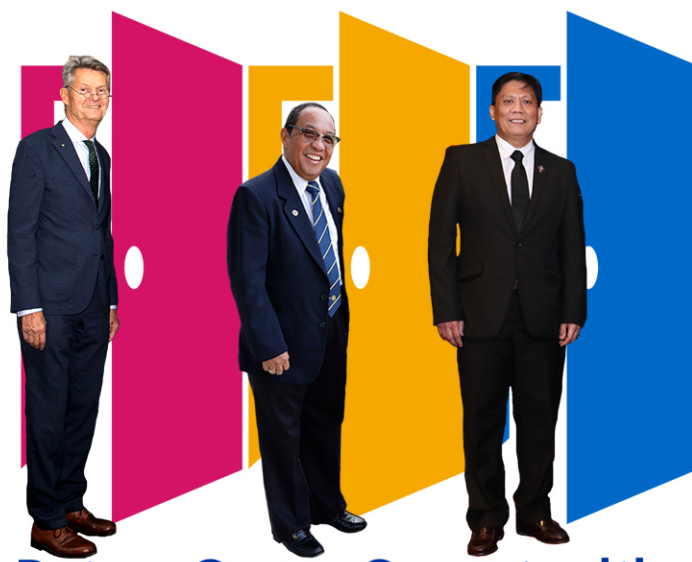


THE FOUNTAIN

CHARTERED OCTOBER 29, 1982

CLUB # 17104

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF ROTARY CLUB OF CEBU FUENTE DISTRICT 3860



Rotary Opens Opportunities

“Rotary is not just a club that you join, it is an invitation to endless opportunities”

HOLGER KNAACK

Rotary International President, RY 2020 - 2021



Rotary
Club of Cebu Fuente





HOLGER KNAACK
Rotary International President



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President's Message



Kung Hei Fat Choi!. As usual, we had as our guest speaker, Feng Shui Master Aldric Dalumpines, to give us guidance on feng shui. According to the master, 2021 is Year of the Metal Ox, and White is the lucky color of the year.

The meeting was star studded, as luminaries from other clubs in the district attended to hear for themselves, what's in store for 2021. Attendees were so interested that the supposed one-hour meeting was extended to three (3) hours to accommodate lots of questions. It was a night of fun as Master Aldric made side comments with double meaning.

Again, Happy Chinese New Year everyone.



EMMANUEL "EMMIE" P. TESALONA
President, RY 2020-2021





POULY JANG
Secretary,
RY 2020 - 2021

From Secretary's Desk

Attendance

ROTARY ID #	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	22nd 02/01	23rd 02/15	24th 02/22	25th 03/01	Perfect Attendance
6726464	Abad	Jose Alfonso					
6581939	Abarintos	Conrado	✓				
8794289	Abay-Abay	Emman Reyan	✓				
9330462	Amago IV	Atty. Bernardino	✓				
6218949	Amores	Maricel	✓				
3362897	Barba	Richard					
6207695	Baring	Engr. Jesselito	✓				
1166426	Calalang	Emmanuel					
8915638	Canama	Don Jade					
10954392	Deiparine	Atty. Sydrick Jose Andre					
2036342	Espina	Arch. Joseph Michael					
1166431	Gonzalez	Dr. Julio	✓				
8944393	Jang	Pouly					
3516557	Karamihan	Dave John	✓				
8599266	Kaufmann	Marina					
10411473	Libron	Dr. Tess Annette					
10234515	Llegunas	Dee Hora	✓				
9804883	Llegunas	Kristoffer	✓				
8794288	Lomanta	Atty. Lolita	✓				
10709899	Ong	Jason	✓				
6726443	Pasion	Ma. Consolacion					
10410040	Ponce	Jose Marie	✓				
6581937	Ramos	Geraldine					
8599268	Rimaz	Ma. Dolores					
5476140	San Pedro	Luz Filipinas					
8794286	Senerpida	Dr. Alain	✓				
3264107	Solomon	Mary Anne	✓				
8543450	Sulay	Kendrick	✓				
9330558	Tesalona	Emmanuel	✓				
5176670	Torres	Arch. Manuel, Jr.	✓				
10713855	Uy	Stephen Henry	✓				
10410033	Yared	Patrick					
TOTAL PERCENTAGE							

BIRTHDAYS

February 17 PP Marina Kaufmann
February 21 FHM Raki Vega-Siu

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

February 14 PP Joseph & Yingying Baduel
February 26 PP Dave John & Gaye Karamihan





IN ROTARY, 23 February is our anniversary, and February is also the month when we focus on promoting peace. There is a reason for this: Contributing to peace and international understanding has been a high

priority for us since our earliest days.

