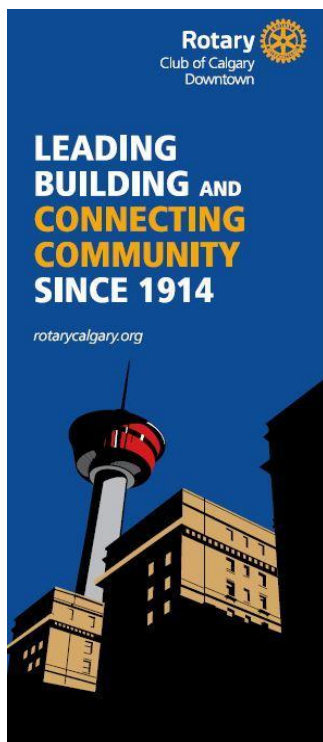




# THE WORLD COMMUNITY SERVICE (WCS)

## ANNUAL REPORT

*Prepared by the World Community Service Committee  
For the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown*



## About WCS

The World Community Service (WCS) committee of the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown (RCCD) contributes to development, implementation, financing and reporting of global projects (outside of Canada) in any of the seven areas of Rotary focus. Many projects are initiated within WCS (with or without Global Grants) by Rotarians who champion and oversee the project. Contributions are also made to selected projects initiated elsewhere. While there is liaison with many other organizations, all projects have a host local Rotary Club.

Often, projects build upon previous successes and associations with a local champion (or more than one) from WCS. Others are new initiations from WCS members. Together, we develop our knowledge and skills while we strive to help people in other countries lead better lives.

## 2024-2025 Committee Highlights

- We funded **23 projects** with **\$276,020 CAD** from the RCCD and an additional **\$42,444** in Directed Donations in **13 different countries** (Uganda, Cambodia, Ghana, Guatemala and Ukraine were the major financial recipients) Summaries of all projects are later in this report.
- WCS leadership included Chair Doug McMillan, New Project Sub-Committee (NPSC) Chair Sonny Belenkie (replaced at year end by Kurt Kowalchuk), International Director Trevor Ironside, Vice Chair Barbara Young, Secretary Emery Varga, Treasurer Lori Forand, Grants Coordinator Lindsay Marczak and Communications Coordinator William Friedson.
- Many WCS members met Rotarian colleagues from abroad during the 2025 Rotary International Convention in Calgary. Among those contributing to the learning program was WCS member Dr. Walley Temple speaking on the early detection and treatment of cervical cancer.
- The death of **Garth Toombs**, a long- time member of the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown (RCCD) and important contributor to World Community Service (WCS) activities, was a significant “loss” for many Rotarians. It is now up to others to carry on his work, especially in Uganda.
- Travel grants helped provide financial assistance for four WCS members to travel to help maintain global community projects while looking for new opportunities. They looked after their additional travel expenses and contributed considerable personal time on behalf of WCS.
- Thanks go to Manon Mitchell for arranging for our International Service banner which now hangs with banners for the four RCCD focus areas at club meetings.
- Thanks go for the administrative assistance provided by Tracy Nelson, Jo-Ann Clark and Alana Sargent (replaced at year end by Iman Saad). WCS members (22 Active and 7 Supporting) also made significant contributions championing projects and planning for the future. WCS remains open to new members from the RCCD and new projects to improve global well-being for others.

# WCS Pledged Funds from 2024-2025 Rotary Year

| Country                                                                                                                                                                                | Project Name                                      | WCS 24/25<br>Pledge (CAD) | Total Project<br>Budget (CAD) * |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| * The total project budget is made up of funds from a variety of sources, including Directed Donations, Pledges from other Rotary Clubs, District Funds and Rotary International Funds |                                                   |                           |                                 |
| Argentina                                                                                                                                                                              | Equipment for Obstetrical Room                    | \$734                     | \$5,788                         |
| Cambodia                                                                                                                                                                               | Pediatric Wheelchair Training                     | \$23,460                  | \$166,648                       |
| Cambodia                                                                                                                                                                               | CLIP 4                                            | \$27,089                  | \$169,406                       |
| Dominican Republic                                                                                                                                                                     | Breaking the Silence                              | \$7,307                   | \$133,055                       |
| Ghana                                                                                                                                                                                  | Cervical Cancer in Ghana                          | \$27,791                  | \$27,791                        |
| Ghana                                                                                                                                                                                  | Punga-Bawiu Microflush Toilet and Water Project   | \$7,323                   | \$141,172                       |
| Guatemala                                                                                                                                                                              | Guatemala Literacy                                | \$14,018                  | \$596,827                       |
| Guatemala                                                                                                                                                                              | WASH Xecoxo                                       | \$7,308                   | \$295,402                       |
| Guinea-Bissau                                                                                                                                                                          | West African Vocational Schools (WAVS)            | \$5,625                   | \$94,813                        |
| India                                                                                                                                                                                  | Improving Children Literacy                       | \$7,324                   | \$104,467                       |
| North Guatemala                                                                                                                                                                        | RACHEL                                            | \$7,122                   | \$197,253                       |
| Philippines                                                                                                                                                                            | WASH Marangan Elementary School                   | \$7,176                   | \$7,176                         |
| Sierra Leone                                                                                                                                                                           | Empowering Women and Girls                        | \$7,307                   | \$50,681                        |
| Thailand                                                                                                                                                                               | Capacity Development Cerebral Palsy               | \$7,652                   | \$53,645                        |
| Uganda                                                                                                                                                                                 | Luwawulo Adopt a Village                          | \$26,602                  | \$141,172                       |
| Uganda                                                                                                                                                                                 | Educating African Youth                           | \$8,693                   | \$8,693                         |
| Uganda                                                                                                                                                                                 | Growing Futures: Improving Maternal & Infant Care | \$14,202                  | \$14,202                        |
| Ukraine                                                                                                                                                                                | Ukraine Rehab Hospital Equipment                  | \$11,271                  | \$208,935                       |
| Ukraine                                                                                                                                                                                | Ukraine Torniquet Project                         | \$5,000                   | \$40,000                        |
| Ukraine                                                                                                                                                                                | Generators for Ukraine                            | \$35,093                  | \$83,000                        |

