



# **Rotarian Action Groups**

## 2008-09 Annual Report

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## Introduction

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Every year Rotarian Action Groups submit a report of activities and finances to Rotary International. These annual reports summarize membership statistics and international humanitarian service activities completed. The following report provides an overview of the work Rotarian Action Groups are doing to further the *Object of Rotary* worldwide.

Additional information about Rotarian Action Groups can be found online, [www.rotary.org/actiongroups](http://www.rotary.org/actiongroups).

## **Action Groups at a Glance**

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Since Rotarian Action Groups were created by the RI Board of Directors in 2005, their popularity and impact have grown around the world. The following provides a broad look at membership and finances of Rotarian Action Groups in 2008-09.

### **Membership**

In 2008-09, 16 Rotarian Action Groups reported a combined membership of 23,464 Rotarians, Rotarian spouses, and Rotaractors in more than 100 countries worldwide. Excluding the Rotarian Action Group for Population Growth & Sustainable Development, which reported the largest membership of any group at 18,079 active members, the average size of Rotarian Action Groups is around 359 active members. This represents a 3.5% increase in the average number of active members reported by Rotarian Action Groups in 2007-08.

### **Finances**

Together these groups reported a combined income of nearly US\$619,000 from membership dues, grants, and other charitable contributions. In 2008-09, all but one group asked members to pay either annual or lifetime membership dues. The average annual membership cost was US\$20 and average lifetime membership cost was US\$90. Rotarian Action Groups reported expenses of over US\$510,000 for international humanitarian service projects and other activities. At year end, Rotarian Action Groups reported combined net assets of over US\$553,000.

# Summary of Annual Reports

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## **Rotarians for Fighting AIDS: a Rotarian Action Group**

### *Purpose*

To break the silence on AIDS, thereby reducing the stigma and making AIDS a mainstream issue. Rotarians for Fighting AIDS (RFFA) works on HIV/AIDS education and prevention, with a particular focus on developing and implementing community support efforts for orphans and vulnerable children.

### *Membership*

In 2008-09, RFFA reported 577 active members in 25 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$25

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### *International Service Projects and Activities*

In 2008-09 RFFA continued to support major HIV/AIDS projects in Africa and partnerships with HOPE Worldwide and the African Network for Children Orphaned and At Risk (ANCHOR). RFFA developed new partnerships with The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation and The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

RFFA has focused largely on two programs to help support the ANCHOR children: Orphan Rescue and Kidz Clubs. Orphan Rescue helps put vulnerable children back in school and pays for their school fees, clothing, sports equipment, nutritional support and mosquito nets. To date, RFFA has raised \$450,000 (\$140,000 in the second half of 2008-09) for Orphan Rescue and each year RFFA's publicity has increased the program's funding.

The Kidz Club program is beginning to build capacity this year, primarily because of the HOPE Kenya model. This program is managed by Rotary Community Corps (RCCs), which consist of young adults from local Kenyan communities who are mentored by a Rotary club and trained in psychosocial support and entrepreneurship skills. This program has proven to be a sustainable answer to child development, addressing children's needs with life skills training, physical protection, nutritional support and other resources.

Since the ANCHOR program's 2005 inception, 102,000 orphans and vulnerable children in Africa have received care, support and education.

RFFA also works to mobilize Rotary clubs and districts into action through communication. It has launched a new website, sent newsletters, developed a story video, and participated in conferences and the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham.

### *Contact Information*

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention**

### ***Purpose***

To bring together, in fellowship and service, Rotarians, spouses and Rotaractors who have an active interest in the prevention of blindness and the promotion of eye health and vision worldwide. Provide both a platform and a forum to discuss ideas and develop appropriate cooperative programs to further shared goals. Promote international understanding and peace through common purpose and efforts.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention (RAGBP) reported 227 active members in 39 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* None

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

RAGBP conducted numerous eye care projects around the world. Some of these projects were completed with the help of 35 grants from The Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund, totaling almost \$73,000.

