

# WHO: over 85M African kids get polio vaccination

March 5 2010

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(AP) -- The World Health Organization says more than 85 million children under 5 in west and central Africa will be vaccinated against polio.

The agency says the massive vaccination campaign in 19 countries by U.N. agencies and the Red Cross will start March 6. It will involve more than 400,000 volunteers and health workers. It is largely funded by Rotary International.

WHO says a 2008 polio outbreak in Nigeria spread throughout western Africa up to Mauritania. It says previous vaccination programs failed to stop the outbreak.

Polio is spread when unvaccinated people come into contact with the feces of those with the virus, often through water. It usually causes paralysis, muscular atrophy, deformation and sometimes death.

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