



Spectrum



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Global health leaders see a clear path to polio eradication

By Ryan Hyland and Arnold R. Grahl
Photography by Monika Lozinska



Rotary and WHO's World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event in Geneva, Switzerland, brought health experts together to share updates, exchange ideas

Global health leaders expressed confidence that polio will be eradicated worldwide and praised the frontline workers who are striving to achieve that goal during an event at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, 21-22 October.

Sponsored by Rotary International and WHO, World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond updated participants and viewers on the status of polio eradication. It also discussed possible community-based solutions that go beyond immunizations to improve the health of mothers and children.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of WHO, speaking at the opening session, said that polio eradication is within reach. He cited the fact that the work of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) has reduced cases by 99.9%, from 350,000 in 1988 to only six cases last year. However, he acknowledged that the global effort has lost ground this year, with 20 cases in Pakistan and two in Afghanistan. Those are the only two countries where the transmission of the wild poliovirus has never been stopped. But the diagnosis of a polio case in the U.S., and the detection of poliovirus in sewage in the United Kingdom "show that polio will remain a global threat until it is eradicated everywhere." Polio cases have also been diagnosed in Malawi and Mozambique last year and this year.

"We still face many challenges, including misinformation, hard-to-access populations, and community fatigue," Dr. Tedros said. Polio immunization programs for children have faced historic disruption, largely because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has added to the challenges. "Without concerted action, we could lose the gains we have made," Dr. Tedros added.

The GPEI's polio eradication strategy for 2022-26 is designed to meet these challenges by using both proven solutions and innovative new tools. At the World Health Summit in Berlin, Germany, earlier in October, donors, including Rotary, committed US\$2.6 billion to fund the strategy. These funds will support polio immunizations in countries where polio is endemic and in those that have had recent outbreaks. It will also fund adoption of the new type 2 oral polio vaccine (nOPV2), which is a genetically modified version of a current vaccine and is less likely to cause outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived polio, also known as variant polio.

Funds will also support the GPEI's commitment to empowering women at all levels of health care. "Gender equality is critical to achieving eradication, because in many of the most affected communities, only women are allowed access to the homes and [to] children other than their own," Dr. Tedros noted.

He assured the audience that polio eradication will remain a top priority for WHO. "With Rotary's support, I look forward to a future when the only thing children ever learn about polio is in the history books," said Dr. Tedros.

Other global health experts who spoke at the event included Aidan O'Leary, director for polio eradication at WHO; Steven Lauwerier, director of polio eradication at UNICEF; and Ambassador Hans-Peter Jungel, deputy permanent representative for Germany.

"Not only is polio eradication feasible, it's within grasp," O'Leary told attendees.

Vaccinating every child against polio must continue to be the priority, said Lauwerier. "A vaccine alone, if it stays in the vial, doesn't make a change," he emphasized.



Attendees give the "this close" sign at the World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event on 21 October in Geneva, Switzerland.

During a question-and-answer session with RI President Jennifer Jones and Jeffrey Kluger, editor at large for TIME magazine, Jones said, "We're making incredible progress, and we need to be proud of where we're at."

We meet calendar months' 2nd & 4th Saturdays at GPT Group, JC 25, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700098 at 6.00 PM

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The second day of the event focused on preventive care and mothers' and children's health. Breakout sessions discussed regional needs and opportunities for collaboration.



Aidan O'Leary, director of polio eradication at WHO, speaks at the World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event on 21 October in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr. Hamid Jafari, director of polio eradication for WHO, said the diagnosis of polio cases in Malawi and Mozambique, as well as the variant poliovirus detections in New York, London, and Israel, demonstrate polio's lingering threat.



Rotary President Jennifer Jones, right, and Jeffery Kluger, senior writer for TIME magazine, discuss polio eradication efforts at the World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event on 21 October in Geneva, Switzerland.



Attendees listen to a presentation at the World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event on 21 October in Geneva, Switzerland.



Attendees gather at the World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond event on 21 October in Geneva, Switzerland.

Global Update underscores the importance of vaccinations

Rotary also released the World Polio Day 2022 Global Update video, which features other global health experts. They underscored the importance of vaccinations as the only sure protection against polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

"As long as the poliovirus survives anywhere, it remains a threat to children and unvaccinated persons everywhere," he said.

Dr. John Vertefeuille, polio eradication branch chief for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), noted the importance of continuing surveillance after cases of polio stop.

"On the road to eradication and containment, surveillance will continue to play a critical role in the certification process, ensuring that poliovirus transmission has been interrupted, and the hard-earned win of a polio-free world will be maintained post-certification," he said.

