

## WEEK 15 – THE PROBLEM WITH POLIO

**Problem-**Despite over 12 billion doses of vaccine administered in the past ten years, there remain two countries in which we have not fully eradicated polio: Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nigeria has crossed the three-year benchmark for remaining polio free and is awaiting certification by the World Health Organization. But after years of steady case declines, the virus has roared back in the tribal areas of Pakistan, where getting all children vaccinated has proven difficult. YTD cases in Pakistan stand at 69 cases and in Afghanistan at 16, for a total of 85 so far in 2019.

**Pain-**This is not just about polio. Everyone here has a mother and father, and those born around and after March 26, 1953, have had the benefit of the Salk – and later the Sabin – vaccines. Think of the mothers and fathers before that date who had to suffer along with their children who had the misfortune of being attacked by this debilitating virus. The mothers and fathers in Pakistan and Afghanistan still live with that fear. This the fear of debilitating illness and often suffocating death.

**Plan -** The eradication of polio is Rotary's legacy – and the legacy of every single Rotarian. We are asking each Rotary member for \$60 in this Rotary year – which will be matched 3:1 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This is roughly equivalent to \$1 each week! Will you be part of this gift to the world's children? If yes, you will have a story to tell and retell to your children and grandchildren about the gift Rotary gave to the children of the world.