U.S. commits $205 million to eradication

President Barack Obama signed an omnibus appropriations bill in January that provides $205 million to support polio eradication in 2014, through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. Agency for International Development.

The largest government donor to polio eradication, the U.S. has contributed more than $2.3 billion since the mid-1980s, when 125 countries were polio endemic and the disease afflicted 350,000 people annually. Today, only Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nigeria are endemic, and in 2013, the combined incidence of polio in those countries fell to a record-low 157 cases. Last month , India reached a three-year milestone without polio, paving the way for the entire Southeast Asia region to be certified free of the disease.

"Eradicating polio will leave a lasting legacy of health care infrastructure, experience, and expertise that is already being used to benefit a broad range of global public health efforts," says James Lacy, chair of Rotary’s Polio Eradication Advocacy Task Force for the United States and past president of Rotary International.

The task force leads Rotary's efforts to inform the U.S. government and other funding sources of the urgency and benefits of supporting the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

Ellison commits $100 million to eradication

Larry Ellison, owner of software giant Oracle has announced his plans to donate the sum of $100 million through his Lawrence Ellison Foundation to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

Ellison’s donation comes in the light of the tremendous progress being made to gradually eradicate the disease, especially in the world’s developing countries, and is part of a drive on the part of the GPEI to raise $5.5 billion over the next six years to finally eradicate polio from the list of the world’s major illnesses.

Thanks to Ellison’s generosity, there are now 10 philanthropists who have pledged more than $500 million to the fund, which will be added to the $1.8 billion already promised by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. To date, a total of 35 donors, either governments or private organizations have committed to a total of $4 billion in pledges to support the GPEI.

Announcing the donation to be made by the Lawrence Ellison Foundation, Bill Gates stated that the tremendous efforts being made to eradicate the polio disease is making tremendous headway, as is possible to say that we are approaching the final stages.

“We knew this last push would be the hardest and the lack of resources can’t be what stands in the way of delivering on the promise of a world without polio. Larry Ellison’s generous donation will help to ensure that all children are protected from this and other vaccine-preventable diseases,” summed up Gates.

The GPEI was first launched in 1988, thanks to the considerable efforts of national governments, the World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as with their initiatives being supported by a number of key partners.
Rotary responds to polio emergency in Syria

EVANSTON, Ill., USA (Dec. 10, 2013) — Rotary International will provide a US$500,000 emergency response grant to support efforts to quell a recent outbreak of the crippling disease polio in strife-torn Syria. The funds are the first to the World Health Organization in direct support of a Global Polio Eradication Initiative plan aimed at outbreak response throughout the Middle East, as the region gears up for a multi-country response to the threat of polio.

As of Dec. 9, there have been 17 cases of wild poliovirus confirmed in Syria since October, the first reported cases in the country since 1999. The Rotary grant to the World Health Organization will support immediate response activities in late 2013 and January 2014, such as the establishment of emergency response control rooms and initial vaccination rounds to immunize children in Syria and surrounding countries against polio.

“It is imperative that we stop this outbreak quickly to protect children in Syria and throughout the region, and that is the purpose of this grant,” said Dr. Robert S. Scott, chair of Rotary’s PolioPlus program. “Rotary and our partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative are working together with local health authorities to activate the outbreak response.”

He noted that the cases in Syria appear to be “imported” from Pakistan, one of three countries where the wild poliovirus remains endemic. “These and other recent polio cases in previously polio-free countries serve as stark reminders that as long as polio still exists anywhere in the world, all unimmunized children everywhere remain at risk,” Scott said.

Today, seven countries across the region rolled out vaccination campaigns aiming to reach 22 million children. These campaigns are planned to be repeated over the next 6 months to protect children in the region from the polio outbreak.

Rotary celebrates India’s third polio-free year

Rotary members worldwide are celebrating a major milestone in the global effort to eradicate polio: India, until recently an epicenter of the wild polio virus, marked the third anniversary of its last recorded case of the paralyzing infectious disease on 13 Jan.

On the same day in 2011, a two-year old girl suffered polio paralysis in Howrah district of West Bengal. Since then, India has not reported any new cases of wild poliovirus.

Leaders see the 13 Jan. milestone as a testament to the determination of Rotary’s international membership of 1.2 million men and women – and especially the 122,000 Rotarians in India – to eradicate polio through the mass immunization of children, a goal Rotary took on in 1985.

In celebration of the decades-long battle and ultimate victory over this disabling disease in India, Rotary clubs throughout the country illuminated landmarks and iconic structures on Jan. 13 with Rotary's dramatic message – ‘India is Polio Free’.