Experts who are part of the national immunization program in Pakistan also talked about the GPEI's gender strategy and the importance of employing female frontline health workers to ensure that campaigns reach every child with the polio vaccine.

"We found that females were reluctant to be vaccinated by male vaccinators," says Dr. Soofia Yunus, director general for the Federal Directorate of Immunization in Pakistan. "In every strategy we make and in every activity that we conduct, we ensure that females are part of it."

As O'Leary said at World Polio Day 2022 and Beyond, "The path forward is absolutely clear. We have the tools. We have the strategies. We have a ruthless focus."

Making an impact through international service

Posted on October 27, 2022 by Sheila Hurst, Ed.D., Rotary Club of Redding West, District 5160's International Service Committee Chair, Health Education and Wellness Rotary Action Group Director

In 2006 I was a new member of the Rotary Club of Redding West in District 5160, Northern California when I was invited to go on a trip with Rotary members to the International Vision Volunteers Eye Hospital in rural Zambia, Zambia. Fortunately, I said yes, and the decision led to memorable experiences, lasting friendships, and a commitment to international service.

Since that first trip, I've visited more than 20 countries to learn about innovative and sustainable club and district-led

programs, written several grants, and consulted on health, education, and literacy projects. As District International Service Chair (DISC), I've been able to build on and expand these experiences and relationships by collaborating with members of our District Resource Network, members with technical knowledge and project-planning skills who mentor clubs, and others in our district and beyond.



Pictured is student Putul Srivastava, who joined Ispat Cooperative Hospital after completing her college and training under the Global Grant that received support from the District 5160 International Service Committee.

Our District International Service Committee is a policy and decision-making group that provides guidance and coaching on projects, grants, and programs. We also coordinate and provide training, presentations, and exhibits for district and club events and activities. Each year, our Committee partners with the District Rotary Foundation Committee to allocate District Designated Funds (DDF) and other funds as they are available to international projects of special interest.

We recently contributed US\$5,000 in DDF to help set up a Vocational Training Centre at PACE Learning Center in Piyali, India. Since the Centre's official launch in December 2021, 60 students have already completed the program and received certificates from the National Skill Development Corporation, a Government of India undertaking that opens employment and entrepreneurial avenues. One student is Putul Srivastava, who joined Ispat Cooperative Hospital in Kalikapur, India, after completing her college and training with support from a TRF Global Grant and District 5160's International Service Committee.

Accepting the invitation to join a trip with Rotary members to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2006 has led to exciting and productive opportunities, including serving as District International Service Chair. I encourage club members to connect with their DISC to learn about the support and guidance they may be able to access to help implement their ideas, strengthen their projects, and empower their programs. With questions, please contact me at disc@rotary5160.org.

Rotary members as provocateurs: building legacies in turbulent times

Posted on October 24, 2022 by Maiden R. Manzanal-Frank, 2015 Rotary Peace Fellow at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand



Maiden Manzanal-Frank

The Rotary Peace Centers Program has truly transformed my life. After receiving a peace fellowship in 2015, my commitment to peace, human security, and development deepened further.

In my current role as a global impact advisor, I help organizations become more robust, sustainable, and effective in their missions.

I draw upon two decades of work with social enterprises, rural women, cooperatives, home-based workers, farmers, artisans, health advocates, and local changemakers. Being based in Canada, I have made contact with all the Rotary clubs in Central Alberta, Edmonton, and Calgary (which I can reach within a few hours), regularly offering support and advice. I share my experiences as a Rotary Peace Fellow and promote the program every year.

The 5 Ps

In this, I have found that Rotary members embody the qualities of a provocateur: everyday leaders who possess **Passion, Purpose, Provision, Practice, and Paradigms**. These 5Ps contribute to effective building of communities, laying down the framework for transformational change in the voice, agency, political will, and cultural awakening of the community partners involved in philanthropic work in the developing world.

This paradigm shift is revolutionary in the sense that instead of working just on "projects and initiatives that build," provocateurs must be concerned with partnering with communities. They need to understand the hearts and minds of people so they can make decisions for themselves, their families, and their communities that lead to sustained positive change.

We know that many wells in Africa are broken and abandoned. Clinics built by foreign donors and wealthy patrons are left inoperable for lack of maintenance, insufficient supplies, or a lack of qualified doctors, nurses, and community health workers. Mosquito bed nets end up not being used for their original purpose. To change this, we need to focus on working more closely with our communities to understand the needs and challenges. We need to produce solutions together that foster the will and capacity for increasing local ownership and accountability.