RAGBP participated in the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham, the Vision Expo (West) Tradeshow, the American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Convention, and the Unite for Sight Conference.

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## **Global Network for Blood Donation, a Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To develop an international network of Rotarians and Rotaractors involved in blood donor projects, inspire other clubs and districts to join the endeavor, and serve as a forum to share experiences.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, the Global Network for Blood Donation, a Rotarian Action Group (GNBD) reported 920 active members in 70 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* None

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

Throughout Rotary year 2008-09, GNBD expanded two major blood donor projects. The Governors' Challenge Blood Drive (GCBD) expanded from two to five neighboring districts in the U.S. The GCBD's original district collected 60,002 blood units. The expansion effort is also underway in Southern Africa. Additionally, the French project "Mon Sang pour les Autres" ("My Blood for Others") has branched further into French-speaking parts of Africa.

GNBD exhibited and held a breakout session at the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham, which increased membership by more than 200 members. GNBD has begun compiling a collection of testimonials about lives

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saved by blood donations, which can be presented in newsletters and posters by any Rotary club, district or organization promoting volunteer blood donation.

The GNBD website has served as the focal point for sharing information and experiences about Rotary related blood donation projects around the world.

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## **Rotarian Action Group of Dental Volunteers**

### ***Purpose***

To provide humanitarian dental service throughout the world and promote awareness of opportunities for service in the vocation of dentistry.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group of Dental Volunteers (RAGDV) reported 305 active members in 32 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$30

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

In 2008-09, RAGDV successfully carried out two dental missions with Las Pinas Dental Society in the Philippines. Additional dental missions are planned.

RAGDV worked with RFFA to provide dentists for a RFFA project in Africa. Broadcasting the need for dentists to participate in a RFFA project demonstrated the impact of collaboration between RAGs. RAGDV also helped facilitate volunteers for an Alliance for Smiles project in China. RAGDV has assisted dentists in finding volunteer opportunities and assisted organizations in finding volunteers. Currently RAGDV is assisting a dental group of Rotarians in Florida who are planning their first dental mission to Panama.

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Diabetes**

### ***Purpose***

To increase awareness and Rotarian Action Group for Diabetes (RAGD) membership to fight the diabetes epidemic. RAGD works to educate and help Rotary districts and clubs mobilize and provide service through a strong commitment to education, identification, and treatment of diabetes, especially among children in developing countries.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, RAGD reported 25 active members in 8 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$25

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

With RAGD recently recognized by the RI Board in November 2008, effort was spent to educate and create awareness throughout Rotary. RAGD exhibited at the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham. The president of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), the past president of the American Diabetes Association, and the president of RAGD also presented at a breakout session at the Convention. The presentation included background on the IDF partnership with RAGD and opportunities for clubs and districts to participate in RAGD service projects.

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## **Disaster Relief Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To provide disaster relief and related responses to natural disasters.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, the Disaster Relief Rotarian Action Group (DRRAG) reported 433 active members in 45 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$25

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

In 2008-09, DRRAG used its web communications portal to relay updates and best practices information during 14 major relief coordination efforts.

DRRAG engaged clubs and districts with a view to expanding its network and enabling them to participate in the continuum of disaster management.

DRRAG continues to work on standardized training modules that would allow clubs to assist in the development of disaster planning strategies.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **World Health Fairs, a Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To collaborate with local Rotary clubs and districts to build sustainable local health fair programs.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, World Health Fairs, a Rotarian Action Group (WHF) reported 287 active members in 37 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$20

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

WHF continues to build on current successes, expand into new countries, and increase membership.

In September 2008, 25 Health Fair Center leaders traveled to Dubna in Western Russia and attended the First Annual Training Seminar. The first seminar was a huge success and led to plans for a Second Annual Training Seminar.

Rotarians in Mexico have continued their successful health fairs in the Merida area of Cancun, and Villahermosa, Tabasco; there has also been activity in Celaya.