Rotary says the challenge now is to replicate India’s success in neighboring Pakistan, one of three remaining polio-endemic countries. Afghanistan and Nigeria are the others. Collectively, they create a reservoir from which the opportunistic disease can emerge to re-infect areas where it had been previously stopped. So-called “imported cases” are occurring now in Syria and several African countries. In 2013, imported cases in non-endemic countries outnumbered the total in the endemic countries 224 to 145, underscoring the importance of stopping the virus where it remains endemic.

“We must now stop polio in Pakistan to both protect Pakistani children and to safeguard our success in India and other countries where we have beaten this terrible disease,” says Deepak Kapur, who chairs Rotary’s India National PolioPlus Committee. “Until polio is finally eradicated globally, all unvaccinated children will remain at risk of infection and paralysis, no matter where they live.”

Rotary leaders in India are working with their Pakistani counterparts to share best practices and lessons learned during India’s successful anti-polio campaign. Rotary was particularly effective in obtaining the support of influential religious leaders in India’s Islamic communities, and Pakistani Rotary leaders are playing a similar role in efforts to counter rumors and misinformation about polio vaccinations that keep some Muslim parents from allowing their children to be immunized.

Meanwhile, National Immunization Days – during which Rotary volunteers join with health workers in an effort to reach every child under age five with the oral polio vaccine -- continue in both countries. In India alone, more than 172 million children receive the vaccine during these mass immunization campaigns.

This month District 5170’s own PDG Brad Howard is leading a team of 24 Rotarians from the US, Canada and Australia to continue the fight against Polio in India.
Polio Updates from around the globe

Afghanistan
- 1 new WPV1 case was reported. Total number of cases for 2013 is 14 and for 2014 the total is 2. All but one were reported close to Pakistan border.
- No new cases reported of vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV2).
- Subnational immunization days (sNIDs) were conducted in Feb and will be repeated in March.

Nigeria
- No new WPV cases were reported. The total number of WPV cases for 2013 was 53. Total number for 2104 is now 9.
- NO new cVDPV2 was reported. The total cVDPV2 for 2013 is 4
- Immunization days occurred in Jan and are planned for March.

Pakistan
- 2 new WPV1 cases were reported bringing the total WPV1 cases for Pakistan in 2013 to 93.
- No new cVDPV2 cases reported. The total cVDPV2 cases for 2013 was 45 and to date in 2014 the total is 1.
- The situation in North Waziristan is dire with the largest number of children being paralyzed by polio in all of Asia.
- The Peshawar valley is considered the main engine of transmission.
- Genetic sequencing of a sample indicates a link to virus detected in Afhanistan.

Chad, Cameroon and CAR
In Chad, Cameroon, and CAR no new cases were reported. For 2013 the totals remain 4 cases in Cameroon and 4 cases in Chad. Immunization days are planned for February and March in the region.

Horn of Africa
- No new WPV1 cases were reported.
- The total number of cases for 2013 in the Horn of Africa was 213 (190 Somalia, 14 Kenya, 9 Ethiopia).
- The largest concern currently is surveillance gaps in infected areas.

Israel, West Bank / Gaza
- Although no cases of paralytic polio has been reported environmental surveillance continues and positive samples were detected in January.
- Immunization activity with bOPV targeting children up to age nine took place in January.

West Africa
- No new WPV cases were reported.
- Multi-country synchronized immunization campaigns will take place in West Africa in Apr. and May.

The Middle East
- In Syria, the total number of WPV1 cases in 2013 remains 23.
- 13 cases are confirmed from contested areas but not yet reflected in official figures.
- Comprehensive outbreak response continues across the region. Over 3 million children were reached in the January vaccination campaign.
- In a joint resolution, all countries of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region have declared polio eradication to be an emergency, calling for support in negotiating and establishing access to those children who are currently unreached with polio vaccination.
As the calendar turned to February our District traditionally turns to Polio. However, it is important to note that the goal for 100% EREY to our Annual Program Funds is still alive and well. I hope you will take the time to review the Annual Giving chart and study both your club’s numbers and the numbers of the other clubs in the District. I am pleased to report that 21 clubs have reached or exceeded their goal for Annual Giving, however, at this point in time we should be seeing most clubs close to their goal. I am also pleased to report that 17 clubs have attained $200 per capita giving which is the District goal which was set in 1999. Finally 19 clubs are at 70% EREY or better with one club, Los Altos Sunset at 100%. I should note that there are three other clubs who need just one member to make a donation to reach the 100% level: Los Altos, San Lorenzo Valley, and Tri-Valley. Let’s make this the year that every club reaches 100% EREY......

