



MEDIA ALERT

<p>WHAT</p>	<p>Polio mass immunization campaigns across Horn of Africa: 3-7 November 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than 55,000 volunteers and health workers will deliver oral polio vaccine (OPV) house-to-house to nearly 4 million children under the age of five years ▪ This is the fourth in a series of synchronized, multi-country polio campaigns in the Horn of Africa. The next activity following this November campaign will be held on 1-4 December 2006, with further campaigns planned for 2007.
<p>WHEN & WHERE</p>	<p>3-7 November 2006, in the following areas of the Horn of Africa:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethiopia (Somali region, and bordering districts in Oromia region): 3-5 November ▪ Somalia (nationwide): 5-7 November ▪ Kenya (North Eastern Province): 3-6 November
<p>WHY</p>	<p>To make the Horn of Africa polio-free again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A polio outbreak in the Horn of Africa has paralysed 256 children in three countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia) since December 2004, due to the international spread of poliovirus originating in northern Nigeria. ▪ Emergency outbreak control measures have significantly curbed the outbreak (with only 7 cases reported in the region in the past 4 months), but these measures must continue until no further cases are reported. ▪ The confirmation that a child was paralysed by polio in Kenya on 17 September 2006 highlights the urgency in stopping this international health threat, and is a stark reminder that the poliovirus travels long distances to find susceptible children anywhere. ▪ The Horn of Africa had been polio-free since October 2002, but became re-infected with virus of Nigerian origin in December 2004 (Ethiopia), July 2005 (Somalia) and September 2006 (Kenya).
<p>WHO</p>	<p>The polio immunization campaigns are conducted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Governments of Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti; ▪ supported by the spearheading partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative: the World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and UNICEF; and ▪ is supported by generous funding from Rotary International, Canada, CDC, DFID, France, Japan, Saudi Arabia, USAID and others.

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