

# NOW, MORE THAN EVER: STOP POLIO FOREVER.



Partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative

## Global Polio Eradication Initiative

### Sudan – Polio Outbreak

- Sudan is experiencing a large outbreak of polio with a significant risk of international spread.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has notified its Member States of this risk through the International Health Regulations (2005).

#### Situation Overview (7 April 2009)

- Since June 2008, Sudan has been experiencing a large poliomyelitis outbreak with a total of 51 WPV1 cases reported from the country as of 7 April.
- Southern Sudan reported 24 cases in 2008 and 21 cases in 2009 (7 April).
- Of the four cases reported from Northern Sudan in 2009, three were from Port Sudan. It is from this area, between 2004 and 2006, that poliovirus spread to cause large international outbreaks.
- In northern Sudan, two large-scale supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) have been held since January, the most recent on 23 March targeting 6.6 million children under five years of age. Further rounds are planned for April and May.

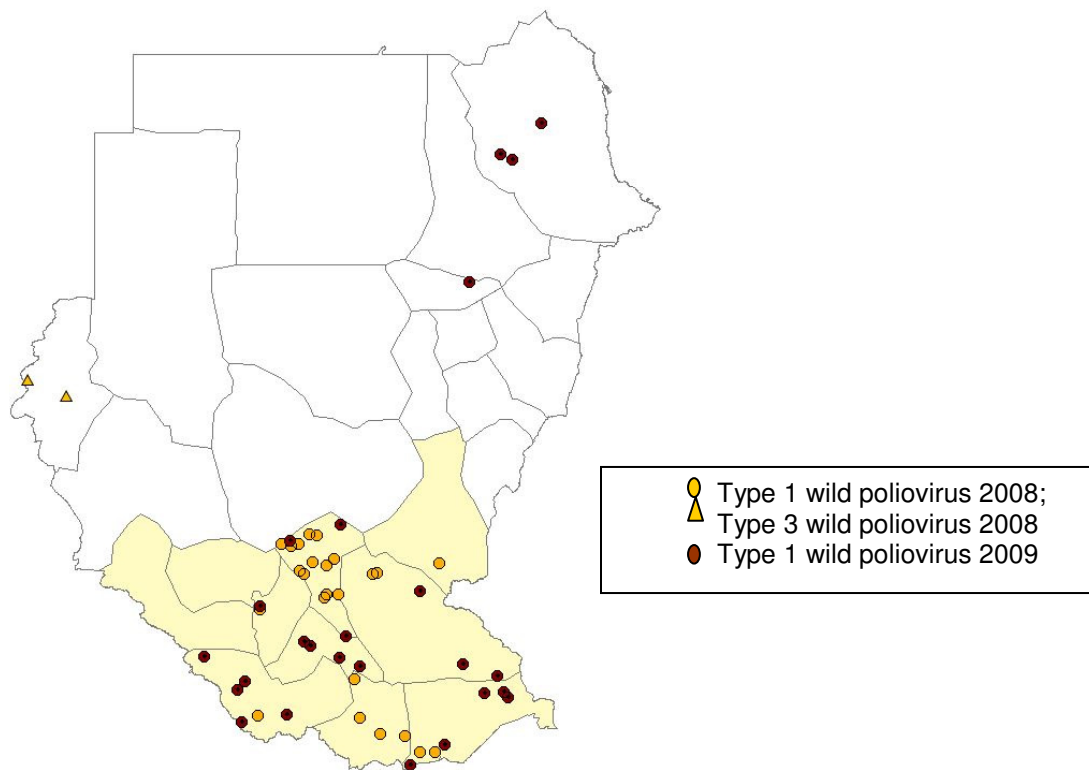
#### KEY FACTS

- Sudan is experiencing an outbreak of wild poliovirus, which has now spread into Kenya (first case since 2006) and Uganda (first case since 1996)
  - Infected provinces in northern Sudan: Khartoum, Red Sea
  - Infected provinces in southern Sudan: Central-, Western- and Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Warab, Unity, Upper Nile
  - Poliovirus reported in Port Sudan (Red Sea) constitutes a very significant threat of further spread, as in 2004 when Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Indonesia were infected
  - Rapid response with high-quality immunization campaigns (following the World Health Assembly resolution 59.1 of 2006) can stop this outbreak.
- In southern Sudan, three SIAs have been held in 2009, the most recent on 23 March targeting 2.8 million children and involving 13, 252 vaccinators. Further rounds are planned for 27-29 April and 25-27 May.
  - As of 7 April, 4 cases related to the outbreak in southern Sudan have already been reported in Kenya and 6 in Uganda.
  - Sudan has previously stopped polio transmission in the entire country and has also halted an outbreak from poliovirus importation in 2004-2005. Experience shows that where polio transmission has been stopped before, it can be stopped again.

## Southern Sudan

- An outbreak of wild poliovirus type 1 which commenced in June 2008 has now spread to the whole of southern Sudan. In the past 12 months, 45 cases have been reported in this outbreak, of which 21 have occurred since January 2009. Three cases in the north in 2009 are genetically related to the virus causing the southern outbreak, and genetic sequencing is awaited on a fourth.
- There is a high risk of international spread from the Sudan outbreak, and the World Health Organization has notified its Member States of this risk through the International Health Regulations. Immunization response in 2008 has included 5 national (NID) and 2 sub-national (SNID) supplementary immunization rounds, while in 2009, three NIDs have been already conducted: 13-15 January (using monovalent OPV1), 15-17 February (monovalent OPV1) and on 23-25 March (trivalent OPV), targeting 2.8 million children under the age of five years. Additional rounds will be carried out on 27-29 April and in May in order to prevent further spread of the outbreak. The April activity is especially important since it will focus on reaching children before the onset of the rains.
- A surveillance review in February 2009 showed great improvements since 2005, and concluded that while half of the states are unlikely to miss wild virus circulation, the other half of the states face challenges which include limited access during the wet season and a shortage of skilled staff.

## Polio cases in Sudan (as of 7 April 2009)



- In spite of the supplementary immunization campaigns, eight of the ten states of Southern Sudan are affected by this outbreak. The solutions to stopping this outbreak are urgent and

systematic improvements in campaign quality (in terms of operations, training of personnel, planning and supervision) and in capacity for service delivery (trucks, boats, protective rain gear), for which additional external resources will be needed.

## **Northern Sudan**

- Northern Sudan has been re-infected with wild poliovirus type 1 since February 2009. Of the four cases reported from Northern Sudan to date, three are from Port Sudan and one from Khartoum. Genetic sequencing of three of the Port Sudan cases shows they are related to southern Sudanese cases. In 2005 poliovirus spread from Port Sudan to Saudi Arabia and Yemen, triggering a large epidemic that reached as far as Indonesia.
- The Sudanese government has been able to conduct three national rounds of SIAs in 2008, including the Darfur regions. Each round reached on average 8.9m children under 5 years of age. In 2009, northern Sudan has responded rapidly with two large-scale supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) the most recent on 23 March targeting 6.6 million children under five years of age. Further synchronized SIAs will be conducted in northern and southern Sudan in April and May. Overall surveillance quality in northern Sudan remains at very high levels.