The government of Fiji has taken over most of the health fair operations started by Suva and Denver Rotarians, but a few Rotary clubs still produce annual fairs.

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Thailand has produced some health fair activity in the northern region.

In the U.S., WHF has active operations in Colorado, Wyoming and Alaska.

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## **Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration, a Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To promote fellowship, understanding, and acquaintance among Rotarians who share a common interest or experience in hearing impairment, and encourage research for cures and prevention.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration, a Rotarian Action Group (RFHR) reported 172 active members in 31 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$10

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

RFHR sponsored and managed Woodstick 2008, an annual drumming event, held this year at the Juanita High School Field House in Seattle. Scientists and staff from the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center participated and the Rotary Club of Clover Park provided volunteers. Funds were shared with the Seattle Rotary Music 4Life project.

RFHR organized and led a tour of the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center for local Rotarian leaders with presentations by scientists.

RFHR participated in a letter writing campaign to US Senator Patty Murray (WA), a Veteran Affairs Committee member, and US Senator Tom Harkin (IA). As a major disability from the war on terror is now hearing damage and tinnitus, several high ranking military officers from the area were involved in appealing to Congress for hearing loss research funding.

RFHR exhibited at the annual District 5020 conference and has presented to over 50 clubs in and near its district. RFHR is in the process of updating its video, *Hope for Hearing Loss*, to incorporate new breakthroughs in research. RFHR will distribute 1,000 or more copies at the 2010 RI Convention in Montreal.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger and Malnutrition**

### ***Purpose***

To provide nutritious food to the hungry, by creating and supporting Rotary projects and programs that enhance and sustain local food security, and increase self-reliance in families and communities.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger and Malnutrition (H&MRAG) reported 85 active members in 14 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$20

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

In 2008-09, H&MRAG initiated its first international service project in India, the Rotary Paapa (Rotary Child) project, which focuses on child malnutrition. Over the last year the project has grown to help 60 malnourished children, ages infant to five months, who have received supplemental nutrition. Medical examinations were performed six months after the project launch and findings showed significant improvement in the children's weight, general health and activity. Based on this progress report, H&MRAG has approved US\$1,540 to sustain this project.

H&MRAG also helped facilitate a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant for a village solar oven on a remote island in the Philippines.

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## **Rotarians Eliminating Malaria, a Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To unite Rotarians and Rotaractors with other individuals, governments and institutions to control malaria and enhance the effectiveness of operational and delivery models.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarians Eliminating Malaria, a Rotarian Action Group (REMaRAG) reported 149 active members in 22 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$20

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

REMaRAG's country coordinators have worked to get subsidies and support from businesses and bring together other NGOs.

Through a Volunteer Service Grant from The Rotary Foundation, REMaRAG initiated new projects, consolidated existing projects and increased Rotary awareness in eastern Africa.

REMaRAG continues to partner with Alliance for Malaria Prevention to implement malaria control campaigns by distributing mosquito nets throughout entire countries, with 10-12 campaigns per year. It is anticipated that cooperating campaigns will distribute approximately 140 million nets by the end of 2010. The Alliance convenes over 20 partners to fund, coordinate, staff, and follow up on this logistically complex work.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Microcredit**

### ***Purpose***

To create dynamic partnerships focusing on education, motivation, communication and coordination to end poverty.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for Microcredit (RAGM) reported 384 active members in 35 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* None

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

In 2008-09, RAGM focused to increase the depth of its base of operations.