# WCS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

## CLIP 4 - Cambodia (*Early Childhood Literacy*) (Manon Mitchell)

The Cambodia Literacy Integrative Project (CLIP) has entered its fourth phase and continues to make a significant impact in rural Cambodian schools. The project's objectives are to:

- Provide enhanced teacher training to build on the limited knowledge many educators currently have.
- Develop classroom resources aligned with the national Kindergarten curriculum.
- Share these resources freely on an open-source platform.

Promotion through social media has led to steady audience growth and broader awareness. A unique strength of CLIP is that all materials are created in Khmer, Cambodia's native language, ensuring cultural relevance and accessibility.

CLIP has been recognized with an award from Rotary International's Basic Education and Literacy Rotary Action Group. Looking ahead, Phase 5 is now in the design stage and is expected to launch in the New Year, pending approval from The Rotary Foundation.



## Breaking the Silence – Dominican Republic (*Education/Maternal and Child Health*) (Manon Mitchell)

In a country facing alarmingly high rates of teenage pregnancy, it is critical to address the root causes—particularly the lack of knowledge about puberty and the human body. The “Break the Silence” project tackles this challenge with two key goals:

1. Educating both girls and boys about the physical and emotional changes of puberty.
2. Providing girls with washable, reusable menstrual hygiene kits, ensuring they don't miss a week of school each month. Without this support, many fall so far behind that they are forced to drop out altogether.

This phase of the broader country-wide initiative is focused on one specific region, reaching 1,200 girls and 1,200 boys with essential education and resources. The Rotary Club of Santiago Monumental is our cooperating partner, with a Rotary International Cadre Edgarkis Crisostomo Marte serving as our key contact. Let's keep girls in schools!

Our club also collaborates with others in this focused area in the Dominican Republic and we have provided funding to the Rotary Club of Grande Prairie with their Global Grant addressing the same need in different geographic regions partnering with the Rotary Club of La Romana in the DR.



## Elimination of Cervical Cancer - Guatemala (*Education/Maternal and Child Health*) (Lori Forand)



This is the second Global Grant that RCCD has provided support for, in Guatemala. Lori Forand took the helm as the RCCD project lead, from Wally Temple this past summer. Through partnerships with Rotary Club La Reforma and the Guatemalan NGO *Faith in Practice*, we are screening, treating, educating and immunizing thousands of individuals who will no longer need to face this debilitating form of cancer. The project focuses on educating healthcare providers to screen and treat women, raising public awareness about HPV prevention, and screening women using Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA). It also ensures immediate treatment for precancerous condition and supports HPV vaccine implementation and testing. This vital initiative has already certified nurses in screening and treatment procedures along with screening over 1000 women. The project is on track to coordinate efforts among many NGOs, screen over 10 000 women, treating any who need it, and educate over 10 000 boys and girls as well as providing the HPV vaccine to over 500 girls.

## Cervical Screening Thermo-coagulators – Ghana (*Education/Maternal and Child Health*) (Ebenezer Menza)

The Cervical Cancer Awareness and Prevention Initiative (CCAPI) was launched in January 2025 and has since trained 9 nurses and midwives at Battor Catholic Hospital in advanced cervical cancer screening and management. Between May and July 2025, the project screened 500 women across multiple regions, with 9 referrals made for further treatment, demonstrating increased awareness and early detection.



