

Infectious Diseases: Polio

Commitment

“We are pleased that the financing gap for 2004 has now been closed through our efforts and those of others. We are determined to close the 2005 financing gap by the 2005 G8 Summit through the contributions of the G8 and other public and private donors.”

G8 Commitment to Help Stop Polio Forever

Background

In 1988, the World Health Organization created the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, an international public health effort to eliminate polio forever.¹⁰²⁸ By the end of 2003, polio had been eradicated in all but six countries — Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Niger, Afghanistan and Egypt.¹⁰²⁹ Together with UNICEF and Rotary International, the G8 member states, the Netherlands and the European Commission are the leading contributors towards the fund.¹⁰³⁰ At the Sea Island Summit, 2004, the G8 released the G8 Commitment to Help Stop Polio Forever in which the G8 member countries committed to closing the 2004-2005 funding gap in the GPEI budget. As of April, 2005, \$50 million US was still required by July in order to fund activities beginning in October.¹⁰³¹ Although the goal is to end polio transmission by 2005, the gap for 2006 is estimated to be \$200 million US, as polio operations must continue for at least one year after the last virus is detected.¹⁰³² Despite the positive progress achieved thus far, in April 2005, polio was imported into Indonesia and Yemen, two countries previously thought to have eliminated the disease within their borders. Both of these strains of the diseases were traced back to Nigeria where immunization campaigns have been stalled for over a year after northern Muslim provinces blocked WHO efforts. As such, the World Health Assembly reaffirmed their commitment to eradicate polio in May 2005, noting that these outbreaks assert the necessity of achieving the final steps in eliminating the disease forever. In light of this, member states have been called upon to sustain their financial support in closing the 2005 \$50 million US funding gap, as well as the \$200 million US for 2006. Without this crucial financial support, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative will not be able to implement its 2004-2008 plan, which includes certifying the elimination of the disease, developing products for the international termination of the oral polio vaccine and using the infrastructure and information to assist in other health initiatives.¹⁰³³

Assessment

Country	Non-Compliance -1	Work in Progress 0	Full Compliance +1
Canada			+1
France	-1		
Germany			+1
Italy	-1		
Japan		0	+1
Russia			+1
United Kingdom			+1
United States			+1
European Union			+1
Overall: 0.44			

Individual Country Compliance Breakdown

1. Canada: + 1

Canada has registered full compliance with its Sea Island commitment regarding closing the 2004-2005 funding gap for the GPEI. On 17 January 2005, Minister of Finance Ralph Goodale and Minister of International Cooperation Aileen Carroll announced C\$42 million in funding to support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The additional pledge was made in direct relation to the Sea Island commitment with Goodale stating that “Canada is stepping in to fund the immediate shortfall faced by the GPEI, providing \$42 million to help finally eradicate this crippling disease.” Since January 2005, Canada has pledged an additional \$680 000 USD, contributing to the diminution of the 2005 funding gap from \$75 million USD to \$50 million USD.¹⁰³⁴ In the fight against polio, Canada’s contribution stands at USD\$68.98 million for 2004-2005.¹⁰³⁵

2. France: -1

France has registered a minimal level of compliance regarding the Sea Island Summit to close the funding gap in the GPEI’s 2005 budget. France has been listed as a core donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, along with 23 other government donors¹⁰³⁶, however, it has been one of the lowest core contributors to the GPEI since it was founded — ranked as a tier 5 donor (US\$5-49 million in donations since 1988), the lowest G8 donor after Italy and Russia.¹⁰³⁷ As of April, 2005, France had not contributed any funds towards closing the Global Polio Eradication Initiative FY2005 budget shortfall.¹⁰³⁸ Despite France’s lack of commitment since the Sea Island Summit, France has donated \$23.7 million USD in core funding for the GPEI 2004-2005, and is projected to pledge an additional \$12.8 million USD for the 2006 fiscal year — the latter of which is the second-highest of any country projection and makes France only one of four countries expected to provide core funding to the GPEI so far in 2006.¹⁰³⁹ Nevertheless, these funding pledges do not conform to the intent of the Sea Island commitment.

3. Germany: + 1

Germany has demonstrated a high level of compliance towards the polio commitment agreed to at the Sea Island Summit. Since January, 2005, Germany has pledged \$12 million USD towards

the 2005 funding gap — a largest contribution of the total US\$26-million in pledges received by the GPEI since January to close the then-\$75 million USD funding gap.¹⁰⁴⁰ Germany's total contribution from 1988-2006 ranks on the third tier of donors, calculated to be between US\$100-249 million, along with Canada, the European Commission and the Netherlands.¹⁰⁴¹ However, prior to its pledge in January 2005, Germany had failed to provide any funding towards closing the GPEI 2005 gap. Considering that Berlin's economy is five times the size of Canada's, Germany's contribution towards the polio eradication commitment cannot be described as exceptional.¹⁰⁴² However, Germany receives a score of +1, as it has made a significant financial contribution in 2005 towards the GPEI funding gap.