### **Field Project - Costa Rica**

The Rotary Club of San Jose and Rotaractors from Heredia participated in a FIDERPAC (Fundacion Integral de Desarrollo Rural del Pacifico Central, a NGO specializing in microcredit projects) event that included dancing and music provided by the local schoolchildren. All the borrowers and their children attended, and an agreement was signed with FIDERPAC to establish community banks, with the understanding that the funds would be reimbursed upon a successful fundraising event by the Rotaractors of Calgary, Canada. The Rotary club also distributed school supplies to the children. The event successfully demonstrated to the community that FIDERPAC and Rotarians are working together to improve their standard of living. As a result of this project, a Costa Rican club has continued to invest in the school's needs and provided new restrooms for the children. This Costa Rican pilot project was the subject of the 2008 Rotaract Outstanding Project of the Year award for North America. This project remains an emphasis for RAGM and original borrowers have received second, third, and fourth loans.

### **Field Project – Liberia**

Update on the Foundation for Women Liberia (FFWL) Microcredit Project: Through multiple Rotary clubs in Canada and the U.S., RAGM raised \$50,000 to directly support the FFWL, operating the first microcredit program in the country since the end of the war. The program has reached more than 400 borrowers in seven of Liberia's fifteen counties. The program has the full support of Liberia President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Vice President Joseph Boakai.

## **Continued Initiatives**

Education has expanded on several levels. New PowerPoint presentations are available on-line. RAGM produced a “A Booth-in-a-Box” with RAGM materials for members to educate and promote microcredit. The same material was put on flash drives to provide “A Booth-on-a-Stick”.

Building on last year’s Microcredit Workshop at Uniendo America in Costa Rica, RAGM conducted a similar workshop in Belize in January 2009. RAGM also presented at the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Rotarians for Mine Action: a Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To promote fellowship and understanding among Rotarians interested in removing landmines and providing education and survivor assistance.

*Rotarians for Mine Action: a Rotarian Action Group requested that its report not be shared.*

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Multiple Sclerosis Awareness**

### ***Purpose***

To promote MS awareness, encourage international and local partnerships between Rotarians and national MS Societies, and contribute to MS research.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for Multiple Sclerosis Awareness (RAGMSA) reported 366 active members in 23 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* None

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* \$20

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

In 2008-09 RAGMSA’s main international focus was to expand its international network of Rotarians by building communication via an e-mail group.

RAGMSA presented at the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham, which was attended by over 50 Rotarians. It also presented at the District 9800 Assembly and provided information at the District 9800 Conference.

### **Partnerships between Rotary clubs and MS Societies**

The Rotary Club of Philadelphia, USA continues to have an annual bike ride. Each year the event directs funds to an MS research project or to help a person with MS manage their daily life and achieve their dreams.

RAGMSA and the Rotary Club of Gisborne, Australia facilitated its third annual Macedon Ranges Bike Ride.

An Australia Rotary club held a MS Global Dinner to raise awareness and funds for research projects in Australia and MSIF.

The Rotary Club of Pakenham, Australia, in partnership with Australian Rotary Health Research Fund and Melbourne University, enabled a PhD student to start their final year of study. The Rotary Club of Whyalla, Australia is in the process of starting a three year partnership with the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund and a university to fund a PhD student's studies. RAGMSA has established a connection with Melbourne University to identify high potential students for future MS research scholarships. RAGMSA has been invited again to the MS Research Australia Research Partners presentation to outline how investment in MS research is making a difference.

A 24 hour Megaswim started in 2001, and now the swims are running in three Australian states.

In Australia there is a shortage of facilities for young people who require intensive 24/7 care. RAGMSA has established a team to develop a facility concept focused on customer needs, ongoing facility management, patient and family respite, and caregiver support and training.

District 9790 has officially recognized MS Awareness as an approved district project.

