

Interim Progress Report

to

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From the Polio Eradication Team of the CORE Group Partners Project

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In late July of 1999, the Polio Eradication Team (PET) of the CORE Group Partners Project (CGPP) was formed to fulfill the terms of a grant from the USAID Global Bureau, Office of Health and Nutrition, Child Survival Division. The project was awarded \$8 million for the Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI). In the first six months of operation, the PET has become as an active partner in the worldwide polio eradication effort. The CORE Group has received 13 polio project sub-grant proposals from eight countries in Africa and Asia.

The CORE Group Polio Eradication Initiative's mission is to coordinate and mobilize community involvement in OPV immunization campaigns in high-risk areas and the hardest-to-reach populations of polio-endemic countries. The CORE Group is uniquely positioned to serve in this capacity as it represents 35 US-based Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) which manage hundreds of USAID funded Child Survival projects worldwide. The mission of the CORE Group Polio Eradication Team is to facilitate mass oral polio vaccine (OPV) immunization campaigns and to document the participation and contribution of the PVOs toward the global eradication of polio. Efforts are focused on countries where the priority is highest and the need is greatest. PVOs are well positioned to address the challenge of global polio eradication in those high-priority countries, such as those in conflict and those with extremely hard-to-reach communities.

The PET strategy involves four concepts:

- 1) Motivating the PVOs to cooperate within the PVO community and with other health partners in their country, USAID, MOH, UNICEF, Rotary, CDC, and local NGOs by requiring them to collaborate in designing coordinated proposals which demonstrate how they will combine their efforts to create synergies in the fight for polio eradication.
- 2) Establishing a Secretariat in each region/country which serves to coordinate the efforts of the PVOs, facilitating the sharing of technical information and strategies for success, arranging and managing workshops and training sessions, and reporting to the CORE Group on the needs and accomplishments of the PEI projects.
- 3) Maintaining the highest technical caliber of all the PEI activities through application of technical expertise obtained through USAID, CDC, and from noted experts in the relevant health disciplines. This sharing of information allows PEI projects to apply epidemiological findings strategically and to conduct and evaluate their programs with scientific rigor.

- 4) The intervention strategy is based on the successful model used in the Americas: immunize as many susceptible children as possible with three doses of potent oral polio vaccine until a least 90% coverage is achieved. This is accomplished by having the PVOs support National Immunization Days (NIDS), house-to-house search for un-immunized children and additional mopping up activities.

The accomplishments of the CORE PET in just six months have been most noteworthy in creating linkages and collaborative relationships between the myriad health organizations in polio-endemic countries. One particularly encouraging example has taken place in Angola. The Angola National Interagency Coordination Committee has invited the CORE Group to full committee membership. The coming country workshop will focus on identifying process and partners for negotiating six days of national tranquility for the purpose of holding National Immunization Days.

Current achievements could easily be expanded to include PVO collaboration and polio eradication activities in all the WHO designated priority countries if additional funding becomes available before the end of the year 2000.



The CORE group Secretariat will be a full partner in the planning of national immunization activities such as the mobile immunization sites and vaccination teams shown above.