We are often asked: “How can we get involved in peace now?” There are many paths to peace in Rotary. Our youth programs point us in the direction of Positive Peace, as does the work of intercountry committees and the Rotary Action Group for Peace.

Another path is the Rotarian Peace Projects Incubator (RPPI), an inspirational collaboration among Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Rotary Peace Fellows and alumni. Led by Rotarians in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, RPPI has designed 48 global projects that any club can support, either directly or through Rotary Foundation global grants. Nino Lotishvili and Matthew Johnsen, alumni of the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, are two of the many volunteers.

During my Rotary peace journey, I have learned how personal resilience helps build inner peace and create sustainable outer peace. This was the inspiration behind the Women Peace Ambassadors for the South Caucasus project, which is based on my field research in Georgia. The RPPI team of Rotarians and peace fellows recognized the incredible potential of women from mixed-ethnicity families who live on borderlands to be role models for peace within and beyond their communities. Through workshops on building inner and outer peace that draw on the power of storytelling, 40 participants will be sharing their stories and reaching around 400 extended family and community members. These inspiring but marginalized women

will reclaim their inner strength as peacebuilders at the grassroots level. In this way, we will take steps toward the sustainable, peaceful society we need so much, not only in our region, but throughout the world. — Nino Lotishvili

I was excited to join the peace incubator project and to further strengthen my ties with Rotary's peace community by working with past and current peace fellows to develop these proposals. My team wrote five proposals — three in Bangladesh, one in Iraq, and one in Poland — that focus on the arts and on education to generate dialogue across religious divisions and avert the radicalization of young people. I was inspired by how, despite the pandemic, we came together via technology with a vision to develop, test, and strengthen ideas and to produce workable solutions that clubs across the world can support to advance peace. I am excited to work with Rotary's peace community to transform these visions into reality. — Matthew Johnsen

Here is further proof that in Rotary, we prefer action to words. This is Rotary at its best. I encourage you to visit rpqi.ch to explore the projects and support them.

We have lasted 116 years because of our strong ethics, our passion for Service Above Self, and our unique approach to problem-solving. One of our greatest strengths is how we reach across our communities and across national, ethnic, religious, and political divisions to unite people of all backgrounds and to help others. This month, let's celebrate our history and the many ways that *Rotary Opens Opportunities* to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace, our ultimate mission.

HOLGER KNAACK

President, Rotary International



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The satisfaction of stepping up

Giving is more than an activity. It is a way of life and a beacon in the search for hope in troubled times. There is great turmoil today, but these are not unusual times, not in the span of human history. The wisdom of the ages is especially important to help us set our path and purpose.

Such wisdom comes from the 12th-century philosopher known as Maimonides. Born in Córdoba, Spain, he and his family went into exile in Morocco to escape religious persecution. As a young man, he mastered Aristotle, astronomy, and later medicine. After moving to Cairo, Maimonides became known as the city's greatest rabbi, producing tomes of commentary on the Torah, and he lived out his final days as a renowned doctor.

But his greatest gift to humanity captured his thoughts about giving itself. His *Eight Levels of Charity* is a masterpiece that teaches us about what giving means and what motivates us to do it.

The bottom rung of Maimonides' ladder is giving out of pity or grudgingly. The next step up is giving less than one should, but doing so cheerfully. Climb up to the fifth rung and you are giving before being asked. Further up the ladder is giving in a way that the receiver does not know who the giver is. The eighth and highest level of charity is to anticipate distress and giving to avoid or prevent it.

When we immunize children against polio, we are anticipating potential illness. We do so with other efforts, such as Rotary projects that reduce the incidence of malaria or cervical cancer.

When we teach someone a profession that enables them to earn a living, we apply the eighth step. From microfinance to education, The Rotary Foundation helps us give the gift of self-reliance.

All of this good work awaits us, as does the work of supporting newborns, cleaning water sources, recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, and countless other efforts we lead.

I am proud to say that many Rotary members climb to the top of Maimonides' ladder. Many of them do so anonymously. Whoever they are and for whatever reason they share their gifts with the Foundation, I thank them.

As an organization, Rotary climbs that ladder as well. Every one of your donations helps us reach higher levels. As we climb this ladder as one, we gain a wider perspective. We see all those who need to be uplifted as well as the countless opportunities we have to help them in Rotary. And as we do so, we find our own meaning and purpose.

