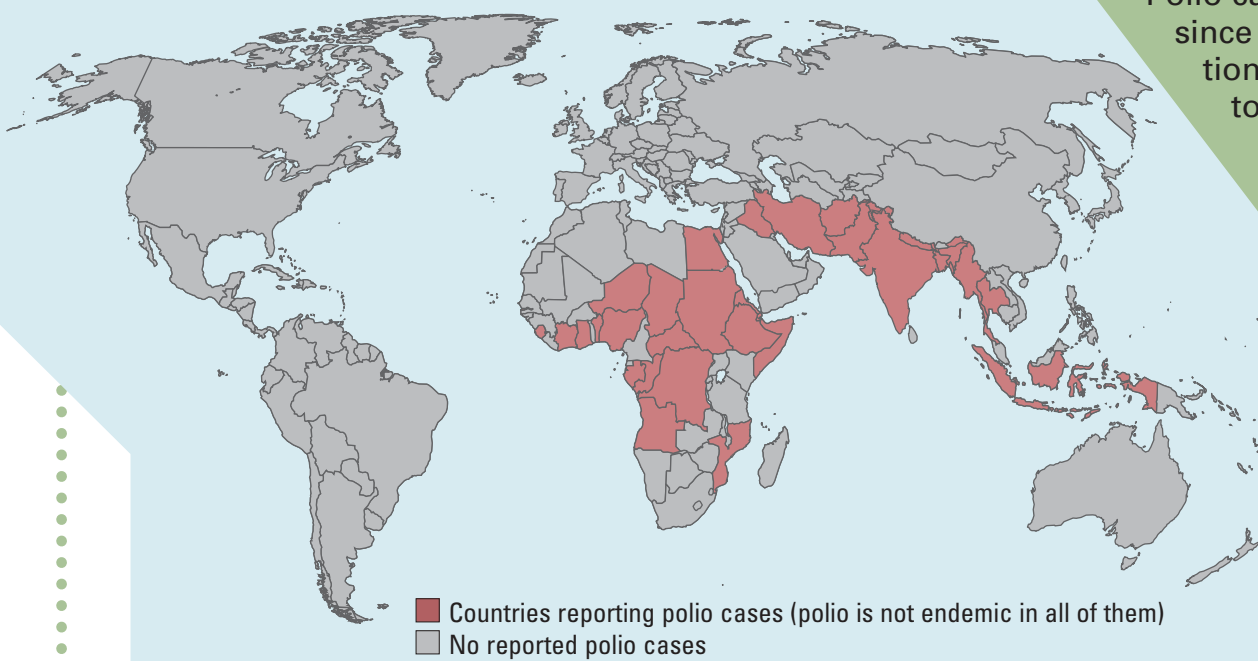
Goal

Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000

Polio Eradication



Narrowing in on polio, 2000



Result

Polio cases have declined by 99 per cent since the launch of the polio eradication initiative in 1988, from 350,000 to less than 3,500 in 2000. Large areas of the world, including North and South America, Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, South-East Asia, China, and northern and southern Africa are polio-free. Polio immunization remains high, with more than 550 million children immunized in 2000 alone through National Immunization Days. Polio surveillance has improved significantly.

... but

Polio is still endemic in 20 countries, most of them extremely poor, heavily populated and/or devastated by civil war, making it difficult to reach and immunize children.

Surveillance improves in 10 high-priority countries, 1999 and 2000

Region	Country	Number of reported polio cases		Non-polio AFP* detected (per 100,000 under 15) Target: at least 1 case
		1999	2000	2000
South Asia	India	2,817	265	2.0
	Pakistan	558	199	1.5
	Bangladesh	393	198	1.9
	Afghanistan	150	120	1.1
Africa	Nigeria	981	637	0.7
	Congo, Dem. Rep.	45	513	2.3
	Ethiopia	131	144	0.7
	Angola	1,103	119	1.6
	Somalia	19	96	2.2
	Sudan	60	79	1.4

*Non-polio acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) detection is a sensitive indicator of the precision of a polio surveillance system. Given the normal frequency of non-polio AFP in a population, an effective surveillance system should diagnose at least one case per 100,000 population under the age of 15. The increase in reported polio cases in some countries is mainly attributable to the increased quality of the surveillance system and does not reflect an increase in the number of polio cases.

Issue

Polio is a highly infectious disease that has paralysed millions of children. The polio virus spreads silently and rapidly – only the first case of paralysis triggers awareness of an outbreak. Polio cannot be cured but it can be prevented by immunization.

Eradication of polio involves both halting the incidence (the number of new cases) of the disease and the worldwide eradication of poliovirus, the virus that causes it. The world will be certified polio-free after at least three years of no new cases reported due to indigenous wild poliovirus.