## Pungu-Bawiu Microflush Toilet and Water Project – Ghana (*Water, Sanitation & Hygiene*) (Doug McMillan)



With Global Grant 2567593 (Lead by the Rotary Club of Halifax Harbor, Canada and the Rotary Club of Bolgatina, Ghana), this project will drill 4 boreholes and build 150 microflush composting toilets to reduce the incidence of sanitation-related diseases. It will promote gender equity by addressing the specific sanitation and water needs of women and girls who are disproportionately affected by the lack of safe and private toilet facilities and clean water sources. More than 30 farmers will benefit from the mechanized boreholes and economic strength of the communities will be improved impacting 27,000 lives.

### **RACHEL – North Guatemala (*Education*)** **(Barb Young)**

Rachel is a means of providing teaching material and resources to areas where the internet is either absent or intermittent. It is essentially a memory box which contains material that can be accessed locally by multiple computers. The project we support in Northern Guatemala provides both the memory box and laptops to schools who would otherwise not have any access to reference material. Teachers are trained and supported in using this material effectively. We are participating with other clubs from Canada and the United States in a Global Grant which is part of a project to extend this means of learning throughout the northern part of Guatemala. To date, 118 schools have been provided with the Rachel system.



### **Improving Childhood Literacy – India (*Childhood Literacy*)** **(Bob Taylor)**

Over the past 14 years since the Maya Devi Hospital first opened its doors, much has evolved — from government healthcare funding and transportation infrastructure to community development. Our own hospital services have grown alongside these changes. Many of our very first infant patients are now in their mid-teens! We've continued to listen closely to the community and our medical team to better understand how to meet these shifting local needs. This includes upgrading our solar power system, adding a dental clinic to our health services, and transforming underused space into an on-site computer and learning centre — a resource designed to support students and expand career opportunities.



### **WASH - Marangan Elementary School – Philippines (*Water, Sanitation & Hygiene*)** **(William Friedson)**

The Zamboanga City West Club (Mindanao) Water Project has been successfully completed, providing fresh, clean water through a WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) program to the Marangan Elementary School and its surrounding community in Southern Philippines. The Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown contributed \$4,000 USD, while the Zamboanga City West Club contributed \$1,000 USD to bring this project to fruition. Originally initiated by Israel Belenkie and Gerard D'Mello of the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown, the project is now an annual initiative, championed by club member William Friedson.



## **Empowering Women and Girls – Sierra Leone (*Education*)** **(Charles Pratt)**

This is a Global Grant Project. This project seeks to improve the quality of life of young women and girls in a small community in Sierra Leone called Cline Town. The project is currently under review by the Rotary Foundation. It involves the provision of skills training supporting educational pursuits, business and entrepreneurial skills, and healthcare education. It is anticipated that the project will benefit 20-30 young women directly and the larger community will benefit from the health education and community outreach activities. The Rotary Club of Freetown will evaluate the success and impact of the project.

Expected completion date is March 31, 2027.

## **Safe Toilet Sanitation for Kids – South Africa (*Water, Sanitation & Hygiene*)** **(Doug McMillan)**

In the Atlantis community, kindergartens are not always equipped with the necessary toilet facilities. This presents major health, hygiene, safety and privacy concerns, leaving children feeling uncomfortable, vulnerable to disease and affects their ability to learn. The Rotary Club of Atlantis (South Africa) is partnering with local business to build friendly standalone toilet facilities at three kindergartens. Each facility will include age-appropriate separate boys' and girls' toilets, ensuring privacy, dignity, and improved hygiene practices from an early age to encourage proper hygiene habits.



## **Empowering Families, Growing Futures: A Project Transforming Maternal and Newborn Health - Uganda (*Maternal and Child Health*)** **(Doug McMillan)**

Global Grant (#2579290) lead by District 9213 in Uganda will provide comprehensive training in Essential Newborn Care and Helping Mothers Survive for midwives and other healthcare workers. Canadian-developed learning programs (Evidence-based Practice for Improving Quality and Quality Improvement Integrated Kangaroo Mother Care) are included. The program will also strengthen local health facilities to improve the quality of maternal and newborn care, engage communities to increase demand generation and utilization of services and provide (primarily education-related) equipment to health centers for improved neonatal and maternity care.



### **Educating African Youth (Committee) – Uganda (*Education*)** **(Diane Macdonald)**

This committee works with a small group of Rotarians in Uganda to administer a fund that pays for the post-secondary education (tuition, books, room and board) of orphan students. The Rotarians select and then mentor the students through the duration of their studies. Graduates of the program are now paying to educate their siblings and are also starting to contribute to the costs of the program. The photos show recent graduates of the program – an architect and a dentist.



### **Generators for Ukraine** **(Sonny Belenkie)**

RCCD/WCS contributed \$25,000 USD, totaling approximately \$83,000 CAD. The remaining funds were raised privately. This initiative became the single largest donation received, funding 140 units from Canada, with an additional 40 units contributed by Sweden. Most generators were delivered to shelters, homes caring for displaced children, and rural community safety stations. In total, 340 generators were distributed—Canada funded 140, and Sweden covered the remainder. All funds from this effort were sent to District 2335 in Sweden, which coordinated the purchase and delivery of the generators.



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