K.R. RAVINDRAN

Foundation trustee chair

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John P. Hewko
Kyiv, Ukraine





August	September
Membership & New Club Development	Basic Education & Literacy
Dave John Karamihan	Maria Celina Amores
Geraldine Ramos	Emman Reyán Abay-Abay
Conrado Abarintos	Maria Consolacion Pasion
October	November
Community Economic Development	Rotary Foundation
Jose Alfonso Abad	Lolita Lomanta
Kristoffer Llegunas	Joseph Michael Espina
Dee Hora Llegunas	Don Jade Canama
December	January
Disease Prevention & Treatment	Vocational Service
Mary Anne Alcordo Solomon	Richard Barba
Ma. Dolores Rimaz	Julio Gonzales
Marina Kaufmann	Tess Annette Serrato-Libron
February	March
Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention	Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
Kendrick Sulay	Alain Senerpida
Jesselito Baring	Jason Ong
April	May
Maternal & Child Health	Youth Service
Bernadino Amago IV	Pouly Jang
Jose Marie Ponce	Manuel Torres Jr
June	July 2021
Rotary Fellowship	
Emmanuel Calalang	
Stephen Henry Uy	
Patrick Yared	



MASTER ALDRIC V. DALUMPINES
Pambansang Geomancer ng
Pilipinas



2021: A Bullish Year! By Master Aldric

Yes you read right.

A bullish year amidst a recession is the storyline for feng shui economic outlook globally and locally in a time of pandemic.

Despite heavy unemployment and growing underemployment in the labor sectors, life goes on with business as unusual!

2021 as a Metal Ox Year will be more of the same as the 2020 Metal Rat year. However, with significantly remarkable improvements as people, governments and private sector businessmen adapt and adjust accordingly to learning curves of the pandemic.

Presumption of regularity spurs bullish confidence with cautious optimism as hopefully successful vaccines and vaccination programs flood the health care markets worldwide.

Lucky Chinese Zodiac signs in career, love, money and health are led by feng shui allies of the Ox sign!

These are the Rooster, Snake, followed by the rebounding fates of both Rat and Horse personalities.

Average luck augurs for Rabbit, Dragon, Monkey, Tiger, and Pig!

Challenged health and fortunes heavily affect the opposing sign of Ox which are the Sheep and fellow Ox! Equally affected with bad luck are Dog people.

However, proper feng shui of homes and business for all signs remains as the key remedies to the challenges posed by the Metal Ox year 2021.

For love lives, wearing white can attract Mr. Right for single and single again ladies of any age! Avoid red as it burns luck in love during a metal year.

Elementary feng shui cures based on your personal element are available for these purposes to alleviate bad health and finances!

In this regard signs under metal, earth and water elements are lucky while fire and wood are not! Know your sign element thru private message to Masters Aldric Luck on Facebook for admin fee via Gcash to be sure!



Cautious optimism in a bullish confidence global climate makes hopes spring eternal for everyone.

Philippine feng shui is dependent on the reading of the incumbent president's Chinese zodiac which is Rooster and excellent in the Metal Ox year!

Hardwork and focus on herd mentality or its basic unit of family and community in human terms is the thematic storyline of the year as taken from the natural traits of the Ox sign, marked by resilience and enduring survival with herd immunity as the desired bottomline marked improvement.

Overall, its business as usual in everyman and every woman's daily grinds but in unusual ways of finding employment and incomes due to Covid pandemic.

As Murphy's law states; if one cannot make both ends meet, make one end vegetables!

For more feng shui tips tune in to Philippine Business Feng Shui by liking this livestream free page every 8 pm on Wednesdays, PhilippineTime.



February events

6th



A BRRRISK GAME OF GOLF

Event: Chili Open
Host: Rotary Club of Akron, Ohio
What it benefits: Camp for children with special needs

What it is: Snow is a distinct possibility at this arctic (yet fun!) version of golf. The historic Hale Farm & Village in Bath is transformed into five courses with nine holes each, where brave “polar bear golfers” take to the tees. Contestants can warm up afterward with a chili meal. It’s probably better to choose brightly colored golf balls over the traditional white for this event!

13th

ARID CONDITIONING

Event: Buckskin Mountain Desert Dash
Host: Rotary Club of Parker, Arizona

What it benefits: Local charities
What it is: There are cycling races and there are running races; this festive and casual desert competition combines the two. Participants can opt for a five-mile bike ride or a 5K walk or run. Everyone ends up at the Desert Bar for libations and camaraderie, and all participants are entered to win donated prizes via drawings.