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Polio Survivors and Associates**

### ***Purpose***

To gather and disseminate information to increase the contribution to the health of polio survivors and those involved with their health care.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for Polio Survivors and Associates (PSA) reported 167 active members in 12 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$100

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* None

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

PSA supported a wide variety of international projects in 2008-09. In Kano, Nigeria, PSA purchased soccer uniforms for a team of polio survivors. In India, Taiwan and Hong Kong, PSA partnered with local clubs and districts to perform corrective surgeries. PSA collaborated with partners in Nigeria, Michigan, New York and

Connecticut to provide self-propelled wheelchairs for polio survivors in northern Nigeria. PSA also partnered with 21 Rotary clubs, six districts, and the PSA Donor Advised Fund to provide bicycle wheelchairs in Nigeria.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Rotarian Action Group for Population Growth & Sustainable Development**

### ***Purpose***

To promote and implement humanitarian and community development projects that directly address and create awareness about population concerns.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Rotarian Action Group for Population Growth & Sustainable Development (RFPD) reported 18,079 active members in 108 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$25

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

RFPD supported 97 international projects in 2008-09; below are projects that total \$100,000 or more.

#### **Vocational Training, Child Spacing & Micro-Credit in Slums of Alexandria – Egypt**

This project is co-sponsored by the Rotary and Rotaract Clubs of Alexandria Cosmpolitan, Egypt and Rotaract clubs in Germany with a project amount of \$100,000. The Egyptian clubs initiated and are implementing the project while their German Rotaract partners monitor the work and provide co-sponsorship and funding.

#### **Improvement of Maternal Health - Prevention and Treatment of Obstretic Fistula - Nigeria**

In Kano and Kaduna, Nigeria, 11 districts, 60 Rotary clubs, 22 Inner Wheel and one Rotaract club sponsor this project. In the first half of 2009, there was a 50% decrease in maternal deaths in the project's hospitals.

#### **Equipping Medical & Pediatric Hospitals - Ghana**

This \$700,000 project partners Rotary clubs in Accra, Ghana, and Cortland, USA. The project was supported by two Volunteer Service Grants during its duration from 2007 to 2009.

#### **Project for Dramatic Radio Series - Honduras**

This \$1,038,114 project serves to educate and increase awareness on issues such as adolescent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, women's empowerment and education, poverty reduction, the environment and infant mortality. The project is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, RFPD's Central America and Caribbean sections, and the Bergstrom Foundation.

## **Venezuela Schools and Rotarian Hospital of Barquisimeto – Venezuela**

This project partnered clubs from Venezuela, the U.S. and the Venezuelan government. The \$711,125 project began in 2008 and should be complete in 2011.

### ***Contact Information***

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## **Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group**

### ***Purpose***

To provide information, support, and encouragement to Rotarians and Rotary clubs and districts to take active roles in projects and programs that develop safe water and sanitation as a means of promoting health and alleviating hunger.

### ***Membership***

In 2008-09, Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group (WASRAG) reported 1,014 active members in 73 countries.

*Annual Membership Dues:* US\$25

*Lifetime Membership Dues:* US\$100

### ***International Service Projects and Activities***

WASRAG has not undertaken any international service projects. Its mandate is to facilitate international service projects throughout the Rotary world.

### ***Fundraising and Cooperative Relationships***

An opportunity and subsequent disappointment were experienced with the PepsiCo Foundation. A \$5 million proposal for UNICEF's Water Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) projects in the developing world was created that would have leveraged funding from other sources to create a partnership capable of delivering water to over one million people. The proposal was accepted at the same time the economy fell; while WASRAG has been assured it is at the top of the list for next year, it was unable to engage in other serious fundraising initiatives during this time.

WASRAG partnered with the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) to prepare a proposal for the U.S. State Department. Access to funding will require additional proposals and collaboration with other bodies. WASRAG may investigate creation of a proposal management team to pursue such opportunities.

WASRAG has reached an agreement with the founder of Water for Life for a grant of \$1 million over the next three years. This agreement still needs to be ratified by WASRAG directors and, when confirmed, will help leverage support for water projects in developing countries. WASRAG is currently in discussions with additional donors and working to build a proposal and presentation capability which illustrates its competitive advantage.

WASRAG has received a draft Agreement of Cooperation with UN-HABITAT.

WASRAG continues to work with the RI Water Resource Group to increase effective communications and seamless response to both internal and external water and sanitation related issues.

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