

**Statement by the International PolioPlus Committee
on Rotarian Travel to Participate as Volunteers
in National Immunization Days in other countries**

Due to the continued financial needs for polio eradication, those who wish to help eradicate polio are strongly encouraged to contribute to Rotary's \$100 Million Challenge. However, those who intend to travel to a National Immunization Day should be considered the following:

In recent times, enthusiastic Rotarians from districts in polio-free countries have decided that they want to help eradicate polio by organizing journeys to polio endemic countries in order to personally participate in a National Immunization Day.

Their efforts and sacrifices have been impressive and admirable.

Rotary districts in polio-affected countries who have had successful ventures in "sponsoring" National Immunization Days are naturally reporting their experiences and suggesting that others consider similar ventures. While we commend the activity and are grateful for the extraordinary contribution to our goal of eradication of polio, we suggest that any district contemplating organizing a similar project be aware of certain aspects for which precautions need to be taken.

1. National Immunization Days often occur in countries under challenging circumstances where there are a limited number of Rotarians. To host and organize a visit from a group of Rotarians may place a burden on the National Committee at a time when their efforts should be focused on conducting the best possible National Immunization Day.
2. National Immunization Day dates are established by the country's government, and they are often subject to change. Last minute changes could interfere with plans for a visit or leave Rotarians with non-refundable travel arrangements.
3. Some of the remaining polio-endemic countries are in "difficult circumstances" and experience occasional civil-strife as well as outright armed conflict. Other countries are extremely poor and do not have a strong infrastructure. Due to these reasons, a country may not have the services to accommodate the visit of a large group of Rotarians.

These hazards may be avoided by following these Guidelines for Rotary Travel to NIDs listed below. Those considering travel are urged to:

- 1) Contact the chair of the polio endemic country's national polio plus committee to obtain his or her assistance and agreement that the visit of a group of volunteers would be welcome; and maintaining contact and coordination throughout the NID planning process.
- 2) Check with the [manager of the PolioPlus Division](#) of The Rotary Foundation to ascertain that the degree of assistance proposed is consistent with the country's needs and priorities and that there are no known problems in the country selected.
- 3) Verify that their health and life insurance provides adequate coverage in the countries of travel. Many health insurance policies provide limited coverage outside of one's home area. Contact your local insurance broker or agent for information on travel insurance coverage.