14th

FOOD FIGHT

Event: Hungry Games
Host: Rotary Club of Nevada City, California
What it benefits: Local youth programs

What it is: Rescheduled from March 2020 because of COVID-19, this long-awaited event will feature a cook-off between two local chefs, live music, live and silent auctions, and a raffle for a dozen \$100 restaurant gift certificates. The chefs will share their culinary tips and tricks as they compete.



19th to

21st

THE REEL DEAL

Event: Banff Mountain Film Festival
Host: Rotary Club of Grand Junction, Colorado
What it benefits: Youth, education, and conservation initiatives

What it is: For the sixth year, the Banff Mountain Film Festival makes a stop at the historic Avalon Theatre in downtown Grand Junction. For three nights, attendees can view a variety of acclaimed films about outdoor activities like kayaking, skiing, and hiking, as well as culturally oriented selections. There will also be an online option for those who prefer to watch from home.

27th to

28th

SEE FOOD, EAT IT

Event: Stone Crab & Seafood Festival
Host: Rotary Club of Homestead, Florida

What it benefits: Local nonprofits
What it is: Originally held on Key Largo, this beloved seafood fest was adopted by the Rotary Club of Homestead when it became too difficult to host on the island because of traffic concerns. Fresh seafood, live music, rides and entertainment for kids, and a plethora of craft and merchandise vendors add up to two days of much-anticipated fun.

02-01-2021 22nd RCCF GMM (Virtual)





A.D.O.P.T. (*A Dose of Positive Thoughts*)

Maricel Borrromeo-Amores

Membership Director 2020-2021

President, RY 2017-2018

If you want to get your message through, speak gently but with a purposeful tone. *Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi*, a Persian poet, clearly tells us that we should not raise our voice and use awful words no matter how tense the situation. Words and Voice should always be an equilibrium.

A voice with a pitch higher coupled with an angry tone that would sometimes

be condescending is truly disdainful and disrespectful. No matter if you are right, a gentle tone would deliver the message. If you just look back on the times that you raised your voice to prove a point- were you able to really resolve the concern or not? I do not think so as it would have created an unhealthy environment of ambivalent emotions that would not settle whatever was the issue or concern being worked out.



Ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice

- Author unknown

Ergo, if your emotions are running high, pause and take stock of your feelings and let it settle down prior talking to the person who might have wronged you. In that way, you are able to sort it out in a more affable manner. *“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.” Proverbs 15*



In a time of extraordinary challenges,
we can celebrate a milestone:
The WHO African region has been
certified free of the wild poliovirus.
Here's how we got there

POLIO FREE

By Diana Schoberg



It was May 1997, and Sam Okudzeto, then a member of the African Regional PolioPlus Committee from Ghana, was flying to Sierra Leone for what he anticipated would be a routine annual meeting about polio eradication in Africa. But when his plane touched down and he looked out the window, he saw that soldiers, guns drawn, had flooded the tarmac.

As Okudzeto made his way to passport control, he asked an airport official what was going on. “Listen carefully,” he was told. “You can hear the guns.” There had been a coup that morning.

“All we heard was *boom, boom, boom*,” Okudzeto recalls. “Then I realized that the aircraft that had brought us had gone.”

With no taxis running, Okudzeto and the other meeting participants who had been on the plane walked to a nearby hotel. “We all went to our rooms and put our luggage down and then went to the restaurant,” he recalls. “I asked for the biggest and juiciest sole fish I had ever had in my life, because it might be my last supper.” (Luckily it wasn’t, and four days later, Okudzeto and the others caught a helicopter out of the country.)

“There is an enemy in life — and it’s fear,” he says now. “For those who are not afraid, it’s amazing what you can do. It’s fantastic to see the result now: Africa is [wild] polio-free.”

In August, the World Health Organization (WHO) certified the African region free of wild poliovirus, the culmination of a decades-long effort involving millions of Rotary members, health workers, government officials, traditional and religious leaders, and parents. Since 1996, a year when wild polio paralyzed an estimated 75,000 children across Africa, health workers have given more than 9 billion doses of the oral polio vaccine, preventing 1.8 million wild polio cases.

“Everybody chipped in,” says Gaston Kaba, longtime chair of the Niger PolioPlus Committee (he retired from the position in June 2019).

“Volunteers, town criers, many other people were involved. Nobody knows about them. They worked quietly to get the job done.”

