

Increased Community Trust in Bauchi State Leads to Reduction in Polio Cases

In 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) listed Nigeria as one of the three remaining countries in the world with cases of poliomyelitis. Children under five years of age are most vulnerable to this highly contagious viral infection, which paralyzes limbs and can cause death. The persistence of polio in Nigeria is a global threat, particularly in the reintroduction of the virus to previously polio-free areas of Nigeria and other countries.

Most of the cases of polio in Nigeria are concentrated in a handful of states in northern Nigeria, including Bauchi, where USAID/TSHIP began work in January 2010. In these areas, far too many vulnerable children were not vaccinated during campaigns because they lived in areas that were hard-to-reach, were engulfed in conflict, or had collectively rejected the vaccines.

To overcome these barriers, USAID/TSHIP employed a community-centered strategy designed to reach every child and gain local trust and ownership. The project supported State Ministry of Health (MOH) and local government area (LGA) officials, who enlisted community

heads from every ward in Bauchi State to personally educate households on the benefits of child immunization. Highly regarded traditional leaders, including the Emir of Dass, were involved in door-to-door campaigns. USAID/TSHIP supported the MOH and LGA officials who conducted between 8-10 immunization plus days (IPDs), which emphasized house-to-house delivery of routine immunization to all children regardless of their previous vaccination status, every year.

From its first year, USAID/TSHIP trained and engaged teams comprised of polio eradication officers, polio monitors at local government and ward levels, community health workers, and traditional birth attendants who were deployed to high-risk areas. The project facilitates surveillance through these teams, which identify and report any suspected case of polio. The project has also enlisted partners to monitor cross-border transmission of polio from neighboring states.

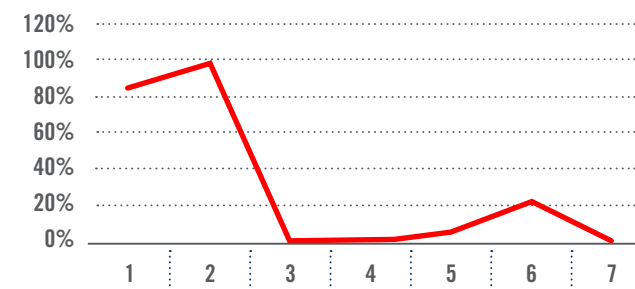
In 2008 and 2009, 85 and 95 percent, respectively, of all new cases of polio reported in

Bauchi and the six states contiguous came from Bauchi State. At the end of 2010, the year that USAID/TSHIP support began, there were no cases of polio in Bauchi State. By the end of 2014, there were no reported cases of polio reported in Bauchi, while Kano, Jigawa, and Yobe States reported a total of 18 news cases.

Despite an influx of internally displaced people from other states, the governor and high-level officials remain stringent in the effort to keep polio out of Bauchi State. USAID/TSHIP and partners helped the state intensify surveillance and maintain community sensitization. Bauchi recently introduced a new polio vaccine, and 'mop-up' exercises to reach children who were missed in previous campaigns and migrants from neighboring states are conducted regularly. As of February 2015, Bauchi State had no reported cases of polio for 20 continuous months.

NO NEW CASES FOR **20** CONSECUTIVE MONTHS

BAUCHI STATE NEW CASES OF POLIOMYELITIS AS A % SHARE OF CASES IN BAUCHI & 6 BOUNDARY STATES, 2008-2014



NUMBER OF CASES OF POLIOMYELITIS REPORTED IN BAUCHI & 7 STATES THAT SHARE BOUNDARIES WITH BAUCHI STATE, 2008-2014

