



扶輪基金保管委員會主委文告

用捐獻慶祝世界小兒麻痺日

在 1990 年代初期，小兒麻痺仍然是我祖國的一大問題。身為斯里蘭卡根除小兒麻痺等疾病計畫主委，我隸屬一個由扶輪社員、政府官員，及聯合國兒童基金會代表組成的特別工作小組，目標是推動所有根除小兒麻痺工作，包括全國免疫日。

可是那些日子困難重重；斯里蘭卡的內戰正方興未艾。政府說全國免疫日只能在衝突區域以外舉行。這表示我國有三分之一的兒童不會獲得疫苗——此提案難以接受。

扶輪與聯合國兒童基金會一起介入，協調一項停火協議。要聯繫上全球數一數二可怕且行蹤不定的叛軍領袖並不容易，而且在協商期間我們還要小心維護扶輪的聲譽。

幾個星期後，我的秘書送了一封信到我辦公室，雙手不斷顫抖。這封由叛軍領袖本人簽名的信寫著：「親愛的雷文壯先生：如果你能夠說服你的政府停戰兩天，那麼我們也就願意放下武器兩天，因為我們的戰爭與兒童無關。」

不久，全國免疫日開辦，印著扶輪標誌的車輛前往叛軍佔領區域的免疫站，獲得與紅十字會同等級的尊重及禮貌對待。

障礙在我們克服之前似乎都是無法克服的。

2020 年 3 月，小兒麻痺計畫做出一項困難的決定，暫時中止小兒麻痺的免疫工作，把扶輪社員協助建立的小兒麻痺基礎建設用於對抗新冠病毒疫情。可是鑑於目前野生株小兒麻痺病毒已從非洲剷除，只剩下在兩個國家傳播而已，我們要繼續向前邁進。我們的歷史顯示我們連最困難的情境都可以克服。可是沒有各位的幫助，我們辦不到。

世界小兒麻痺日是 10 月 24 日，也是我們能夠為扶輪根除小兒麻痺工作募集資金及宣導的大好機會。至 endpolio.org/worldpolioday 取得規劃虛擬活動及募款活動的工具，並登記貴社的活動。

請考慮捐款給「現在就根除小兒麻痺」，可獲得蓋茲基金會 2 比 1 的配合捐款。面對全球流行病，小兒麻痺有很高的風險會擴散蔓延。你的支持比以往都更重要，可確保我們可以一起征服剩餘的障礙，達成無小兒麻痺的世界。

雷文壯 K.R. RAVINDRAN

扶輪基金保管委員會主委



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Celebrate World Polio Day with a donation

In the early 1990s, polio was still a concern in my country. As the Sri Lanka PolioPlus Committee chair, I was part of a task force of Rotarians, government officials, and UNICEF representatives that drove all polio eradication efforts, including National Immunization Days (NIDs).

But those were difficult days; civil war was raging in Sri Lanka. The government said NIDs could happen only outside conflict zones. This meant one-third of the country's children would not be vaccinated — an unacceptable proposition.

Rotary stepped in with UNICEF to engineer a cease-fire. Establishing contact with one of the world's most feared and elusive rebel leaders was not easy, and we were careful to maintain Rotary's good name during negotiations.

A few weeks later, my secretary delivered a letter to my office, her hands shaking. Signed by the rebel leader himself, it read: "Dear Mr. Ravindran: If you can persuade your government to stop the war for two days, then we are willing to lay down our guns for two days too, for our war is not with children."

Soon the NID was on, and vehicles bearing the Rotary emblem traveled to the vaccination booths in the areas occupied by insurgents, receiving the same respect and courtesy as the Red Cross.

Obstacles can seem insurmountable until we overcome them.

In March 2020, the polio program made the tough decision to temporarily suspend polio immunizations while the polio infrastructure that Rotary members had helped build was used for COVID-19 response. But with the wild poliovirus now banished from the African region and circulating in just two remaining countries, we continue to move forward. Our history shows that we can overcome even the most difficult situations. But we can't do it without your help.

World Polio Day is 24 October, and it's the greatest opportunity we have to raise funds and awareness for Rotary's polio eradication efforts. Visit endpolio.org/worldpolioday to get tools for planning virtual events and fundraisers, and to register your club's event.

Please consider making a donation to End Polio Now, to be matched 2-to-1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In the face of a pandemic, there is a serious risk of further spread of polio. Your support is more important than ever, and it will ensure that together we can tackle the remaining obstacles and achieve a polio-free world.

K.R. RAVINDRAN

Foundation trustee chair

Illustration by Luke Wilson