The 47 countries that make up WHO’s African region are home to nearly 1,400 Rotary clubs and 32,000 members, many of whom have dedicated time and resources to the effort. Rotary members around the world have contributed nearly \$890 million toward eradicating polio in the region, advocated for support from their governments,

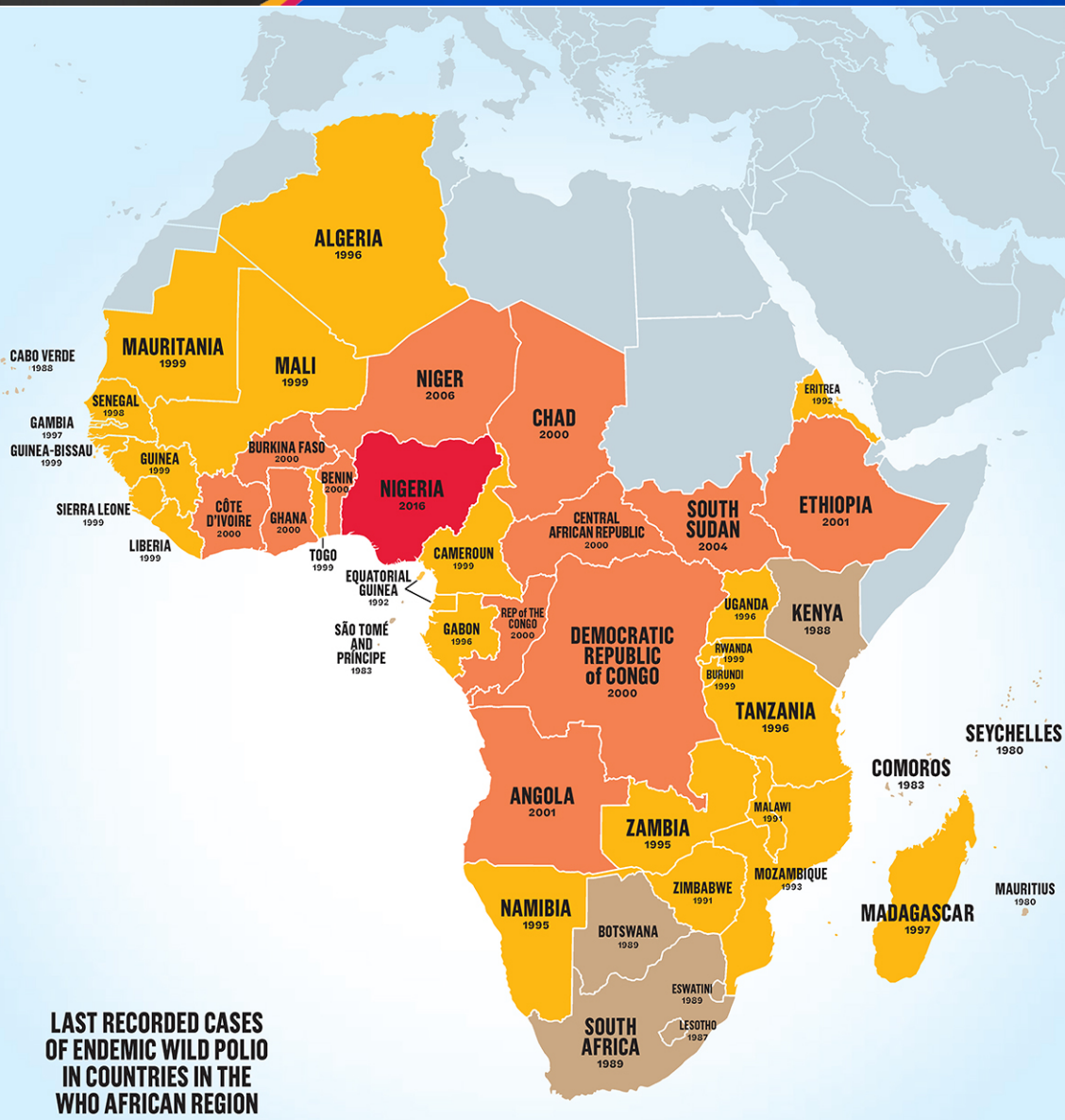
mobilized communities around National Immunization Days, and held events for World Polio Day to raise public awareness.

The legacy of those efforts is a health care infrastructure that is playing an important role in the COVID-19 pandemic and is poised to respond to future public health emergencies. The laboratory and surveillance networks developed to track the polio-

virus are being used to monitor other diseases. Polio workers bolster an array of routine immunizations, deliver deworming medicines and oral rehydration salts, and provide other health services. And they continue to vaccinate children against polio, because until the virus is eradicated from the earth, it remains a threat everywhere. “Being declared free of polio is an amazing success,” says Teguest Yilma, Ethiopia PolioPlus Committee chair. “I am happy — but I’m still not relaxed.”