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Annual Fund Goal 2013-2014</th>
<th>Annual Fund through February 10</th>
<th>APF Per Capita</th>
<th>% of Goal Achieved</th>
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</table>
From the desk of the chairman

Roger Hassler, PDG

Angie and I just returned from our trip to Guatemala, a trip that reinforced our commitment to The Rotary Foundation. The first three days were spent in Antiqua where we attended the Uniendo America Project Fair. This event is close to the folks in our own District because it was co-founded by PDG Karl Stucki from the Rotary Club of Oakland. Each year the Clubs/Districts in the six Central America countries put on a fair to showcase the projects that they need help with from clubs around the world. Hundreds of worthy projects were showcased and I hoped that each of them could find a sponsor to support these causes. We also had the opportunity to renew our friendships with three of our past Rotary Partners in Service visiting with Fabio Carballo, Julio Grazioso, and Wayne Johnson.

Our next stop was in Uspantan a small village about 120km north-east of Antigua. We were privileged to be allowed to join the clubs from Area 7 (Santa Cruz County) on their Health Fair project to teach the children in the area how to protect themselves from germ transmission. This is the heart and soul of The Rotary Foundation. During a three day period 22 Rotary volunteers trained and supported over 500 school age children. At one point I had noted that there were very few of these youngsters who wore corrective lenses. I thought that these young people were very fortunate to have such good eye sight until they were given short eye test and then many of them were referred to the three Rotarians in our group who were professional eye caretakers. During the event 40 pairs of glasses were issued. Can you imagine the importance of the event to the lives of these kids. The Rotary Foundation and Rotarians at Work, I wish you all could have been there to see the impact of your generosity!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>% of Goal Achieved</th>
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My voyage as a Rotary Peace Fellow

I came to the United Kingdom in the middle of September 2012 and by that time I could not have imagined how my life would change since then. The Rotary Peace Fellowship has allowed me to study and research a wide variety of subjects, from peacekeeping and peace-building to gender violence, humanitarian crises. Not only do I feel like a more informed global citizen, but I also feel like I have a clear path for how I can best use my career for social good.

In order to become a highly qualified expert in the peace development field, I must build upon my undergraduate degree and work experience with the first class international relations and conflict resolution studies program. A graduate level of education is a serious commitment, and it had been my goal for a long time. The fact that University of Bradford is among the 100 best universities in the world, proved its reputation in providing specialized knowledge and invaluable experience exchange opportunities. Among the six MA degree courses presented at the Department of Peace Studies, I have chosen the Conflict, Security, and Development course. When I started my studies, I did not want to just get a degree, but want to get a better understanding of global affairs. I believe that I enhanced my knowledge in the fields like conflict resolution, human rights, gender and conflicts, mediation, and global security.

Volunteering at Bradford Action for Refugees

Besides my studies at the university, I was also involved in a whole routine of other interesting activities. I used my free time to teach Russian language at the Language centre at the university and also volunteered at couple of local organizations.

My current occupation at Bradford Action for Refugees (BAfR) gave me the incredible opportunity to be immersed in one of the most diverse communities of West Yorkshire and to contribute to the organization’s work by providing services to refugees.

BAfR is a local non-governmental organization, whose mission is to provide emergency relief, post-conflict development, protection, and to support people affected by violent conflict, oppression, and natural disasters.

BAFR members together with the volunteers offer advice and assistance to different vulnerable individuals and families through various services, support projects and networks. In particular I was involved in Children and Families project. The aim of this project is to support families in the integration process through giving practical assistance and moral support.

I am proud to help these vulnerable people to start a new life in the United Kingdom, to adapt to a new culture, and to have access to social services and opportunities. I empathize with these people and completely realize what terrible situations they have gone through because I experienced the same thing in my life. Nobody should be forced to leave everything behind and live in fear, sorrow, and terror!

Volunteering at PhysioNet

In October 2012, the Rotary Peace Fellows, from class XI were invited to the Rotary District 1040 Conference in Scarborough. There was a House of Friendship set up as a part of the conference program. One of the projects that captured my attention was a PhysioNet project.

PhysioNet is a charity based in Yorkshire, England set up in 2005 to provide physiotherapy equipment to disabled children in Eastern & Central Europe and in developing countries round the world. All equipment is donated and it is refurbished prior to shipment. Since its foundation, the PhysioNet has donated and shipped the equipment to Swaziland, Benin, South Africa, Belorussia, Kenya, Nepal, Fiji, Uganda, Ghana and other countries.

During the conference I met Peter Thompson, who is the founder and the chairman of PhysioNet. He invited me to work as a volunteer and help to spread the word about the project and find the partners through social media. Since then I have been working with this organization. Besides promoting the PhysioNet project through social media, I also work on mobilization of young people, who assist to pack and load the wheelchair and other equipment prior to shipping to different countries.
Applied Field Experience World Uyghur Congress

Rotary Peace fellows undertake the three months applied field experience (AFE, i.e. summer internship) as a part of a Rotary Peace Fellowship. When the summer 2013 started, I decided to do my AFE at the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) in Munich.

