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# Promotional Guide for Humanitarian Projects

## Doing Good in the World

*Guidelines for the promotion of projects and activities funded through the humanitarian programs of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International.*

Rotarians serving others through the humanitarian programs of The Rotary Foundation are “doing good in the world,” an important part of the purpose of the Foundation. But what about the Foundation’s mission to increase international understanding, goodwill, and peace? To fulfill the purpose of the Foundation, it is essential to tell the story of Rotary’s humanitarian activities to as many people as possible.

The most effective way to do this is through the news media and other public relations efforts.

Foundation humanitarian programs may involve Rotarians in two or more countries. That means there may be at least two media markets for every story.

Using the media in two or more countries to share compelling stories of Rotary service increases

- ◆ International understanding and goodwill
- ◆ Public awareness, participation, and support

Use these guidelines to design your media strategy in collaboration with the chairs for both public relations and The Rotary Foundation in all the districts involved in the project or activity.

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## Planning

All humanitarian activities are potential media stories, but turning that potential into effective publicity takes planning. Even before funding is approved, enlist the ideas and assistance of all interested parties. These would include all participating district governors, and public relations and Foundation chairs. In addition, it is important to inform other organizations and authorities that might support and cooperate with you.

Develop a coordinated promotional plan to ensure public participation, support, and recognition for

Rotary’s humanitarian activity, and include the essential elements of this plan in your final grant proposal.

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## Community relations

Enlist support from all sectors of the community. Government officials and other organizations can offer advice and endorse projects. Educational, health care, and other appropriate authorities can help promote projects. The business and professional community can donate equipment, facilities, or services. Community and religious leaders can encourage and strengthen project acceptance.

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## Media

Create a list of appropriate contacts in print, broadcast, and Internet media in all districts participating in the activity.

Develop one-page summaries of the activity and short profiles of key participants.

Tell target media about the humanitarian activity before it begins (consider inaugural events), while it is being conducted (note significant developments), and when it is completed (quantify the results and relay personal experiences). Hands-on activities are more compelling than routine donation presentations.

Illustrate the project with photos, video, and the testimony of authorities and those benefiting from the grant. Incorporate the production of these tools as part of your project implementation plan.

Offer yourself and other qualified individuals as spokespersons. Let journalists know who can tell this story best and how and when to reach them. If the spokesperson is a non-Rotarian, make sure that he or she has background materials and a solid understanding of Rotary.

Media coverage in nonproject countries can increase public awareness of needs in developing countries and of Rotary’s work to meet those needs. Stories can be used to help generate project funds.

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They can also be featured in the publications of supporting organizations that may also cite a project as a good example.

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### Special events

Parades, receptions, inaugural ceremonies, dedications, and award presentations can help draw public attention to your humanitarian activity. With flair and imagination, you can dramatize the impact of service (whether it is happening, has happened, or will happen). Participants can include dignitaries and/or authorities and celebrities, as well as those who are implementing the project and the project beneficiaries. Keep the speeches short and the stories compelling.

Build these events into your plans. Let the media know about each event in advance.

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### Displays, posters, and leaflets

Promotion is often key to the success of the project and can help recruit participants, partners, and/or generate additional funds. Where possible, engage the services of a professional designer and use the same visual design in all your publications, displays, and public information material. Create a project identity.

Find ways to utilize the Rotary emblem, even if it's simply printing news releases on the district governor's stationery or making sure that participants wear the emblem on a cap or T-shirt when photographs are being taken.

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### Background for public information material

In developing material for the news media, include brief explanations of Rotary and its Foundation and describe parallel Rotary activities around the globe. Sample phrases follow:

- ◆ Founded in 1905, Rotary International comprises more than 30,000 clubs, with approximately 1.2 million members in more than 160 countries.
- ◆ Through The Rotary Foundation, this global network conducts educational and humanitarian activities to further international understanding and peace and improve the human condition. Since 1947, The Rotary Foundation has spent nearly US\$991 million on these programs.
- ◆ Humanitarian projects address with sustainable development the needs Rotary clubs have identified in their communities.

Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation facts can be accessed via fax through Rotary's Faxback service. In the USA and Canada, call 800-510-8726.

Contact the RI Public Relations Division for additional information or examples of news releases/media advisories: telephone, 847-866-3000; fax, 847-866-8237; e-mail, [pr@rotaryintl.org](mailto:pr@rotaryintl.org); RI Web site, [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).

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### Public Relations Tools

*Effective Public Relations:  
A Guide for Rotary Clubs* (257)

*Public Relations Possibilities* (259)

*Rotary Fact Pack* (267)

*Public Relations: Make It Work  
for You* (video) (269)

*Connecting Lives. Affecting Lives* (015)  
*Print PSAs* (CD-ROM)

*RI Print PSAs* (CD-ROM) (345)

*Rotary Foundation Print  
PSAs* (CD-ROM) (335)

Additional information on the above public relations resources and other RI materials can be ordered through the RI *Catalog*. An online version is available on the RI Web site at [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).

