



Rotary Club of Sedona

District 5490, Club #1230

PO Box 2170

Sedona, Arizona 86339

www.sedonarotary.org

Service Above Self

December 11th Meeting
GSE Team Report

Upcoming Meetings:

December 18th

December 25th

January 1st

Bill Lee, Parks and Rec Director, City of Sedona

Dark, No regular Club Meeting

Dark, No regular Club Meeting

RI and Gates Foundation commit US\$200 million for intensified push to finish polio

By Wayne Hearn & Dan Nixon

Rotary International News - 26 November 2007

Photo by AP Images



Bill Gates, cofounder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, gives a baby the oral polio vaccine at the Shadnagar community health clinic in Andhra Pradesh, India, in 2002.

Rotary International announced a partnership with the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) on 26 November that will inject a much needed US\$200 million into the global effort to eradicate polio.

The Rotary Foundation received a \$100 million Gates Foundation challenge grant, which Rotary will raise funds to match, dollar for dollar, over three years.

Rotary will spend the initial \$100 million within one year in direct support of immunization activities carried out by the [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#), spearheaded by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), Rotary International, the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and [UNICEF](#).

"The extraordinary dedication of Rotary members has played a critical role in bringing polio to the brink of eradication," says Bill Gates, cochair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Eradicating polio will

be one of the most significant public health accomplishments in history, and we are committed to helping reach that goal."

The polio eradication grant is one of the largest challenge grants ever given by the Gates Foundation and the largest grant received by Rotary in its 102-year history. Since 1985, Rotary has made polio eradication its top priority and has contributed \$633 million to the effort.

"Rotarians worldwide have worked very hard over the years to reach this point, and it is rewarding to see our approach validated in such a significant way by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation," says Dr. Robert Scott, chair of The Rotary Foundation Trustees. "We hope that this shared commitment of Rotary and the Gates Foundation will challenge other donors, including foundations, governments, and nongovernmental organizations, to step up and make sure we have the resources needed to rid the world of polio once and for all."

"This partnership is a historic milestone - and timely opportunity - for Rotary through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative to help eradicate a disease that once devastated a thousand lives a day," says RI President Wilfrid Wilkinson. "I know that we as Rotarians will accept the challenge and do our part to finish the job."

The Gates Foundation grant comes at a critical juncture for the initiative, which urgently needs an infusion of funds to reach the eradication goal. Although the initiative has slashed the number of polio cases by 99 percent over the past two decades, the wild poliovirus still persists in four countries: Afghanistan, India, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Polio cases represented by that final 1 percent are the most costly to prevent, due to geographical isolation, poor public infrastructure, armed conflict, cultural barriers, and other factors.

"This investment is precisely the catalyst we need as we intensify the push to finish polio," says [Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO's director-general](#). "We have the technical tools to do it, and we can achieve a polio-free world if the rest of our financial partners step up to meet the challenge."

Most of the initial \$100 million will be spent in support of mass immunization campaigns in polio-affected countries, poliovirus surveillance activities, and community education and outreach. The grant will also support an expanded research agenda on ways to expedite interruption of the transmission of the wild poliovirus. Rotary will distribute the funds through grants to WHO and UNICEF.

"The funds made possible through the Gates Foundation grant will help the Global Polio Eradication Initiative scale up its efforts to provide oral polio vaccine to children in those isolated locations where it's most needed," [says Ann Veneman, executive director of UNICEF](#). "This important contribution will improve the capacity to protect vulnerable children from this debilitating disease."

[CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding](#) says the collaboration between Rotary and the Gates Foundation underscores the importance of private-sector involvement in major public health efforts. "As a government agency, we think it's wonderful that our private-sector colleagues have taken a leadership role in something as important as polio eradication. Their participation is absolutely cri

Do you know why a bicycle can not stand by itself?

Because it's two tired.