

Manna from Pakistan

From Jenny Horton of Kenmore Club
 on the Polio Eradication Trail

"Jenny Horton" <yen283@bigpond.com>

Email No.11: December 2007

Greetings from Pakistan!

Assalam Alaikum!

This is long over due and for that I apologize, but as they say, "better late than never". It has been a busy time, but that is polio eradication, it never stops as we strive as part of this incredible team to free children of this one preventable disease. We will WIN, I promise you that!

Global Situation

So where are we at 12 Dec 07:

Total Cases	Year to date 2007	Year to date 2006	Total in 2006
Globally	820	1791	1997
Pakistan	21	36	40
India	452	583	676
Afghanistan	13	29	31
Nigeria	242	1034	1122
Niger	10	11	11
Chad	14	0	1
DRC	40	8	13
Sudan	1	0	0
Angola	8	1	2
Myanmar	11	0	0
Somalia	8	32	35

It's easy to see the improvement in Nigeria, but all endemic 4 countries (those highlighted in yellow) are making progress towards the goal of a polio free world. India has greatly cut down its districts with P1 virus but currently is experiencing a P3 outbreak to which they are responding with the monovalent OPV3 vaccine. So inshuallah (God willing), things will settle quickly. In the endemic countries, some areas are having monthly campaigns which are a real strain on the system and the people involved. Really I take my hat off to the teams that knock on every door to reach every child. It is really physically difficult work.

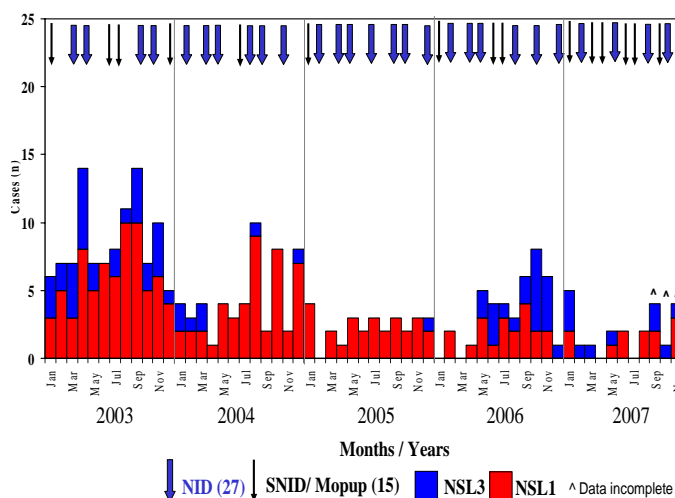


Save the children! Health Minister adds a drop.

Pakistan Update

Here we are making progress. It might not be as quick as we would like but we are reaching the milestones set for us in the reduction of districts and vaccination status of children. Sadly just this week we had 4 new cases which really rip our hearts out.

Confirmed Polio Cases By Poliovirus Type, 2003-2007*



* Afp.rec Data as of 08-12-2007

Zak.....Our Australian polio case

I have had the opportunity to meet with Zak, and discuss with him the feelings and experiences he had while in Box Hill Hospital in isolation. I felt very proud to be a Rotarian as he shared the incredible commitment by PDG Jenny Coburn who supported him at a very difficult time in his life. I could not imagine what it was like to have his clothes taken and be held in isolation for such a long period. His only link to the outside was Rotary. This to me is what we are about as an organization, building the bridges across the world.



Zak and Jenny at the Rotary lab

Zak vaccinating



Manna from Pakistan

**From Jenny Horton of Kenmore Club
 on the Polio Eradication Trail**



Email No.11: December 2007

"Jenny Horton" <yen283@bigpond.com>

Zak spent 3 days with me in Pakistan. He joined the group to meet with the Prime Minister who was endorsing polio eradication and also spent a day vaccinating children with me in Islamabad. It was truly a pleasure to spend time with him and especially to see that he is suffering no disability, probably due to his mother ensuring that he had all his vaccinations as a child. Zak will be returning to Australia to continue his studies in 2008 and I know he will remain in contact with PDG Jenny and me.

Measles

In November I spent a week in the southern part of Pakistan, Balochistan Province, monitoring the measles campaign. Pakistan is carrying out a national measles elimination campaign by vaccinating all children between 9 months and 13 years against measles.

Being down on the Arabian coast was certainly a change for me. It is desert area that reaches the coast line. I spent many hours travelling from area to area ensuring the campaign was being carried out correctly.



Fishing with donkey power

Measles injections save children also



We worked from the border of Iran back to Karachi. For me the chance to eat fresh seafood was great and to meet people who relate more to Oman than to Pakistan. The area is reasonably undeveloped but one port, Gwadar, is the focus of developing infrastructure to take some of the load from Karachi. For me, even though the work hours were long, the change was lovely. The measles program has come about from the infrastructure built by polio eradication and applying the same model.

Another Christmas in Pakistan

This year will be a unique year, when we have a holiday over the Christmas period as EID ul Azha falls on the 21st here and the 25th is a national holiday for the birth and death of the founder of Pakistan Quad-e-Azam. I have had interesting Christmas' here before; one being a white Christmas when I was in Balochistan. This year I think I will stay home as it has been a hectic time over the past few months and I actually need the space to think and catch up on all those emails. I will be thinking of you all at home in the heat.