In a time of extraordinary challenges, we can celebrate the eradication of wild polio in the African region. Here are just a few of the stories of the drive and determination Rotary members and our partners have shown in overcoming challenges and setbacks.

**ROTARY MEMBERS
AROUND THE WORLD HAVE
CONTRIBUTED NEARLY
\$890 MILLION TOWARD
ERADICATING POLIO
IN THE AFRICAN REGION.**



LAST RECORDED CASES OF ENDEMIC WILD POLIO IN COUNTRIES IN THE WHO AFRICAN REGION

- 1980s
- 1990s
- 2000s
- 2010s

Sources: Our World in Data; Global Polio Eradication Initiative

THE CHALLENGE:

Conflict

In February 2005, as civil war raged through Côte d'Ivoire, Marie-Irène Richmond-Ahoua entered the heart of rebel-held territory. Then the national PolioPlus committee chair, Richmond-Ahoua joined representatives from Rotary's partners on a United Nations (UN) flight to Bouaké, where the rebels were based. "We met with rebel chiefs to beg them to make immunization days safe," she recalls, asking for their cooperation in providing soldiers to protect the vaccinators. "They did it. For five days, it was easy to reach children."

Over the years, security was one of the biggest challenges to the polio eradication effort in Africa. Rotary and its partners worked to negotiate truces and military protection to make sure that health workers could reach every child in conflict areas. In 1994 and 1996, the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Sudanese government agreed to honor "corridors of peace" where vaccinators could travel safely, and two years later, a PolioPlus grant supported the airlifting of vaccines into villages that hadn't seen a government health worker in 15 years. In 1985 in Uganda, the government and the National Resistance Army agreed to permit UNICEF flights into rebel-held territory after the civil war cut off a third of the population from government services. And in late 1999, then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan negotiated a nationwide truce in Sierra Leone so that National Immunization Days could be held.

But at times, bloodshed still derailed polio eradication efforts. Nigeria thought it had seen its last case of wild polio in July 2014. But then the militant group

Boko Haram kept vaccinators out of its strongholds in Borno state in northeastern Nigeria for several years. "Boko Haram was against immunizations in the first place, so many health facilities were destroyed. Immunization was not even something you could think about," says Tunji Funsho, who has served as Nigeria PolioPlus Committee chair since 2013. Polio was festering, undiagnosed, in the areas of Borno where children hadn't received their vaccines, and in 2016 the country recorded four cases.

But the Nigerian government — as well as Rotary, its partners, and health workers and volunteers — never gave up. The Nigerian Army became a key participant in vaccination efforts. At first, it would secure an area, and vaccinators would spend two days or less quickly immunizing children before leaving, a strategy called "hit and run." Later, armed local militia members would escort vaccinators to unsafe areas. Today, army medical corps members carry the vaccine to settlements

that remain unsafe for civilians to enter and vaccinate children themselves. "The military knows how to take care of themselves," Funsho says.

Funsho recalls visiting the home of the child who had the last case of wild polio in Nigeria, another innocent victim of the insurgency. "The potential for a three-year-old girl in Borno state to achieve the best that is possible for her life is already very low — educationally, socially, in all aspects of human endeavor," he says. "Add polio paralysis to that, and what is the hope for that child? It is heart-rending."

"BOKO HARAM WAS AGAINST IMMUNIZATIONS IN THE FIRST PLACE, SO MANY HEALTH FACILITIES WERE DESTROYED. IMMUNIZATION WAS NOT EVEN SOMETHING YOU COULD THINK ABOUT."

Rotary and its partners worked to negotiate truces and military protection for health workers in conflict areas.



Tony Karumba/AFP via Getty Images



THE CHALLENGE:

Rumors

In Nigeria, another significant obstacle was the persistent rumors about the safety of the oral polio vaccine that spread in the northern part of the country in the early 2000s, Funsho says. Skeptical political and religious leaders told parents to refuse vaccinations, combining rhetoric of the anti-vaccine movement with conspiracy theories about a Western plot to sterilize Muslims. “This rumor was not homegrown. It came from abroad and found local weapons to energize it,” Funsho says. “It led to vaccination becoming a political thing rather than a means to protect our children against paralysis.”

The situation deteriorated. Several states in northern Nigeria canceled all immunization activities until officials could show proof that the vaccine was safe, and the country went 14 months without a National Immunization Day. The Nigerian government, strongly committed to polio eradication, set up a committee that included key Muslim leaders to verify the vaccine’s safety. They toured vaccine manufacturing sites and produced a report that satisfied all except political and religious leaders in Kano state, the epicenter of the rumors. Officials then sent their own committee of health experts and religious scholars to Indonesia, where they reconfirmed the safety of a vaccine manufactured in a Muslim country.