The World Uyghur Congress is an international democratic organization that represents the collective interests of the Uyghur people both in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (China) and abroad. The WUC was established in 2004. The main objective is to promote the rights and freedoms of Uyghur people to use nonviolent, and democratic means to determine the political Future of Xinjiang.

The WUC is also a founding member of Unrepresented Peoples Organization (UNPO) that is based in Netherlands. The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization is an international, nonviolent, and democratic membership organization. Its members are indigenous peoples, minorities, and unrecognized or occupied territories who have joined together to protect and promote their human and cultural rights, to preserve their environments, and to find nonviolent solutions to conflicts which affect them.

I chose to do my AFE at the World Uyghur Congress, because my current research is focused on gender and ethnic discrimination of Uyghurs in Western China. I had a great experience at WUC gaining new skills and knowledge on minority issues, human rights & democracy.

One year has passed, but it has been a wonderful year full of exciting events and a great, invaluable experience! During this year, I not only gained theoretical and practical experience, but also I had a chance to explore the new places and meet some interesting and inspiring people, who do the tremendous work to improve the lives of different communities around the globe.

It’s been an incredible year for me, studying with people in an international setting, where I learned from people who worked in conflict areas and who dealt with development. It is important to have a collective voice, a collective force to work together for peace. The investment, which Rotary is making into peace education for young people is extraordinary and extremely important.

I am grateful to Rotary Foundation for this incredible opportunity to be immersed in a whole new world of self-fulfillment, challenges, and opportunities. With completion of my Master's program I am looking forward to new possibilities, where I could fully realize myself and bring positive changes to the vulnerable communities worldwide!

Nigora Akhmedova, Rotary Peace Scholar 2012-13
MA in Conflict, Security and Development
University of Bradford, United Kingdom

In 2013, The Rotary Foundation earned a grade of A+ from the American Institute of Philanthropy, a top rating of four stars from Charity Navigator, and full accreditation from the Wise Giving Alliance of the Better Business Bureau, based on the previous year’s results. In fiscal year 2012-13, only 2 percent of Foundation expenditures went to administrative expenses and 9 percent to fundraising. The Foundation directed 89 percent of its spending to programs, far exceeding the benchmarks that independent charity-rating services view as a measure of high efficiency. (from 2012-13 RI/TRF Annual Report)
District 5170 Candidates Named Rotary Peace Fellow

Fellows join in new class of future leaders committed to peace

While the world hopes for peace, Rotary works to make it a reality. Gina Fu of Milpitas and Lauren Markham of Oakland have been named as two of 100 Rotary Peace Fellows to study peace building and conflict resolution. The program was created as part of Rotary’s ongoing effort to promote greater tolerance and cooperation among people worldwide.

Gina, whose previous experiences include teaching in Ukraine with the Peace Corps, will enter the 16-month Master’s Degree program at the University of Queensland in Australia. After strengthening her knowledge and skills at her Rotary Peace Center, Gina aspires to work at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) which administers sustainable development for women and children around the world. Gina is sponsored by the Rotary Club of San Jose Silicon Valley.

Lauren, whose service experience includes work in Uganda, El Salvador and Costa Rica is presently in charge of the full service community school program at Oakland International High School, a school for 100% low-income refugees and immigrants. She will complete the three-month Professional Certificate program at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. To quote Lauren, "Service is an exchange in which all parties are learning, growing, contributing and receiving. That paradigm of mutual exchange has shaped the work I do and the manner in which I do it." Lauren is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Oakland #3.

There are more than 780 Rotary Peace Fellow alumni now working in high-level positions at prestigious organizations such as the United Nations, the European Parliament, Interpol, USAid, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Organization of American States. While war, famine, poverty and disease remain serious challenges worldwide, the Rotary Peace Centers program gives Peace Fellows the knowledge and tools to address them.

"Rotary believes, as I believe, that it is possible to have a world without war," said Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. "By educating future peace-builders and working to ease the conditions that breed violence and conflict, Rotary is demonstrating to the rest of the world that peace is attainable."

Ten years ago, Rotary decided to take a direct approach to world understanding by providing future leaders with the tools they need to “wage peace” on the global stage. Since 2002, Rotary clubs, each year sponsor up to 50 scholars who embark on one to two years of study to earn master’s-level degrees in peace and conflict resolution at Rotary Peace Centers at leading universities in England, Japan, Australia, Sweden, and the United States.

- Uppsala University, Sweden
- University of Bradford, United Kingdom
- University of Queensland, Australia
- International Christian University, Japan
- Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA

In addition to the 2 year university programs, the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkom University in Bangkok, Thailand offers a three-month professional development certificate in peace and conflict studies each year for up to 50 mid-level professionals from related fields, such as public health, education, international law, economic development, journalism, and social justice.
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