# NEWS RELEASE

**Sample Press Release**

**CONTACT:** [NAME, PHONE, E-MAIL] FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

 **[NAME/GROUP] of [CITY] [AMOUNT RAISED/ACTIVITY]
to help eradicate polio worldwide**

**[CITY, COUNTRY, DATE]** – As part of a yearlong celebration to mark Rotary’s 110th anniversary and its 30th year in the fight to end polio, Rotary clubs worldwide are holding events to raise funds and awareness needed to eradicate this paralyzing and potentially fatal disease – once and for all.

The Rotary club of **[CITY] [INSERT PLANNED ACTIVITY OR A SYNOPSIS OF HOW THE CLUB HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE EFFORTS OVER THE YEARS].**

This **[CLUB ACTIVITY]** follows a succession of significant developments that have brought the world closer to eradicating only the second human disease in history.

In 2014, the entire World Health Organization-designated Southeast Asia Region (SEARO) was declared polio-free, which includes: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Timor-Leste. Polio cases in Africa dropped by nearly 90 percent.

"We are encouraged to see the tangible progress made against polio in 2014," says Mike McGovern, chair of Rotary's International PolioPlus Committee. "However, until we eliminate polio from its final reservoirs, children everywhere are at risk from this disease. Rotary -- along with our partners -- will work hard to ensure that the world's most vulnerable children are kept safe from polio."

Rotary launched its flagship PolioPlus program in 1985, and in 1988 became a spearheading partner in the [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](http://www.polioeradication.org/) (GPEI) with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Since the global initiative began in 1988, the incidence of polio has plummeted by more than 99 percent, from about 350,000 cases a year to less than 370 in 2014.

More than 2.5 billion children have been immunized in 122 countries, preventing five million cases of paralysis and 250,000 deaths. Polio today remains endemic in only three countries; Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan, although “imported” cases in previously polio-free areas will continue to occur until the virus is finally stopped in the endemic countries.

Through PolioPlus, Rotary has contributed more than $1.3 billion in support, along with securing over $10 billion from donor governments. Most recently, in January, Rotary announced grants of $34.8 million to support polio eradication efforts in 10 countries. And through the 2013-18 “End Polio Now: Make History Today Campaign,” every dollar Rotary contributes to polio eradication will be matched 2-to-1 (up to $35 million per year) by the Gates Foundation.

**[INSERT QUOTE FROM LOCAL CLUB MEMBER- WHY THEY ARE WORKING TO END POLIO]**

In addition to ending polio, Rotary members contribute their time, energy and passion to sustainable, long-term projects in local communities across throughout the world. Projects focus on humanitarian issues like peace and conflict resolution, disease prevention and treatment, water and sanitation, maternal and child health, basic education and literacy and economic and community development.

**About Rotary**

Rotary 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 34,000 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. The first Rotary club was founded in Chicago in 1905.

Visit [rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org/) and [endpolio.org](http://www.endpolio.org/) for more about Rotary and its efforts to eradicate polio. Video and still images will be available on the [Rotary Media Center](https://www.rotary.org/en/news-features/media-center).