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EDITOR DR ARUNA TANTIA

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Take action to save mothers and babies

Posted on April 1, 2019 by Rotary Service and Engagement on rotaryservice

An estimated 5.9 million children under the age of five die each year because of malnutrition, inadequate health care, and poor sanitation - all of which can be prevented. Rotary members expand access to quality care, so mothers and children everywhere can have the same opportunities for a healthy future. Members provide education, immunizations, birth kits, and mobile health clinics. Women are taught how to prevent mother-to-infant HIV transmission, how to breast feed, and how to protect themselves and children from disease.



A woman in Luperon, Dominican Republic, can give her child a clean bottle because of the bio-sand water filter in her home.

During April, Rotary Maternal and Child Health Month, take action to support mothers and children! If your club or district needs help from sector experts to start a large-scale project focused on maternal and child health, Rotarian Action Groups (RAGs) can help. Action Groups are organized by committed Rotarians, Rotarians' family members, and Rotary program participants and alumni who have expertise and a passion for a particular type of service. Learn about our current Groups with expertise in maternal and child health, and contact them directly for assistance with starting a new, or expanding an existing, initiative:

- With 13,500 worldwide members, the Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development (RFPD) has the largest membership of any action group. RFPD assists with projects addressing the intersection of unsustainable development, human suffering, and overpopulation, such as access to health services. The group maintains information on maternal health projects that clubs/districts can help sponsor.
- The Rotarian Action Group for Healthy Pregnancies / Healthy Children (RAG HP/HC) is focused on reducing child and maternal mortality. The group is working with clubs and districts to provide education and promote awareness of prenatal care.
- RAG4CLUBFOOT provides global leadership to eliminate clubfoot disability and aims to raise public awareness about clubfoot deformity to reduce associated stigma. The group can also help clubs and districts conduct a community assessment, identify international partners, incorporate sustainability components, secure funding, advise on Global Grant applications, create a plan for monitoring and evaluation, promote an ongoing/completed project, and speak or present at meetings/events on the topic.

Looking for some inspiration? Here are just a few examples of Rotary projects that are saving mothers and children:



The Rotary Club of Navotas in the Philippines

- The Rotary Club of Navotas in the Philippines organized a session on the psychological benefits of breast feeding for mothers and babies. The session was led by healthcare staff with the support of Rotarians, spouses and Rotaractors. 30 women from the local community who had either recently had a baby or were pregnant attended the session, and were all given a breast pump and additional gifts to adjust to life as new mothers.



The Rotary Club of Navotas in the Philippines

- Many girls from low income families in Bangladesh cannot afford sanitary products during their menstrual cycle. Oftentimes, girls and women resort to using dry leaves, which are very unhygienic. In many cases, girls also miss school while menstruating, which halts their education. The Rotary Club of Bhairab Khulna, in collaboration with three other Rotary clubs, organized a project to help raise awareness of using sanitary pads for girls at the local school. The clubs organized an open discussion with the girls where a doctor shared personal hygiene suggestions. After the seminar, the clubs established a "Pad Corner" in the school. Through this pad corner, the girls had access to sanitary napkins right at school.
- The Rotary Club of Butwal-Downtown worked with the Rotaract Club of Butwal Ramapithecus and the Siddhartha Children and Woman Hospital in Nepal to organize a free mega health camp in their community. 471 children and women benefitted from the services provided including family planning, ultrasounds, x-rays, and overall health screenings.



Rotary Club of Bhairab Khulna in India

Innovation through Rotary

Posted on March 28, 2019 by Alexandria Ritchie, a member of the Rotaract Club of Virginia Commonwealth University and the Rotary Club of James River, Richmond, Virginia, USA



RI President Barry and Rotary directors with Rotaractors at the Rotaract Turns 50 Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Both Rotary and Rotaract have contributed so much to who I am as a young person. The spirit of innovation that I've found in this family has been instrumental to my journey.

