

# ACHIEVING IMPACT AT SCALE: THE ROTARY FOUNDATION INNOVATES

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A few months ago, the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International took a major step to achieve impact at scale. It launched a new initiative - the "Programs of Scale", with the aim of funding one or more large \$2 million grants designed to reach a large number of people in a significant geographic area. The idea is to fund projects that are sustainable, evidence-based, and have a measurable impact. Activities lasting three to five years and focusing on one or more of Rotary's focus areas can be funded.

Together, representing our two clubs (Capitol Hill and Washington Global), we worked on drafting a proposal to address maternal and child health in Nigeria. The country accounts for more than one-fifth of all maternal deaths globally. According to data from the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the maternal mortality ratio for the 7-year period before the survey is estimated at 512 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, one of the highest rates in the world. This compares to a target of less than 70 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals. Nigeria's pregnancy-related maternal mortality ratio is even higher at 556 deaths per 100,000 live births. Virtually no progress has been achieved over time in reducing this rate since estimates based on data from the 2008 and 2013 DHS were at 576 and 545 deaths per 100,000 live births, respectively.

Both the World Health Organization and the Federal Ministry of Health in their Roadmap for Action 2019-2021 have called for improving Nigeria's health information systems to generate actionable information that could lead to improvements in maternal and child health outcomes. In addition, they

recommend designing training materials and guidelines for health workers and providing support to Nigeria to implement programs and systematically monitor progress.

In order to help improve maternal and child health in the country, we worked with counterparts from Rotary Districts D1860 (Germany) and D9125 (Nigeria) and the support of the Rotarian Action Group for Population and Development (RFPD) as well as the Federal Ministry of Health of Nigeria (FMOH) to put together a proposal for the Rotary Foundation's Program of Scale. Improving Nigeria's health information systems to generate actionable information and providing states as well as communities with training to improve maternal health outcomes is precisely the objective of the proposal we submitted to the Rotary Foundation.

We designed a project that built on previous Rotary grants in the country. Past grants have helped set up a system to better monitor maternal deaths in hospitals. The aim of our new proposal is to improve the existing platform, expand it beyond hospitals to primary health care facilities, and implement community-level dialogues to materially improve community engagement and mobilization in support of maternal health outcomes. All these activities fit within the Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) of Nigeria's Federal Ministry.

We don't know yet whether our proposal will be selected, but we just learned that out of 61 proposals submitted to the Rotary Foundation, we are part of a small set of proposals that have been invited to submit a more detailed application by September 2020. Bringing Rotarians together with focused technical cooperation is one effective way of providing service to the global community. We will continue to work on this project and keep you aware

of the outcome! While we hope to get the funding, even if we do not, working on the proposal has helped us sharpen our focus for our future work in this area in Nigeria.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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a smooth DG transition; all these Summits were recorded and are available on the D7620 website.

15. DG Barton was invited to make a presentation to the RI Board of Directors in February on the 4th RI strategic priority, namely "Enhancing Participant Engagement."

16. D7620 launched two large Covid-19 initiatives:

- The "Covid-19 Response Team" initiative: 150 volunteers are delivering food and medicine to Rotarians and prospective Rotarians in need – hotline # is (240) 781-6586.

- The "Team Covid-19 Recovery" initiative: This leadership initiative consists of three parts:

1. The D7620 Covid-19 Survey that has been implemented. More than 580 Rotarians responded to the survey and provided >1,100 comments.

2. 6 Vision Papers addressing the six Covid-19 topics of greatest importance to D7620 Rotarians based on the District Covid-19 Survey results. These papers will be delivered weekly starting May 17th and ending on June 21st. All Vision Papers are available on the District Website – [www.rotary7620.org](http://www.rotary7620.org)

3. 6 webinars – one for each of the Vision Papers – that give D7620 Rotarians an opportunity to discuss the Vision Paper in detail. These webinars will be delivered weekly starting May 20th and ending June 24th. All webinars are being recorded and available on the District Website – [www.rotary7620.org](http://www.rotary7620.org)