

PREMIER NATIONAL HIV TESTING & COUNSELING DAY

HELD IN EAST AFRICA
BY ROTARY DISTRICT
9200 & RFFA

Rotarians from 102 Rotary Clubs in the countries of Kenya and Uganda got together on April 30th, the Rotary-declared Rotarians At Work Day and did **something that has never been done before in the history of Rotary** – they held a nationwide HIV Testing & Counseling Day at 125 sites throughout the two countries that included wraparound health services! They called it the Rotary Family Health Day!

This one to three day event was the vision of District Governor Stephen Mwanje, District 9200 in East Africa. He engaged the support and partnership of RFFA (Rotarians For Fighting AIDS), the Rotarian Action Group led by CEO Marion Bunch. DG Stephen asked RFFA to help him obtain partners and resources to bring this event to life. He asked each Rotary Club to have ten representatives working at this event – or over 1,000 Rotary volunteers.

RFFA gained the pro bono services of its global partner, FHI (Family Health International) to help plan the overall project and to be the Primary Technical Partner in Kenya. AIDS Information Center was engaged as the Primary Technical Partner in Uganda. The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation (a six year partner of RFFA) provided \$100,000 in mobilization costs for this event. Rotary Clubs held fundraisers to support the event. Thirty or more other technical partners in each country provided pro bono technical/medical support for this mission. RFFA leaders and the key partners worked with the Ministry of Health in each country in planning this event.

Multi disciplinary health services were offered to attract the people to come to the event at over 125 locations that were either 'static' sites or outreach sites under tents. Door-to-door testing and counseling was also done on a door-to-door basis in the Rift Valley by a legion of 80 FHI counselors with Rotarian administrative support.

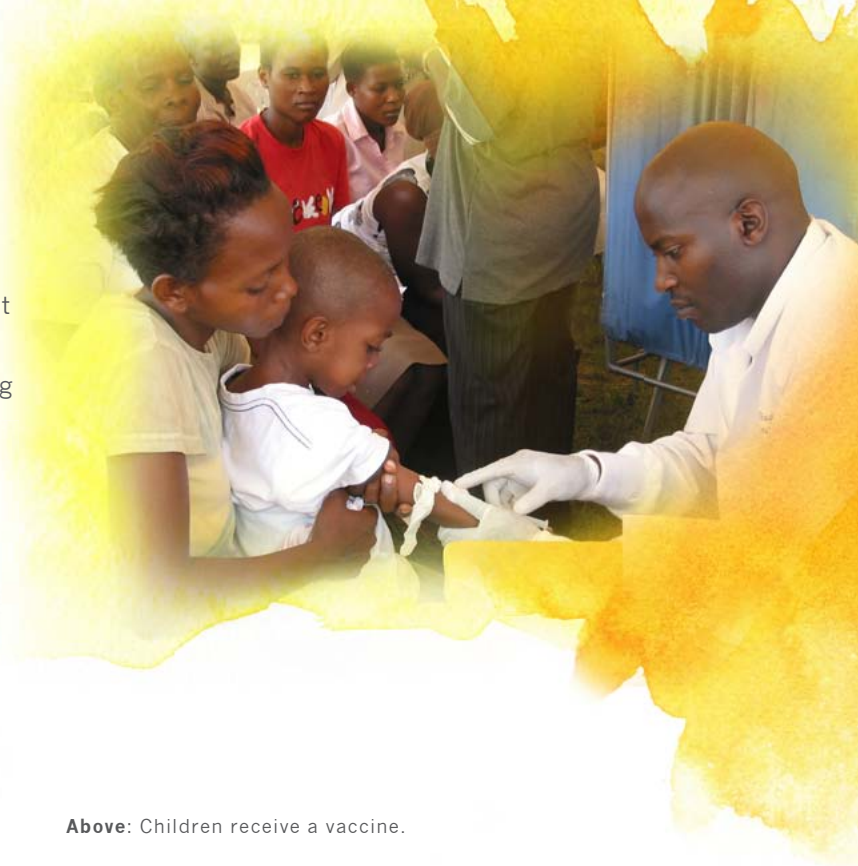


Above: RFFA CEO, Marion Bunch, gives a polio vaccine to an infant.

In addition to HIV Testing & Family Counseling, the ancillary health services promoted the wellness of the entire family. The offering (which varied from site to site) were:

- Dental clinic and hygiene education
- Blood sugar level screening; blood pressure
- Malaria and TB screening and referrals
- Distribution of treated bed nets
- Cervical and breast cancer screening
- Sanitary towels for girls ("Freedom for Girls" packet)
- Polio immunization at some sites
- De-worming for all children, Vitamin A supplements
- Pharmacies were established at many of the sites

Rotarians were ingenious in coming up with different ways to attract young people to get tested. In Cura, a small village in Kenya, football players had to get tested before they could play ball. At Nairobi soccer tournaments, the entry fee was a certificate of HIV testing. Rotaractors and Rotary Community Corps got involved in many parts of the country to mobilize the youth into getting tested. The YMCA provided jumping castle and entertainment for the young children.



Above: Children receive a vaccine.

Left: Play football for Cura ... if you get AIDS tested.



Each country held a national launch before the day of the event. In Kenya, the launch was held in Naivasha (Rift Valley) and attended by some 2,000 people. The Honorable Beth Mugo, Minister for Public Health and Sanitation, officiated at the event which was attended by other senior Kenya government officials and USAID officials as well as hundreds of citizens. Mark Doyle (RFFA Board Chair) and William Asiko (President, The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation) went to Nairobi sites to observe the high attendance and the work in process.

In Kampala, Uganda, DG Stephen held a dinner launch which was attended by 100 Rotarians and partners, including Marion Bunch and Joe McGinnis (RFFA Marketing Director), as well as Coca-Cola's Century Bottling Co. and Mary Howard (RI Global Grants). Much to the surprise of DG Stephen, Marion presented him with RFFA's annual 'Jerry's HERO' Award in appreciation of his leadership in having the vision to develop the Rotary Family Health Day. (This award is given annually to commemorate Marion's son, Jerry, who died of AIDS in 1994.)



Above: Rift Valley citizens benefit from door-to-door testing and counseling.



Above: Mark Doyle, RFFA Board Chair, and William Asiko, President of The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation with Kenya Rotarians.

The Rotary leaders who worked tirelessly on this event were:

DISTRICT 9200:

Eric Krystall, HIV/AIDS Officer
Peters Musoke, Rotarians At Work Chair

KENYA:

Keith Castelino, RFFA Kenya Chair
Muthoni Gichohi, Rotarians At Work Chair

UGANDA:

Rev. Sam Kuteikara, RFFA Uganda Chair
Theresa Baganja, Rotarians At Work Chair

In conclusion, Rotarians were stunned at the large turnout of the people. Literally thousands of people walked for miles to get to the Rotary Family Health Day site because their needs were so great. It was a truly unique and rewarding service project in the name of Rotarians At Work Day.