During my very first meeting as a member of an Interact club, I listened as our faculty adviser talked about the project the club had just finished. They had raised funds to provide livestock to a family in South America. The livestock would benefit the family for years to come because it would help provide goods that they could sell in a local market for profit. I remember thinking how amazing and different this type of service seemed. Looking back, I now realize that I was falling in love with this idea of *sustainability*.

I came away from Interact feeling inspired because our service was going to help people with a sense of permanence. A big part of my early love for Rotary came from the fact that sustainability allows for intentional relationship-building. I learned that sustainable service requires a sense of bold innovation. As I joined Rotaract, and then later Rotary as a dual member, I always kept this idea with me because it gave me a sense of empowerment and a belief in possibility.

I owe so much to my Rotary family because all my experiences have energized my love of service, belief in leadership through inspiration, and change through creativity. As I pursued a degree in biomedical engineering with a goal of becoming a physician, I started applying these Rotary values to my life outside of Rotary.

I chose the degree I did in a large part because of my mom and brother. My brother Oliver was born with a chromosome anomaly that sadly cost him his life. He is such a huge part of my drive to become a doctor. Amid this struggle, my mom had a negative experience with the epidural she was given to numb the pain during delivery. The epidural was not placed correctly resulting in a lot of additional pain. I have had the incredible opportunity to help create a potential solution to others suffering this problem, that has since developed into a company. I have Rotary largely to thank for our success thus far.

Without Rotary, I would not have been brave enough to embrace bold innovation. Rotary helped me develop the skills I need to be able to be successful both in medicine and with our product. I have learned how

to interact with people from a wide variety of backgrounds, properly function with a large team, and convey the value proposition of something I believe in. Being a Rotarian has also taught me the importance of collaboration. Bringing together people of diverse talents and ideas under a common vision makes innovation possible and it's what gives us hope for a better future. Thanks to Rotary, I have a deep appreciation for innovation within the field of medicine.

Looking ahead at Rotary's future, I see us as *Interactors, Rotaractors, and Rotarians* embracing this sense of collaborative innovation and unity in all things including membership, engagement, leadership, and of course, service. We owe it to the organization that we love so much to challenge ourselves by thinking outside of the box when it comes to engaging people of different backgrounds and visions. It is this spirit of diversity and collaboration that allows Rotary to stay relevant, and impactful to the world around us. When we as Rotarians challenge ourselves to be *creative, bold, and intentional* in our efforts to recruit and engage new people in Rotary, we secure our future.

Rotary makes it a small world after all

Posted on April 3, 2019 by Kamlesh Chandan, Rotary Club of Lake Norman/Huntersville, North Carolina, USA



Jordan Koletic, left, and Robert Smayda Jr at Rotary Day at the United Nations in 2014

In 2015, I was working at one of the largest Fortune 500 banks in the United States when I read an article on our internal website about a team member traveling to eastern Africa. I found the story intriguing, and reached out to her for more details about the trip and to see if it had a connection with Rotary. But at the time I did not hear back.

Shortly thereafter, I began attending Toastmasters International meetings with a colleague, Robert, from the technology division. We both enjoyed our weekly dose of public speaking, and I learned that he was a young professional looking to become more involved in his community. I shared with him what Rotary clubs had been doing in the Charlotte community, and also told him about our international work. And he expressed interest in joining.

I had put the intranet story to the back of my mind until later that year, when I received my copy of *The Rotarian*. One of the articles covered Rotary Day at the United Nations and contained a photo of a young lady attending the event and a doppelganger of Robert sitting next to her. In my next Toastmasters meeting, I told Robert about the article and he said it was indeed him and his girlfriend (now wife), Jordan. He went on to tell me about her interest in women's health issues in east Africa and how she had spoken about the issue at the event.

Two months later, Robert asked me if he could forward my contact information to Jordan, who worked at the bank in the analytics group. She called me, and we talked about her east Africa project. That began a year of conversations. I was shocked she was the same person I had read about on the bank's website, and I connected Jordan with local Rotary leaders. I was convinced The Rotary Foundation could help her with her interest in pursuing a master's degree in advanced peace studies at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, with a focus on regions affected by conflict.

