



PRESS RELEASE

Rotary grants of \$ 43.6 million to immunization of children in Africa, Asia and the Middle East against polio the Eastern Mediterranean region will receive \$ 15.1 million to prevent new epidemics.

-EVANSTON (United States) - Rotary will give additional \$ 43.6 million to fund immunization activities, monitoring and research carried out by the global polio eradication Initiative to end the disease from here in 2018. Part of this sum, 15.1 million, will fund eradication efforts in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

The commitment announced this week follows the declaration of the World Health (who) organization stating that the spread of polio was a "risk of international public health. The eradication initiative is focused on the interruption of transmission in the last three countries endemic — Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan — which is essential to stop epidemics in countries where the disease had previously been eradicated. In this statement, the who recommends polio-infected countries to ensure that all travellers from their territory or leaving are vaccinated.

Rotary Grants meet the demands of its eradication - UNICEF and the who initiative partners - working together with the Governments of the countries infected by polio in the planning and implementation of SIAs.

They include \$ 5.7 million to finance the fight against polio in Afghanistan who reported 4 cases on June 11 of this year. 5.6 million for Pakistan with 75 cases this year; 3.6 million for the Iraq that were 2 cases; and \$ 148,000 for monitoring in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

"The polio eradication programme is a glimmer of hope," says Michel Jazzar, a Lebanese Rotarian. By two drops of polio vaccine, Rotary ensures that each child can reach adulthood without fear of contracting polio. "Apart from the Eastern Mediterranean region, Rotary grants include \$ 6.5 million for Nigeria which has seen 3 cases of polio this year; 4.77 million for Ethiopia which has 1 case; 4.15 million for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has not yet experienced any cases this year; 3.45 million for Chad which has no cases of polio this year; 4.7 million for surveillance activities and technical support in Africa; 2.6 million for the India which officially eradicated polio at the beginning of the year 2014; 1.65 million for who research activities; and \$ 470,000 for the monitoring activities in the Southeast Asia region.

The second phase of the global polio eradication Initiative is implemented in the region to stop the spread of the disease. The strategic plan against outbreaks of polio in the



Middle East details measures for the Syria and neighbouring countries to cope with the circulation of wild virus of polio following cases of import.

Rotary launched its PolioPlus program in 1985 and became in 1988 one of the spearheads of the Global Initiative for the polio eradication with who, UNICEF and the US for the Control Centre and the prevention of diseases. Since then, the number of cases of polio in the world has decreased by more than 99% to no longer to count as 416 in 2013.

The work of Rotary focuses on advocacy, fundraising, volunteer mobilization and awareness of the public. Rotarians have thus allocated more than \$ 1.2 billion and devoted countless volunteer hours to combat polio. The Gates Foundation has meanwhile committed to pay double the financial contribution of the Rotary for the eradication of polio, 35 million per year through 2018.

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