

# NEWS RELEASE

**Rotary announces US$35 million to support a polio-free world**

**EVANSTON, Ill. (17 January 2017)** — Rotary today announced $35 million in grants to support the global effort to end polio, bringing the humanitarian service organization’s contribution to $140 million since January 2016.

Nearly half of the funds Rotary announced today ($16.15 million) will support the emergency response campaigns in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin (Chad, northern Cameroon, southern Niger and Central African Republic). Four cases of polio were detected in Nigeria in 2016, which had previously not seen a case since July 2014.

With these cases, funding is needed to support rapid response plans in Nigeria and surrounding countries to stop the outbreak.

While significant strides have been made against the paralyzing disease, with just 35 cases reported in 2016, polio remains a threat in hard-to-reach and underserved areas, and conflict zones. To sustain this progress, and protect all children from polio, experts say $1.5 billion is needed.

In addition to supporting the response in the Lake Chad Basin region, funding has been allocated to support polio eradication efforts in Afghanistan ($7.15 million), Pakistan ($4.2 million), Somalia ($4.64 million), and South Sudan ($2.19 million). A final grant in the amount of $666,845 will support technical assistance in UNICEF’s West and Central Africa Regional Office.

Rotary has contributed more than $1.6 billion, including matching funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and countless volunteer hours since launching its polio immunization program, PolioPlus, in 1985. In 1988, Rotary became a spearheading partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and was later joined by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Since the initiative launched, the incidence of polio has plummeted by more than 99.9 percent, from about 350,000 cases a year to 35 confirmed in 2016, and no cases in 2017.

**About Rotary**

[Rotary](http://www.rotary.org) brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 35,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a [polio-free world](http://www.endpolio.org). To access broadcast quality video footage and still photos go to: [The Newsmarket](http://rotary.thenewsmarket.com/).

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**Media Contact:**

**Michelle Kloempken:** [Michelle.Kloempken@rotary.org](mailto:Michelle.Kloempken@rotary.org), 847-866-3247