The chain of events impressed upon me how small our world can be. You never know when the person sitting next to you could be the next Nobel Prize winner, the individual that cures cancer, or just someone who wants to make a difference in the world.



Kamlesh Chandan and Jordan Koletic at a Rotary club meeting

My Rotary club and District 7680 applied for and received a global grant to fund a \$30,000 scholarship for Jordan, who completed a one-year peace studies program in Human Rights and International Politics at the University of Glasgow in 2017. She is now working for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor within the U.S. Department of State.

We stay in touch, and Jordan is considering applying for a Rotary Peace Fellowship.

That day made me a believer in 2019-20 Rotary President Mark Daniel Maloney's theme, Rotary Connects the World.

Jordan Koletic contributed to this article

Rotaractors raise awareness of thalassemia

Posted on April 5, 2019 by Ali Raza, president of the Rotaract Club of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Punjab, Pakistan



Rotaract members talk to students about thalassemia

We live in a society where people call themselves humans before they know the need of being human; where they wish for a long life before they wish for healthy life; and where they work for wealth before they work for health. But I believe being human means being responsible. And that includes not just shutting our eyes when segments of our society are suffering and need our help.

A year ago, I watched a video on Facebook about thalassemia, an inherited chronic anemia resulting from faulty hemoglobin production. In the video, a child with thalassemia is interviewed. Tears started rolling down my face as the child asked her interviewer, "is God angry with me?" and "why is Allah punishing me?" How do you answer a question like that?

I knew that I had to do something. That day, I learned about Jehaad for Zero Thalassemia, an organization working to raise awareness of the disease and encourage blood donations. They were the ones who produced the video. I joined and started working with them.

In January, I was invited to their annual convention at the University of Central Punjab in Lahore. I was blessed to be among people who had been working to help people with thalassemia for years. I watched that video again, and my eyes again filled with tears. But this time, I was filled with resolve to continue my efforts to raise awareness.

I came back to my Rotaract Club of Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, and we planned a thalassemia awareness campaign. We placed colorful posters with information about thalassemia all over the city. We distributed 1,000 pamphlets to students at the University and answered questions.



Dr. Ali Sajid Imami, a member the Rotary Club of Multan Cantt, leads a discussion on thalassemia

We also organized a seminar, "Jehaad for Zero Thalassemia," inviting Dr. Ali Sajid Imami, a member of the Rotary Club of Multan Cantt, to

share his expertise about the nature of thalassemia and how it can be detected, cured, and prevented. He also stressed our social responsibilities regarding the disease. Students asked many questions. Participants were given passes for a free test that detects thalassemia. During the seminar, I watched the same video a third time. But this time, instead of tears, I was filled with hope because we are successfully spreading awareness about this disease. Our work is not done. But we are taking steps to end thalassemia. It feels good to be a responsible human being, to make no excuses, and to work to make the world a better place. I look forward to working with my colleagues and encouraging others as we go.

Can corruption ever be eliminated in the world?

Boss Tweed & Napster show a counterintuitive path forward

Apr 3, 2019 by Clayton Christensen + Efosa Ojomo + Karen Dillon



Corruption doesn't result from a lack of ethics or knowledge; it's a workaround chosen by people when they have few better options. Ask citizens why their countries aren't developing, ask investors why they choose not to invest in some regions, and corruption is almost always at the top of their list of reasons.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent annually trying to eradicate fraud and graft around the world, yet it's stubbornly pervasive.

When I (Clayton) was a missionary in South Korea in the 1970s, we were visited monthly by a man selling "safety" insurance. If you paid him, he guaranteed that your home would not be robbed; if you didn't, somebody picked your house clean. Making sure that our possessions were not taken away was important for our survival, so we paid.

It's only in hindsight that I see we were willing participants in a form of low-grade corruption - the kind that establishes a power balance in a community, makes lives easier (or harder, for those who don't participate), and keeps the economic wheels of daily life greased. On either side, corruption was, and continues to be, a matter of survival.

Today, more than two-thirds of the countries measured by global anti-corruption group Transparency International score lower than 50 out of a possible 100 on the annual Corruption Perceptions Index. (A score of 0 is seen as very corrupt; 100 is seen as very clean.) The average score worldwide is 43. According to the organization, 79 percent of the 7.6 billion people in the world live in countries with "corrupt" governments. That's a lot of us. It's hard to estimate the negative effect that corruption has on poorer countries, especially when its mere perception impedes investments that can help them create wealth and prosperity.

People in societies where corruption is common are not missing the fundamental moral fiber of those in non-corrupt societies, nor are they simply ignorant that there is a better way. Instead, corruption is a workaround when there are few better options. Corruption is hired for a Job to Be Done, or, more specifically, to help people make progress in a particular circumstance. In fact, our research has found that there are three powerful reasons why people hire corruption.

First, the vast majority of individuals in society want to make progress. From the jobless person looking for employment to the wealthy person looking to gain more status, we want to improve our financial, social and emotional well-being. When society offers few legitimate options to progress, corruption becomes more attractive.

Second, every individual, just like every company, has a cost structure. In business, a company's cost structure is the combination of fixed and variable costs it incurs to run its business. Individuals also have a cost structure - how much money they spend to maintain their lifestyle - and it includes rent or mortgage payments, school fees, hospital bills and food. Just like companies, individuals must have revenues that surpass their costs. Understanding this revenue-cost relationship helps predict circumstances where the likelihood of corruption will be high. For example, if a police officer in India earns 20,000 rupees a month (approximately \$295) but has a cost structure

We meet 2nd and 4th Saturdays at the Auditorium at 9th floor, JC 25, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700098 at 5.00 PM

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that demands he spend \$400 a month, he will be susceptible to corruption, regardless of what the laws dictate.

Third, people hire corruption because most individuals - regardless of income level - will subvert the law to make progress or benefit themselves. According to Harvard academics Edward Glaeser and Andrei Shleifer, when confronted with a law that limits our ability to do what we want to do, most of us make a mental calculation: Do I need to obey this law, or can I get away with disobeying it? And which way will I be better off? The average rational person will compare the benefits of obeying the law with the consequences of disobedience. If the scale tips toward disobedience, then it is actually irrational to obey the law, no matter how "good" it might seem.

Consider the fact that so many of us, all over the world, flout the speed limit when there are no police officers or cameras in sight. We want to make progress - get where we are going quickly - and willingly ignore the people who enforce the legal speed limit because we believe we're better off making that choice.

Fighting corruption feels like playing a game of Whac-A-Mole. As soon as one corrupt player is vanquished, more pop up in its place. The problem just needs to be examined differently. Instead of poor countries continuing to try to fight corruption with their limited resources, what would happen if they focused on enabling the creation of new markets that help citizens solve their everyday problems?

Development often precedes successful anti-corruption programs, not the other way around. Once enough markets are created, people have an interest in those markets succeeding. Governments will generate more revenue to improve their courts, law enforcement, and legislative systems. In addition, markets provide jobs that give people a viable alternative to accumulating wealth through corrupt means.

There was a time when corruption in America rivaled corruption in some of the poorest countries today. It was epitomized by 19th-century politician William Magear "Boss" Tweed. Born in 1823, Tweed entered New York City politics at an early age and was elected city alderman by the time he was 28. After spending several years in the position, he opened a law office even though he was not a lawyer. There, he received payments for his "legal services," payments that were mostly extortions. With these funds, Tweed purchased Manhattan real estate and further grew his influence.

"The Tweed ring at its height was an engineering marvel, strong and solid, strategically deployed to control key power points: the courts, the legislature, the treasury and the ballot box," biographer Kenneth Ackerman wrote. "Its frauds had a grandeur of scale and an elegance of structure: money laundering, profit sharing and organization." During his time as the boss of Tammany Hall, Tweed, briefly a member of the US House of Representatives, stole a sum estimated to be between \$1 billion and \$4 billion in today's dollars.

Had Transparency International's rankings existed back then, the US would not have been high on the list of "least corrupt" countries. But it improved over time. Was that due primarily to better laws, better politicians or better institutions? These certainly all helped, but they didn't cause America to suddenly stop being corrupt.

As more and more Americans created more and more wealth for themselves and found better ways to make a living, their voices of dissatisfaction with corruption became louder. "Politically, the rage of victims counted for very little in 1840, not much in 1860; by 1890, it was a roaring force" is how Stanford Law professor Lawrence Friedman put it. In the US, development happened in spite of the widespread corruption and unpredictability. Anti-corruption was not triggered by legislation or an increased intensity in law enforcement; it came about because the fundamental equation of how Americans, whether average or rich, could make money, make progress, and make a living for themselves and their families changed.

When a better way presents itself, the process that leads to transparency begins. We can see this happening in countries all over the world. In the late 1940s, for instance, Taiwan was quite corrupt and unpredictable. Mayors and local public officials handed out favors to their cronies and lined their own pockets in the process, and many forms of corruption, such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism and organized crime went unchecked. Taiwan, however, has since become

a successful and productive economy, and ranks high - 29th - out of the 180 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index.

Consider what happened in the music industry in America at the turn of this century, when a culture of piracy and illegal music sharing gave way to one in which customers opted to pay for streaming music instead. If you're old enough to remember the golden age of the mixtape, you will remember that after the innovation of a dual-cassette recorder, copying music was easy. Many of us made mixtapes for parties, mixtapes to share with girlfriends or boyfriends, mixtapes for road trips.

Music industry executives spent years lobbying Congress for stricter copyright protections and millions of dollars in awareness campaigns designed to deter people from "stealing" music this way. But none of that made a dent in the practice of making copies. America had become a nation of thieves who stole music.

We might win cases against corrupt politicians and corrupt practices, but until we understand why people hire corruption, we'll continue to spend hard-earned resources fighting this problem.

Although the music industry won the battle, illegal sharing just went further underground. In a confessional book titled *How Music Got Free*, journalist Stephen Witt chronicles his foray into the world of music piracy and his eventual change of heart. He did not stop stealing music because he had a moral revelation. Rather, Witt threw in the towel in 2014 because it was simply not worth the trouble.

"Using Spotify for the first time, I immediately understood that the corporations had won - its scope and convenience made torrenting music seem antique," he writes. "For the first time, a legal business was offering a product that was superior to what was available underground."

The music industry might have been able to knock down music pirates here and there. But until it truly understood why people were "hiring" those alternative solutions, it was never going to prevail. It was playing its own game of Whac-A-Mole.

Of course, the world shouldn't turn a blind eye and wait for economic growth to push aside fraud and graft. But if we want to have a fighting chance against corruption, we can complement existing efforts with market-creating innovations. We're not saying that corruption can be completely eradicated from any society, but it can be significantly mitigated. And this matters to a society's potential for growth, because limiting corruption leads to predictability, which improves trust and transparency.

Adapted from the new book, "The Prosperity Paradox: How Innovation Can Lift Nations out of Poverty" by Clayton Christensen, Efosa Ojomo and Karen Dillon - reprinted by IDEAS.TED.COM with permission from publisher and authors.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Clayton Christensen is the Kim B Clark Professor at Harvard Business School. Efosa Ojomo works with Christensen. He is a graduate of Harvard Business School. Karen Dillon is the former editor of the Harvard Business Review and coauthor of the bestseller "How Will You Measure Your Life and Competing Against Luck". She is a graduate of Cornell and of Northwestern Universities.

Birthdays of Rotary members in April, 2019

Uttam Ganguli, past Governor on April 2, 2019
Debashis Mitra, past Governor on April 21, 2019
Vijay S Bhandari, past Governor on April 27, 2019

April is Maternal and Child Health Month

UNWIND

The most effective way to remember your wife's birthday is to forget it once

TAILPIECE

"A study showed that replacing a toxic worker with an average one can be twice as profitable as upgrading an average one to a star."
Adam Grant