Meanwhile, Rotary members continued to engage in advocacy and in educating the public. Ado Bayero,

the late emir of Kano, was a supporter of the Rotary Club of Kano, and Funsho was his personal physician. One of the country’s most influential Muslim leaders, the emir “was a great friend of Rotary,” Funsho says. “He knew Rotary would not bring anything harmful.” The emir demonstrated his faith in the oral polio vaccine by personally immunizing his grandchildren in his palace. “We used that to a lot of our advantage in the media.”

“IT LED TO VACCINATION BECOMING A POLITICAL THING RATHER THAN A MEANS TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN AGAINST PARALYSIS.”

In neighboring Niger, a country whose population is 99 percent Muslim, then-President Mamadou Tandja pushed back against the persistent rumors in a key speech that launched a 2004 immunization campaign. He gave the speech in Hausa, a language widely spoken in Niger as well as Nigeria, which made his message about the importance of vaccination all the more effective. “Tandja was very strong on the message he delivered,” says

Kaba, the former Niger PolioPlus Committee chair. “He referred to the Quran. You don’t joke with the Quran.” A month later, Rotary presented Tandja with a Polio Eradication Champion Award.

Polio cases in Africa had been trending down until the early 2000s. But the rumors and missed immunizations led to the exportation of the virus from Nigeria to almost 20 countries. “As soon as we overcame that, the graph just went gradually down and down until we got to zero,” Funsho says.

Rotary members in Nigeria advocated with government leaders and educated the public to dispel persistent myths about vaccine safety.

THE CHALLENGE:

Hard-to-reach children

Nearly 800,000 refugees live in Ethiopia, most of them from Eritrea, Somalia, and South Sudan. “Our borders are very porous. A lot of people come in and out from neighboring countries,” Yilma says. So the government coordinates cross-border vaccination campaigns with surrounding nations to ensure that the virus isn’t brought in over the border.

The country has some of the most rugged terrain in Africa — from mountainous highlands to vast desert plains that sit hundreds of feet below sea level. There are some places where health workers have to walk hours to reach a single family, and others that are so densely populated that ensuring that every child is vaccinated can be difficult. “Ethiopia didn’t face a situation like in Nigeria where people outright refused to be vaccinated,” Yilma says. “The problems in Ethiopia are that it’s a large population that is mobile and that the topography of Ethiopia makes them very difficult to reach.”

Throughout the African region, millions of health workers have traveled by foot, boat, bicycle, and bus during the decades-long eradication campaign.

Grants from The Rotary Foundation have supported them along the way. In 2000, Africa’s first synchronized multicountry immunization campaigns reached 76 million children in 17 countries.

Rotary members from other countries often came to Ethiopia to volunteer during National Immunization Days, providing a morale boost to local members and communities. The visitors saw other needs as well and stepped up to help, Yilma says, supporting water projects and schools in addition to polio eradication.

Related health initiatives — the “plus” in PolioPlus — went a long way toward getting local communities to accept the polio vaccine, says Funsho. During polio outbreaks in Nigeria, children were visited frequently by health workers

to provide immunizations, yet often families didn’t have clean drinking water or access to basic medicines. Grants from the Foundation allowed Rotary members to install solar-powered boreholes, first in settlements for displaced persons in Borno and later in surrounding communities. “That endeared Rotary to the area,” Funsho says.

THROUGHOUT THE AFRICAN REGION, MILLIONS OF HEALTH WORKERS HAVE TRAVELED BY FOOT, BOAT, BICYCLE, AND BUS DURING THE DECADES-LONG ERADICATION CAMPAIGN.



To eradicate wild polio in Africa, health workers had to vaccinate hard-to-reach children such as those at this camp for internally displaced people in northern Nigeria.



THE CHALLENGE:

Political will

It was 1996. Wild polio would paralyze 75,000 children across Africa that year. A decade earlier, African health ministers had agreed to a goal to reach 75 percent of children with vaccines by 1990 — but the gains they had made were erased in the face of a deteriorating regional economy, lingering drought, competing health priorities, and debilitating civil wars. Polio eradication needed a champion.