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## Case Study

*This 3-H project utilized all the techniques described in these guidelines. As you read how the techniques were used, consider how they might be adapted for your project.*

### AIDS Awareness Campaign in India

Responding to the escalating threat of AIDS, the Rotary Club of Coimbatore, India, began sharing information with other clubs, enlisting their support for a campaign in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Thus far, 95 clubs and nearly 300 Rotarians have directly supported a massive AIDS awareness campaign.

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## Planning

With the expertise of local health officials, hospitals, and a foundation, Rotarians created a project plan that included public relations activities. Dubbed Project RAID (Rotary AIDS Information Division), the campaign was approved for 3-H funding. A project office and administration team were established and trained. AIDS testing kits were distributed.

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## Special events

After launching the project with a public symposium attracting thousands, the project began a campaign of smaller special events conducted by volunteers on motorcycles and in specially equipped vans. They found street theater their most effective tool and trained volunteer teams of performers. Alerted to team visits, Rotary clubs arranged performances in schools, institutions, and factories. Banners, slides, badges, posters, and condoms were delivered to the secretary of each Rotary club, who organized a rally and delivered the materials to the team upon their arrival. After presentations, audiences were full of questions and eagerly accepted the publicity materials and condoms donated by the local health authorities. In addition, public interest was bolstered by annual rallies on World AIDS Day.

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## Community relations

Grassroots workers of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and National Service Scheme volunteers from schools and colleges were trained to replicate the AIDS awareness programs. In addition to the initial advisers, some 30 NGOs and 36 government agencies have been involved in the campaign. Interested organizations were routinely informed of project developments.



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## Media

Attracted from the beginning by the symposium and other public events, newspaper and radio coverage was consistently high. Project spokespersons were often interviewed and publicity was supplemented by messages recorded for All India Radio.

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## Displays, etc.

Handbills, stickers, T-shirts, and aprons were produced with messages in local languages. All volunteers wore trademark yellow shirts or aprons, and display material, including banners and posters, appeared at all events. In addition, Rotarians staged AIDS awareness exhibits at more than 110 trade fairs and carnivals.

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## Results and recognition

Based on the number of basic pamphlets distributed, the campaign has directly reached nearly 800,000 people, including 5,000 laborers in 127 industries and students in 91 educational institutions. Its effectiveness garnered the support of the National Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which assigned its own theater team to support Rotary's efforts.

(sample news release)

TEL:  
FAX:  
WEB:  
E-MAIL:

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## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE:**

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**Area high school students load 20-foot long container with clothing, blankets, and books to be shipped to Africa for needy refugees**

WHEELING, IL – (insert date) The Wheeling High School Refugee Club, comprised of students from Wheeling, St. Viator and Rolling Meadows High Schools, has put together a container of items that will be shipped to Africa for needy refugees. Wheeling High School teacher Pete Fischbach came up with the idea after visiting an Angolan refugee camp last year in Zambia. The students have collected clothing, blankets, and school books over the last few months. The Wheeling High School Senior Class and the Rotary Club of Wheeling have donated \$7,000 to the project.

**WHO**                      The Wheeling High School Refugee Club & Rotary Club members.

**WHAT**                     A 20-foot long overseas container to be filled with items for Angolan refugees in Zambia. Over 240 large boxes carrying over 1,000 blankets, textbooks, clothes, toiletries, and school supplies.

**WHEN**                    (insert day of the week, date and time)

**WHERE**                    Wheeling High School  
900 South Elmhurst Road, Wheeling, Illinois

**MEDIA  
INFORMATION**        Please contact (insert contact person)

**CONTACT  
ON LOCATION**        (insert name)

*Rotary International is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, and help to build goodwill and peace in the world. There are approximately 1.2 million Rotarians who are members of more than 30,000 Rotary clubs in more than 160 countries. For more information, visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).*

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(sample news release)

TEL:  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE:**

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### **Rotary volunteers to provide facial reconstructive surgeries for 100 children in El Salvador**

DES MOINES, IA – (insert date) Eighteen Rotary volunteers from Iowa, including plastic surgeons, anesthesiologists, and nurses, are leaving for El Salvador Wednesday to perform over 100 cleft palate surgeries for Salvadorian children. The surgeries will take place over a one-week period.

The surgeries are coordinated by Rotaplast, a San Francisco based non-profit organization that works with Rotary clubs worldwide to restore the physical and emotional lives of impoverished children through free reconstructive facial surgeries. Cleft lip and cleft palate are conditions that occur when facial tissues fail to grow correctly, creating a gap in the lip or roof of the mouth. Other countries that have benefited from the missions are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Guatemala, Peru, Venezuela and Vietnam.

**WHO** Iowa Rotary volunteers made up of plastic surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses a pediatrician, a dentist, an orthodontist, and a speech pathologist.

**WHAT** To perform over 100 cleft palate surgeries on Salvadorian children.

**WHERE** San Salvador, El Salvador.

**WHEN** The team's flight departs Wednesday, April 23 at 3:50 p.m. from Des Moines International Airport. Team will be at airport at 1:00 p.m. – Continental/Express Jet Airline – gate # to be determined. (Insert contact information)

**MEDIA CONTACT** Please contact (Insert information here)

**WEB INFORMATION** www.(insert Web site address here)

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