Amazingly, yesterday I had to go and buy some warm shawls, as I do not have anything warm. Living in Karachi has been like living in Brisbane, tropical. Now in Islamabad we are at the foothills of the Himalayas and the wind from the snow definitely cools the place down. All the trees have lost their leaves and I have a heater on in my guest house room all night. Any excuse to get new clothes made. I now need a heavier fabric and long sleeves!

Rotary

I continue to attend meetings at my honorary club, Islamabad Metropolitan but also attend Islamabad Cosmopolitan when I can. This year we have had a visit from PRID Kaylan Banerjee for the Prime Minister's event and for our Rotary Foundation Seminar. As always it was good to hear what is happening in India and to catch up with PRID Kaylan.

Here we have worked on many Polio Plus Partners (PPP) Projects and I thank all those who donate to PPP. Our big success this year was the production and airing of "Polio True Stories". These are stories from or about polio victims and are very powerful in sharing the need to vaccinate. We had these translated into several languages and have also shared them with Afghanistan in Dari (Persian) and Phastun languages. To purchase air time on multiple TV channels is expensive but this is the main means of information gathering by people, so it is money well spent.



The Aussie Flag is flying!

Manna from Pakistan

From Jenny Horton of Kenmore Club
 on the Polio Eradication Trail



Email No.11: December 2007

"Jenny Horton" <yen283@bigpond.com>

I also had the opportunity to attend the Zone 5 & 6A Institute in Goa, India. It was great to reunite with old friends from India and be updated about the Rotary world by RIP Wilf and TRF Chair Bob, as well as many other leaders of our organization. How proud was this Australian when our flag was paraded in the opening and our national anthem played.

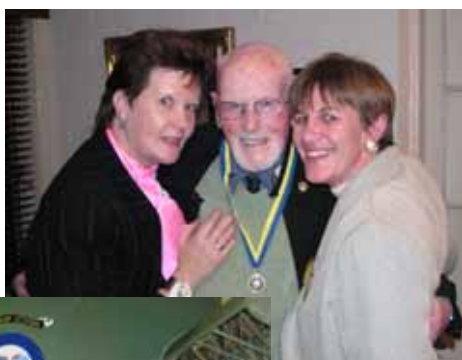
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have really assisted by filling some big gaps in our funding. However we have to remember we have to match this money, and that is a huge commitment for all Rotary Clubs. So all funds being given to restricted-giving – polio or polio plus partners - attract this matching of funds. We truly thank the Gates Foundation for trusting us to manage the utilization of their money on the eradication of polio.

Friends

I had a rush trip home to say good bye to a dear friend whom I loved dearly. It really made me think about the depth of love we share with others, the support of those we love at home and in other places, while we are away and the importance of friendship.

My dear friend, Lofty, was a huge supporter of me and of Polio Eradication. At 88 years old, he learned to use the internet so he could stay in touch over all that distance. I used to love his emails as he wrote to tell me he "booted up" his computer and "googled" my address and "google earthed" the apartment I was living in. He taught me so much, and I really thank him for his love.

Peta, Lofty complete with PHF, Jenny



Lofty loved his aircraft

Lofty was made a Paul Harris Fellow for his commitment to polio and was known to many Rotarians as he joined me, Peta Nagle and Geoff Haigh at some Rotary events. That cuppa tea at Togginis at Spring Hill will never be the same without the spirit of Lofty with us. I am pleased he is now at peace with his maker.

What does one do when out of vegemite?

On Dec 30, I will be returning to Australia having finished my contract here in Pakistan. This will for me be a sad time as I leave a country that has challenged me in every way and to leave the hands-on field work that I have enjoyed for the past years. I have made some really good friends and am thankful that I have had the opportunity to serve as part of this most incredible program.

I ask your prayers for Pakistan right now. There are many problems and I do not believe they will solve those issues in the near future. It also is a challenging time for polio eradication as this final milestone is being the most difficult. I cannot tell you the anguish we feel as a new case is announced by the lab. It is a real sense of frustration tied in with disappointment and challenge. I can assure you our team here is working long hours to "fill the gaps".

I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and pray for a time of love and safety for all. Thanks to each of you for your commitment to the eradication of polio globally and remember that it takes all of us to make this happen. I am in awe when I think of those who have served this program in so many capacities since it was first conceived and I feel honoured to have met many of those pioneering people who made this possible. I can never think of Polio Eradication without thinking of PRIP Sir Clem Renouf, who told us "Rotary gives ordinary people the opportunity to do extraordinary things". How true!

Many Blessings and Happy Christmas.

Allah hafiz,
Jenny, WHO Team in Pakistan

My reason for being here!
 Eradicate Polio!



Manna from Pakistan

From Jenny Horton of Kenmore Club
on the Polio Eradication Trail



"Jenny Horton" <yen283@bigpond.com>

Email No.11: December 2007

2007 IMAGES OF PAKISTAN:

