



RI District 2452 Polio Summit Program

*Beirut, Lebanon 6th September 2015
-Hilton Beirut Habtoor Grand Hotel-
Theme: "The last 0.1% of Polio cases"*



John F. Germ, RI President 2016-17

District 2452 Polio Summit

Beirut - Lebanon

September 6, 2015

It's a pleasure for me to be with you for this celebration of 30 years of Rotary's quest to eradicate polio. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sanofi for their support of Rotary.

Sanofi Pasteur's Work with Rotary

2005: Provided grant of US \$15,000 to help publish Herb Pigman's book, *Conquering Polio* for Rotary's Centennial

2011: Helped secure opportunities to ring the bell at five stock exchanges on Rotary's anniversary (23 Feb) in New York, Lisbon, Brussels, Paris, and Amsterdam. A Sanofi rep attended each of the events.

2014: Provided US \$50,000 to help support World Polio Day (it was a contribution to TRF). Their CEO provided a video presentation for our event and two representatives from Sanofi attended the event in Chicago.

They have also featured a couple of Rotarians as “polio heroes” on their website.

Rotary’s involvement in Polio Eradication is part of Rotary’s past, present and future.

Chinese Proverb:

“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with one single step.”

Our story begins with a dream and the step to do something good in the world.

Without the dream more than 2 billion children might not have been spared the pain of a crippling disease called Polio and our journey is not over.

It was Sir Clem Renouf, President of RI 1978-79, after reading about the eradication of small pox, he asked one of his DG’s Dr. John Sever if there was something of this magnitude that Rotary could be involved in – thus the first step.

Our journey to eradicate polio continued in September 1979 when Rotary made a five year commitment of U.S. \$760,000 to provide and help deliver Polio vaccine to 6 million children in the Philippines – led by Jim Bomar, who served as RI President 1979-80.

Jim told the story of his visit to the Philippines and his placing those precious drops in the mouth of a young girl when he felt a tug on his pants leg.

Looking down, he saw a crawler, a boy about 12 years old who had been crippled by polio.

He continued to provide the drops and then he looked at the boy who looked up and said, “Thank you mister. That’s my sister and she will not be crippled like I am.” He was really saying Thank you Rotary.

Our journey continued and in 1984, under the leadership of Past President Carlos Canseco, a polio 2005 Committee was appointed to recommend a long-term plan of action to immunize all the children of the world against polio by the 2005.

Rotary undertook a challenging fund raising campaign in 1985 to 1988 to raise \$120 million and raised \$247 million.

Following the success of the campaign and seeing the commitment of Rotarians, the World Health Alliance became involved in 1988. Partnership Rotary, CDC, WHO & UNICEF.

Shortage of Funds

Rotary undertook another campaign in 2002-05 to raise \$80 million, and raised \$135 million.

Our journey did not end in 2005 due to conflicts, lack of political leadership and religious concerns, and we continue today on that journey.

The RI Board, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation and the Council of Legislation have all said the Eradication of Polio is the program of the highest order.

I had the opportunity in March 2004, to visit Nigeria for an NID. Upon arrival, I was told we could not have an NID in Kano.

We did go to the outlying villages and thru all the travel problems, seeing children drinking dirty water and living in very poor conditions we were able to provide these precious drops of vaccine.

I will never forget kneeling down to place those drops in a child's mouth, or holding a small child and after placing the drops, looking at the mother.

I did not speak her language and she did not speak mine, but she used the universal sign of thank you – a smile.

In May of 2005, Judy and I had the opportunity to visit one of the most troubled spots for eradicating polio – the state of Uttar Pradesh India.

There, they have over 500,000 births per month, poor drinking water and sanitation, poor living conditions, and yet the mothers brought the children to receive those precious drops.

In September 2010 Judy and I had the opportunity to be in Abuji, Nigeria for an NID and to participate in a Polio Summit.

So we have seen first-hand as many of you have, the impact that Rotary has had in this campaign and the looks of thanks on the faces of mothers as they realize the life saving effect of vaccine on their children.

Each of you also have wonderful stories to tell. Travel has taken us from over 1,000 cases per day in 125 countries in 1985 to ____ cases in 2 endemic countries , Pakistan ____ cases, Afghanistan ____ cases as of August __ 2015. Nigeria has not had a case since July 24, 2014 and there have been no cases in Africa since 11 August 2014. The last case of Type 2 was in 1999, so Type 2 has been eradicated. It has been almost three years since the last case of Type 3, so it is on the verge of elimination.

Now 80% of the world's population live in a polio free country.

Rotary was given the greatest tribute possible when the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on November 16, 2007 at 1:23 p.m. Central Time, wired US \$100 Million to Rotary to help in our eradication efforts.

The two conditions were that we spend their money by December 31, 2008, and raise our US \$100 million by December 31, 2010.

- **Confidence**
- **Trust**

On January 21, 2009, while we had only raised \$45,348,000, Bill Gates announced a great to the Rotary Foundation of US \$255 million over 3 years and challenged Rotary to raise another US \$100 million.

He explained the Challenge was a reward to Rotary for their commitment in immunizing over 2 billion children in their campaign to eradicate this deadly disease.

He explained the significance of the grant to Rotary and not to the other partners, for Rotary has the infrastructure and the passion to spend it where needed.

The Polio Eradication Campaign is the largest public health campaign the world has ever seen.

Our challenge was to raise US \$200 million by 30 June 2012.

Thanks to you we raised the \$200 million by January 2012 and as a result the BMGF gave a Rotary a gift of \$50 million to assist in the eradication efforts. As of June 30, 2012 we raised \$228.7 million.

In May 2013 the World's Ministers of Health gathered in Geneva and launched a bold new "Polio Eradication & Endgame Strategic Plan" that was developed by the polio partners and Rotary over the previous twelve months. The funding requirement to fully implement the plan is significant: U.S. 5.5 billion, excluding India, where the government continues to fund efforts there.

The plan also looks beyond polio, into adapting the program's infrastructure to deliver other health services to the world's most vulnerable children, what we call the "Plus" in "Polio Plus". The new plan needs the backing of every single Rotarian. We are very close to making history by defeating this disease, but we must maintain our focus and drive.

One of the forces that will get us across the finish line is Rotary's focused financial support, which will be magnified with an agreement with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. From 2013 to 2018, every US \$1 million that Rotary commits in direct support for polio immunization (up to US \$35 million) will be matched by an additional US \$2 million from the Gates Foundation.

We are:

- **Asking Districts to commit a minimum of 20% of their DDF, which is currently matched by TRF \$0.50 to \$1.00. If the District is spending their DDF on educational or humanitarian program – great! If not, then please give it to the Polio Campaign.**
- **Each Club raise a minimum of US \$1,500 per year through club and community events. Many can't. Those that can must do more.**

Polio has robbed so many children of their childhoods, leaving them crippled for life, if they survive the disease. Victims of Polio also put untold burdens on the families who care for them. Sadly, children with Polio are often abandoned to fend for themselves.

Dr. Bruce Aylward, Assistant Director General at the World Health Organization, confirms that Rotary has been critical in sounding the initial alarm, drawing the world's attention to this crisis and keeping up the call to action. "It is Rotary that keeps governments and communities focused on polio eradication and we must not let up now. Rotary's voice is the most powerful weapon we have in the war against polio."

This is who we are: an organization working in concert with our partners to keep a promise we made to children everywhere, the promise of a polio-free world. We have the plan, we have the people and we have the vision. Let's get to work and wipe out polio once and for all.

Thank you for allowing Judy and I to be with you and your gracious hospitality.

John F. Germ, RI President 2016-17