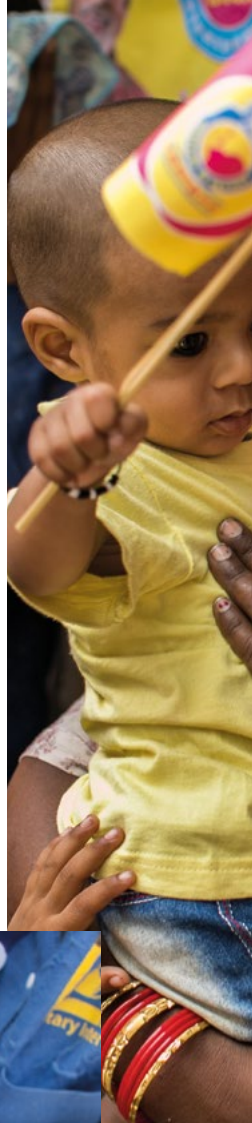




# END POLIO NOW

## *Where we're at*



By PDG Bob Aitken AM  
RI End Polio Now Coordinator,  
Region 9, 2018-20

### New goals for 2019-20

At long last, our *End Polio Now* campaign leaders in Evanston, US, have signed off on fundraising goals for the current Rotary year – once again a world target of US\$50 million for polio eradication has been set. Here are a few ways you can play your part:

- Encourage every club to set a minimum *PolioPlus* goal of \$1500 – in addition to annual fund goals.
- Encourage all districts to allocate 20 per cent of district designated funds to *PolioPlus* – especially in the light of the offer to match every \$1 of DDF with \$1 from the World Fund this Rotary year. When multiplied by the Gates match, the dollars are very impressive.
- Build awareness and support for Rotary's campaign to end polio with the use of videos, banners and special meetings. Encourage every club to purchase a polio pull-up banner and/or special signage for use in the public arena.



- Celebrate World Polio Day on October 24. Acknowledge every club in every district for making an effort to hold a special event in polio week.

### Achieving maximum value for donations

There was a great example of the impact of the innovative fundraising program by District 9680 in 2016-17. Some 43 clubs joined forces to raise US\$854,000 (AU\$1.15 million). This was achieved by the 43 clubs

contributing US\$2650 (AU\$3577) to *PolioPlus* – as requested by then RI president John Germ. More than US\$114,000 from clubs was matched by district designated funds. The final amount was possible due to a factor of 7.5 thanks to a 50 per cent subsidy from The Rotary Foundation World Fund and a 2:1 match from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The district was recognised on stage at the RI Convention in Atlanta, US, as the third largest DDF contributing district in the world that year.



### Fundraising becoming more difficult

Most Rotarians agree that fundraising becomes more difficult each year, and last year was particularly so given the huge demands of the tragic drought prevailing throughout most of NSW and Queensland.

In May, the *End Polio Now* campaign had raised just \$30 million and our goal of \$50 million was looking very shaky.

That equated to \$3 million per month over the first 10 months of the year. Take that average forward to the end of June and our total would have been approximately \$36 million. The \$14 million shortfall would have left \$28 million of the Bill & Melinda Gates matched funds on the table, which would have had great impact on our work in the field.

Concern was shared around the world and the response was magnificent. Every *End Polio Now* coordinator reported extra effort from clubs and districts and, incredibly, the final total was \$50.8 million.

All districts should have received TRF chair Gary Huang's message and, while the numbers are a little daunting, we must go forward together, reminding our clubs of the vital nature of our cause.

### World Polio Day

World Polio Day (October 24) is approaching and we need to be planning special promotional and fundraising events now. Several capital cities have picked up the Train Ride for Polio concept from Dave Anderson, of the Rotary Club of Beecroft, NSW, which has potential to encourage clubs and districts to raise large amounts of money.

For those more remote clubs, the Barefoot Bowls for Polio concept has taken off and promises excellent promotion and a lot of fun. Several Rotary clubs have made contact with their local bowls club to arrange an afternoon of fun, with the opportunity for promotion of the polio campaign.

Bowls club members provide a good target audience for promotion of our campaign, given many are of an age group that will remember the immunisation campaigns.

Many clubs and districts report their own special polio day activities and there is really no limit to what can be done.

Remember, *Rotary Down Under* can organise all kinds of *End Polio Now* promotional material – from banners to the famous *End Polio Now* red T-shirts.

### August case numbers

As previously reported, some good news for August was the completion of a polio-free three years for Nigeria, with certification to follow in the near future.

Further cases of wild polio virus have been reported in Afghanistan and Pakistan – a tribute to more intensive surveillance measures in the area of conflict along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border.

The latest figures (with figures for



the same 2018 period in brackets) are as follows:

- Global – 82 (15)
- Afghanistan – 16 (12)
- Pakistan – 66 (3)

The final total for 2018 was 33, with 21 in Afghanistan and 12 in Pakistan.

The number of global cases for vaccine derived polio stands at 72. There were 50 cases at the same time last year and a total of 103 for the year. •

**FAR LEFT:** A team works at a polio-vaccine transit post at a checkpoint in northwest Pakistan. (Photo: Khaula Jamil)

**TOP LEFT:** Rotarians, Rotaractors, health workers and other volunteers set up and operated more than 1500 immunisation booths in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India during a week-long campaign in June. (Photo: Alyce Henson/Rotary International)

**ABOVE:** Young Afghan sisters Setayesh and Sahamaz hold up their Purple Pinkies to show they have received the polio vaccine. (Photo: Tuuli Hongisto/WHO Afghanistan)