A provocateur is not a savior, a patron, a philanthropist, a fixer, or the sole source of resources, connections, or knowledge. A provocateur is a facilitator, a partner, an idea contributor, and a force for good. Instead of doing something for the community partner, they facilitate what's positive in communities and what's working, and help bring these features to the surface. They externalize them so that everyone learns and grows from their own wisdom and practices.

As provocateurs, Rotary members can learn from distilled insights on impact, contextual relevance, relationship with change partners and their transformational processes, building a legacy they can be proud of, and looking for innovation in the underappreciated area. Provocateurs practice these traits:

- **Playing the long game**
Many projects and charitable activities are very short-sighted and focus on short-term gains. We need to go beyond the palpable need we see, to know what brings about real change in communities. We need to learn to bring about effective change by asking the right questions.
- **Learning from mistakes without guilt and shame**
Often, a project ends with a plethora of introspections and reviews. When results fall short, the "blame game" can happen. But mistakes can guide our actions and provide the impetus for improvements. We need to learn from our mistakes and those of others.
- **Viewing goodbyes as inevitable but useful**
Conclusions of our work with community partners are a source of inspiration, renewal, and change. Relationships within the community will continue to evolve based on their newly-found capacities, wisdom, and knowledge. We need to begin to act as a bridge to the solutions that work best for them and their organizations.

The real impact of a Rotary Peace Fellowship is measured not only by the transformation in a peace fellow's life but how they pay it forward in an exponential way. I pay it forward by using my lessons learned and experiences in the field to inspire Rotary members, their partners, and global on-purpose organizations to rise above the challenges of our time and become beacons of hope, impact, and lasting positive legacies.

The time for effective provocation is now.

About the author: Maiden R. Manzanal-Frank is a global impact advisor and adjunct instructor at the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, where she leads a course on Leadership and Change-making. Her new book, *Provocateurs Not Philanthropists*, explores the role of provocateurs in turning good intentions into global impact

Brief outline of the Global Grant 1991152

Purpose: 'Fight against Anemia in Women'
Objectives: Treat women of Anemia by screening and treatment and prevent by educating them
Title: 'Matri-Raksha' - protection of mothers
Scope of work: Provide screening camps, minor and major surgeries, medicines, awareness training, healthcare professional training and providing diagnostic equipment at community health centers
Coverage: Both districts of 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India
Sponsors: Rotary clubs of Salt Lake Metropolitan Kolkata of District 3291, India and Nidau-Biel, Biel-Bienne, Biel-Buttenberg of District 1990, Switzerland:
Grant Partners: Rotary Foundation India, the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International,
Associates: Related Government and civic bodies, NGO's

QUOTE

Acquiring literacy is an empowering process, enabling millions to enjoy access to knowledge and information which broadens horizons, increases opportunities and creates alternatives for building a better life. Kofi Annan

UNWIND

*What's that in your eye? Oh, it's a sparkle.
Reply: What are you on: Crack or cocaine*

Birthdays of members in October 2022

Sanjay Agarwal on October 5, 2022
President Elect Ansul Agrawal on October 7, 2022
Past President Dr Chitra Ray on October 15, 2022

October is Economic & Community Development month

Anniversaries of members in Nov 2022

Spouse Sapna & Sanjay Agarwal on November 19, 2022
President Archana & Mukesh Goyal on November 21, 2022
Past Prez Dr Aruna & Dr Om Tantia on November 27, 2022
Spouse Sushila & VP Indra Kumar Bagri on November 30, 2022

November is Rotary Foundation month

TAILPIECE

Empower entrepreneurs during Community Economic Development Month



The Seven Women Center is a social enterprise in Nepal founded by Australian Rotary member and former Rotary Peace Fellow Stephanie Woollard. The center offers marginalized women education, skills training, and employment opportunities. The evolving venture has grown from helping seven women to assisting more than 5,000.



Rotary members promote community economic development and reduce poverty in underserved areas by improving access to skills training, well-paying jobs, and financial management institutions. Their projects range from vocational training and mentorship to offering small-business tools and reasonable financing. Our members work to strengthen local entrepreneurs and leaders, particularly women, across communities.

Mobile clinic delivers free health care



Rotary clubs in Wisconsin and Minnesota, USA, used a global grant from The Rotary Foundation and partnered with clubs in the Netherlands and Germany to purchase and equip a mobile health clinic for a community organization in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

The clinic provides primary and specialty health care services at no cost to those without access to insurance, and is equipped with two exam rooms, diagnostic equipment, and a wheelchair lift