4. Italy: -1

Italy has not fulfilled its commitment towards polio eradication asserted at the Sea Island Summit. Although Italy was included in a long list of core donors that have contributed money to the annual budget of the Global Eradication Fund in 2004, it has not provided financial support since the Summit. To date, there is no indication that Italy promised further funds in 2005 despite the WHO's April 7th call for money to close the US\$6.3 Million funding gap in response to the outbreak in Sudan¹⁰⁴³ and GPEI's larger January call to close its then-US\$75-million funding gap for 2005. Italy, however, is projected to pledge US\$5.5-million in core funding for the GPEI in 2006 — making it only one in four countries projected to do so in that year and ranking it as the third most generous national donor in 2006.¹⁰⁴⁴ Nevertheless, these pledges do not count towards closing the 2005 budget shortfall of the GPEI as committed by the G8 at Sea Island and as such, Italy receives a score of -1, indicating non-compliance.

5. Japan: 0

Japan has demonstrated an intermediate level of compliance regarding the Sea Island Summit commitment towards the eradication of polio. Since January, 2005, Japan has not pledged any additional money towards eliminating US funding gap for 2005, now estimated at \$50 million US.¹⁰⁴⁵ However, in August 2004, Japan donated US\$3.7 million to The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support the campaign against polio in Egypt.¹⁰⁴⁶ While UNICEF and the GPEI are not synonymous, UNICEF is a major sponsor of the GPEI and the Initiative asserts UNICEF as a partner in the global initiative of polio eradication.¹⁰⁴⁷ Japan's total contribution from 1988-2006 is calculated at the second-highest tier, along with the United Kingdom (250-500 million USD), however, it has yet to provide directly to the GPEI funding gap for 2005. As such, Japan receives a score of 0, indicating a work in progress.

6. Russia: +1

Russia has registered a high level of compliance with its Sea Island Summit commitments regarding polio. On July 13, 2004 the Russian Federation announced an additional pledge of US\$4 million to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative to help it close its funding gap. The announcement came from M. Fradakov, the Chairman of the Russian Federation indicating the high degree of importance Russia attaches to the polio initiative. This pledge included an additional US\$3 million for polio eradication in 2005.¹⁰⁴⁸ The Russian Federation, however, has not responded to the GPEI January 2005 appeal to close its then-US\$75-million budget short fall for 2005. Nevertheless, it has provided a significant financial contribution since the Sea Island

Summit and as such, can be commended for complying with the polio commitment.¹⁰⁴⁹ In the fight against polio, Russia's contribution stands now at US\$8 million for 2003-2005.¹⁰⁵⁰

7. United Kingdom: +1

The United Kingdom has registered a high level of compliance towards the Sea Island Summit commitment regarding the eradication of polio. Since January, 2005, the United Kingdom has pledged 11.8 million USD towards eliminating the \$75 million USD funding gap for the 2005 year, now estimated at \$50 million USD.¹⁰⁵¹ On February 25, 2005, the UK's international development minister, Gareth Thomas, announced a \$10 million US contribution to the WHO polio eradication program in Pakistan for 2004-2005.¹⁰⁵² The United Kingdom is also involved with the Polio Eradication Coalition, a group of individual governments who intend on fighting the disease through a plan organized until 2008.¹⁰⁵³ In addition, £2.2 million has been dedicated towards the communication division of the National Polio Eradication Campaign, in adherence with UNICEF's Communication Strategy of 2004/2005.¹⁰⁵⁴ The United Kingdom is considered a tier-2 level donor, a scale which indicates that it had donated between 250-500 million USD from 1988-2006.¹⁰⁵⁵

8. United States: +1

In the 2004-2005 year, the US government remains the largest donor of both the public and private sectors globally to its GPEI commitment. The confirmed value for this period is \$223.3 million USD.¹⁰⁵⁶ The US government contributes funding directly the GPEI as well as through the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and USAID. Since January 2005, USAID has contributed \$200,000 in new pledges for polio eradication.¹⁰⁵⁷ Funding through USAID has included ancillary assistance such as "surveillance, laboratory and operational" and "communication and social mobilization in priority countries," totalling \$29.4 million from late autumn to April 2005.¹⁰⁵⁸ The United States receives a score of +1, indicating full compliance with the Sea Island Summit regarding polio.

9. European Union: +1

The European Union has registered a high level of compliance with its Sea Island commitment regarding polio eradication. After the progress made through their 2004 pledge of €62 million, the European Union (EU) has continued being a leading contributor to the fund. In 2005, The European Commission agreed to fund various African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) with €55 million through the WHO in order to fund the 2005-2006 efforts toward eradication of the disease in 14 ACP countries.¹⁰⁵⁹ This is especially important since polio has recently resurfaced through importation in 16 parts of Africa as well as countries which had previously been declared polio free such as Yemen and Indonesia.¹⁰⁶⁰ The European Commission has also pledged the equivalent of US\$300,738 for the fight against Polio in Mali.¹⁰⁶¹

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