

Mankind cannot claim many truly sensational success stories.

This is one.



SMALLPOX and its Eradication

An unprecedented history of medicine, of world collaboration, and of human triumph, unfolded now, for the first time, in all its magnificent detail.

by F. Fenner, D.A. Henderson, I. Arfa, Z. Jezek and I.D. Ladnyi



A World Health Organization Publication

A history of world collaboration

“The execution of this global programme was inevitably complicated by a host of natural and political problems, ranging from floods, drought, famine and war to such human failings as incompetence, dishonesty and personal antagonisms.”

The eradication of smallpox marked one of the few times in history when every country of the world united in a common cause. The 14 chapters devoted to the eradication campaign provide fascinating portraits of national politics and personalities — from the quiet collaboration of the superpowers to the difficult maneuvers necessary to conduct field operations in nations at war.

In text and colour photos, the book also illustrates a world terrain of conflict and cooperation in places ranging from sophisticated laboratories in big cities to remote villages and hamlets in the pampas and forests of South America, the islands of Indonesia, the mountains and jungles of Asia, and the deserts and tropical rain forests of Africa.

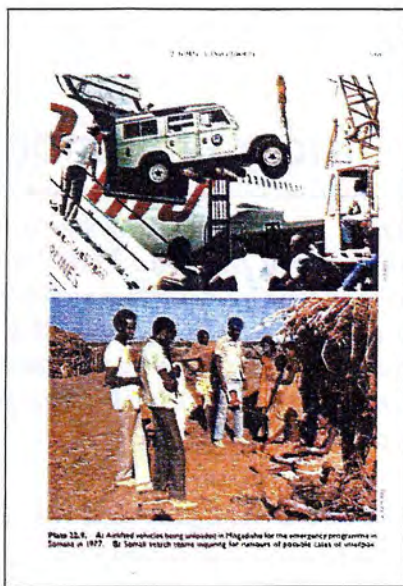


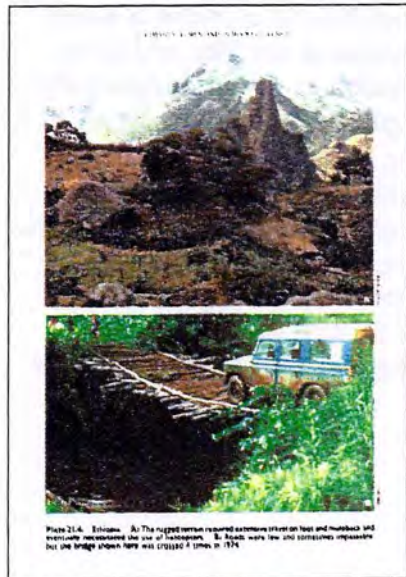
Plate 12.9. A: Aircraf being unloaded in Madagascar for the emergency programme in Somalia in 1977. B: Somali research teams inspecting for rumours of possible cases of smallpox.

A history of human triumph

“After smallpox had been eradicated, many persons inside and outside WHO mistakenly concluded that the achievement could be attributed to a generously financed, enthusiastically supported and authoritatively directed programme similar to a military campaign. In reality, the programme had none of these characteristics.”

Above all, **Smallpox and its Eradication** is a history of human triumph against incredible odds. Shortages of staff and of funds, inadequate supplies of vaccine, wars, disasters, poor transportation, and breakdowns in communications were repeatedly encountered and overcome through sheer dedication and creative solutions.

The book also stands as a lesson in the inventiveness and almost ruthless pragmatism required to achieve an idealistic goal, a goal that, up to the end, was regarded by many — both within and outside WHO — as utopian.



Smallpox and its Eradication

The definitive history of mankind's triumph over a dreaded disease

In 31 chapters, **Smallpox and its Eradication** recounts the history of one of humanity's worst diseases, moving from ancient times, through the discovery of vaccination, to the spectacular WHO-led programme that finally vanquished the disease. Authored by experts personally involved in the eradication campaign, the book gives posterity a minutely detailed account of both how the disease once reigned and what was necessary, step by step and country by country, to eliminate the "ancient scourge" once and for all. Virtually everything ever known or believed about the disease, and everything that happened during the global eradication campaign, has been collected and preserved in this richly illustrated account.

For scientists and clinicians, **Smallpox and its Eradication** will serve as a complete and final review of knowledge on the clinical features,

virology, pathology, immunology, and epidemiology of variola major and minor. For students of public health and medical historians, the book offers access to a wealth of previously unpublished data and personal experiences that make up the saga of a public health event unprecedented in scope and unparalleled in the magnitude of its achievement. For posterity, **Smallpox and its Eradication** will serve, above all, as an inspiring reminder of the time when the world united, behind a humanitarian goal, and destroyed a disease forever.

Smallpox and its Eradication

by F. Fenner, D.A. Henderson,
I. Arita, Z. Jezek, and I.D. Ladnyi
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Smallpox and its Eradication

About the authors

Frank Fenner, M.D., a virologist, has been a professor at the Australian National University since 1949. In 1969, he became a member of the WHO Informal Group on Monkeypox and Related Viruses and has served on various WHO committees on orthopoxviruses. From 1978—1979, Dr. Fenner was Chairman of the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication. He is currently a Visiting Fellow in the John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University, Canberra.

Donald Ainslie Henderson, M.D. is a health manager and epidemiologist. While at the Centers for Disease Control in the USA, he was responsible in 1965—1966 for the planning of the western and central African smallpox eradication-measles control programme, conducted with the support of the United States Agency for International Development. As Chief of the WHO Smallpox Eradication unit, Dr. Henderson headed the eradication campaign during the challenging years from 1966 to 1977. In 1977, Dr. Henderson became Dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland, USA, and Professor of Epidemiology and International Health. He was a member of the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication.

Isao Arita, M.D., a health manager and epidemiologist, worked for the smallpox eradication programme in western Africa in 1962—1963 as a member of the staff of the WHO Regional Office for Africa. In 1964 he was transferred to WHO headquarters in Geneva. Two years later he joined the Smallpox Eradication unit, serving as its Chief from 1977 until 1984. Dr. Arita is now Director of the Kumamoto National Hospital in Japan and a member of the advisory group on international health of the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Japan.

Zdenek Jezek, M.D., an epidemiologist, joined the field staff of the Intensified Smallpox Eradication Programme in 1972, working first with the WHO Smallpox Eradication and Epidemiological Advisory Team in the WHO South-East Asia Region and later in Somalia. He was one of many Czech epidemiologists who played a major role in smallpox eradication. Dr. Jezek joined the Smallpox Eradication unit at WHO headquarters in 1980. He succeeded Arita as Chief of the unit in 1985.

Ivan Danilovich Ladnyi, M.D., an epidemiologist, served as a WHO Inter-country Advisor on smallpox eradication in Africa from 1965 to 1971. From 1976 to 1983 he was Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization, responsible for communicable and parasitic diseases. He was then Deputy Director of the All-Union Institute of Medical Information of the Ministry of Health of the USSR from 1983 until his death in 1987.

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