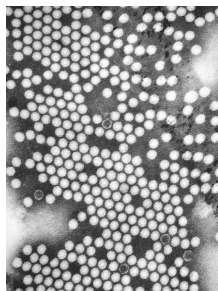


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By: Tudor Vieru, Science Editor



Electron micrograph of the poliovirus, a species of Enterovirus
Wikipedia Commons

[Google Funded a Film About Polio Cases Worldwide](#)

The Google.org branch of the company was involved in the ambitious project

Though polio is a disease that has been thoroughly wiped out in developed countries, it still wrecks havoc in underdeveloped nations, such as India, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In an attempt to raise public awareness on the matter in the West, Google.org partially funded the Vermilion Films company, which in turn followed public health volunteers in the most forgotten corners of the river, up to the Ganges basin and the poorest locations of Nigeria. The documentary, tracking several stories in different countries, is shot entirely in HD format, in an attempt to make it as appealing as possible in the eyes of the public. Its title - *The Final Inch* - refers to the fact that insufficiently-available polio vaccines are often the last resort newborns and small children in poor nations can benefit from, before they are irreversibly affected by the terrible disease. Poliomyelitis attacks the central nervous system, and, in its most severe manifestations, can cause paralysis, by destroying motor neurons. The spinal cord can also suffer from inflammation, as the virus enters the blood stream. And although a vaccine is readily available in the developed world for approximately 50 years, poorer countries still have little to none of it. Google.org argues that such a situation, on a global level, can only be the result of criminal carelessness, on the part of authorities from both the first and the third world. As a result, the 38 minute-long film will be heavily promoted by Google, via its website. Also, Home Box Office will air the documentary in 2009, in an attempt to bring these problems to the wide American public. "When you haven't seen a disease for quite a while, which is the case in the industrialized countries, you forget about the terrible disease that it really is," said World Health Organization representative, David Heymann, on Google's official [blog](#).