Rotary and its partners found one in Nelson Mandela. Approached by Rotary leaders, Mandela, then president of South Africa, agreed to advocate for the cause. At the July 1996 summit of the Organization of African Unity (the predecessor to the African Union), Mandela galvanized his fellow African heads of state to make polio eradication an urgent priority. Within weeks, Mandela, with Rotary leaders by his side, launched the Kick Polio Out of Africa campaign, using soccer matches and sports stars to rally support. By the end of the year, more than 30 countries had held National or Sub-national Immunization Days, and 60 million children had been vaccinated. “The involvement of the African Union, particularly of Mandela, meant so much for us,” Okudzeto says. “It was fantastic.”

Rotary members used their respected roles in society — and often their personal charisma — to advocate for their governments to become active in polio eradication. “Security and political will were the biggest challenges,” says Richmond-Ahoua, the Côte d’Ivoire PolioPlus Committee chair from 1996 to 2014. “We have to convince civic society, opinion leaders, parents, traditional leaders, and religious leaders. Ending polio was not an option; it was an obligation.”

Such advocacy work wasn’t glamorous; it involved regular meetings with ministers of health and their staff members to remind them that polio-virus was still there. And sometimes Rotary members had to get creative to convince recalcitrant leaders that it was their responsibility to immunize the citizens of their country. Richmond-Ahoua tells a story about this.

It was 2000, and there had been a coup in Côte d’Ivoire. The new government didn’t want to carry out National Immunization Days. Richmond-Ahoua decided to go to the head of state’s home — without an appointment.

Upon arrival, she asked to see the wife of General Robert Guéï, who had been put in charge after the coup. “They looked at me as if I was mad,” she says. “But Rotarians take risks when they want some-

thing.” After waiting more than five hours, she was finally called in to see the first lady, Rose Doucou Guéï. When she explained why she was there, the first lady was in complete agreement, and she not only convinced her husband of the importance of the NIDs, but attended one herself. “She’s a woman.

She has children. She understood,” Richmond-Ahoua says.

Richmond-Ahoua’s story is one dramatic example of the everyday advocacy by Rotary members to keep polio at the top of the political agenda in countries throughout the continent. Though now Africa is wild polio-free, the work will continue, Richmond-Ahoua says. “We have to ensure that the political will is strong to finish the job.”

Kaba recalls looking at a map of Niger with Tandja, the country’s president from 1999 to 2010. “Niger is a huge country, the size of California and Texas combined, and two-thirds of the country is desert. He said, ‘Can we eradicate polio from this country?’” Kaba remembers. “I said, ‘Yes, with your help, we can.’” ■

**ROTARY MEMBERS USED
THEIR RESPECTED ROLES
IN SOCIETY TO ADVOCATE
FOR THEIR GOVERNMENTS
TO BECOME ACTIVE
IN POLIO ERADICATION.**

The next phase

The certification of the African region as wild polio-free is a milestone in Rotary’s commitment to rid the world of polio. But the work isn’t over. “We are entering a phase that will be a bit more difficult, because when we advocate for more funds and more resources, people will say that we’ve been certified polio-free, so why do we need more?” Funsho says.

As long as the poliovirus survives anywhere, it remains only a plane ride away. Routine immunization rates in Nigeria aren’t high enough to guarantee that if wild poliovirus is imported back into the country, more children won’t be paralyzed. The country will still need to hold regular National Immunization Days, even if not at the pace they were held before certification. “Our current slogan is ‘Keep Polio at Zero,’” Funsho says.

You can play a part in keeping Africa free of wild polio — and in wiping out wild polio in the last two endemic countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Each contribution to the PolioPlus Fund gets us closer to our goal of \$50 million per year to end polio. With every dollar matched 2-to-1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, your donation goes even further to help reach children in every part of the world with the polio vaccine as well as other lifesaving vaccines and health care. Make your contribution at endpolio.org/donate.





ORATIO IMPERATA: PRAYER AGAINST COVID-19 or 2019 CORONA VIRUS DISEASE

**God our Father,
We come to you in our need
To ask your protection against the 2019 Corona Virus Disease,
That has claimed lives
And has affected many.**

**We pray for your grace
For the people tasked with studying the nature and cause
Of this virus and its disease
And of stemming the tide of its transmission.
Guide the hands and minds of medical experts
That they may minister to the sick
With competence and compassion,
And of those governments and private agencies
That must find cure and solution to this epidemic.**

**We pray for those afflicted
May they be restored to health soon.**

**Grant us the grace
To work for the good of all
And to help those in need.**

**Grant this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever. Amen.**

**Mary Help of all Christians, pray for us.
St. Raphael the Archangel, pray for us.
St. Rock, pray for us.
St. Lorenzo Ruiz, pray for us.**





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NOTES:
