

**DISEASE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH
INTERVENTION PROGRAM: FOCUS ON ROTARY CLUBS IN RURAL
COMMUNITIES OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The severity and magnitude of deadly diseases around the world have shown that the management and delivery of health services to the vulnerable populace can no longer be the sole responsibility of governments but requires the support of non-governmental organizations. History have recognized that international non-governmental organizations like Rotary International, which focuses on combating diseases, such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, diabetes and polio, have implemented several health intervention programs aimed at preventing and treating communicable and non-communicable diseases in order to improve health and well-being of rural dwellers. Such measures have also covered a wide range of social interventions that are designed to improve living conditions in rural communities. However, an examination of the existing studies indicates that the Rotary's activities in Ogun State, particularly in the area of disease prevention and treatment, have not been properly documented. In view of this, this paper investigated the efforts of Rotary clubs on disease prevention and treatment through public health intervention program in rural communities of Ogun State using historical research design. It is found that Rotary clubs in Ogun State have undertaken health education or awareness programs, facilitated blood transfusion, testing, screening and treatment, donated and renovated health facilities, and provided training, counselling and immunization services. It also identified the challenges that the organization faced during the implementation of these programs. The paper concludes that Rotary clubs should intensify efforts to strengthen their health intervention programs to cover the underserved rural areas in Ogun State.

Keywords: Disease Prevention; Disease Treatment; Public Health Intervention; Rotary Clubs; Rural Communities.

Introduction

In the earliest time and until the recent, disease has been of the many health problems that are widespread around the world. Diseases globally, as Davies, et al.¹ have observed, pose serious threat to human survival more than war and other activities that had engaged man in previous centuries thereby making the national governments having robust diplomatic discourse on health issues than any other issue. Novotny, et al.² argued that health concerns have become global issues in the 21st century with nations realizing the need for pragmatic response and collaboration in the fight against deadly diseases. Nigeria and other developing countries deal with a variety of health crises that have an impact on their socioeconomic and political development. Addressing these issues in these nations has proven to be a difficult task because of poor governance, inadequate funding, weak infrastructure, and low health workforce, as well as their unequal access to safe and effective vaccines, tests, and treatments.³

The prevalent deadliest infectious or communicable diseases, which include Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), Tuberculosis (TB), measles, malaria, influenza and diarrhea, together have resulted to millions of deaths.⁴ For instance, TB kills about 1.4 million people each year globally, malaria leads to more than 400,000 deaths annually, and HIV/AIDS continues to be the top cause of mortality in sub-Saharan Africa.⁵ In the next ten years, there will be a 17 percent increase in the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which currently account for over 70% of fatalities globally.⁶ According to available data, NCDs, including diabetes, cancer, chronic lung disease, and cardiovascular disease (CVD), account for 74percent of global fatalities each year.⁷ Viruses, bacteria, fungus, parasites, and prions are among the agents responsible for infectious diseases and their treatment is determined by the underlying causes.⁸

Since the mid-19th century, disease prevention and treatment have continued to receive global attention, owing to the rising prevalence of dangerous and communicable diseases in many countries around the world, particularly emerging ones. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines disease prevention as procedures and actions aimed at minimizing the likelihood of a disease or condition affecting an individual, halting or slowing the ailment's progression, or reducing disability.⁹ Effective disease prevention reduces the likelihood of an individual contracting a disease, illness, or injury. It also assists people in properly managing existing diseases or health issues in order to avert deterioration in health.¹⁰

The goal of public health is to promote health and avoid diseases. The history of public health is rife with attempts aimed at finding effective strategies to protect the world's population from sickness.¹¹ Early disease prevention initiatives centered on providing access to clean water, safe housing, more nutrient-dense and cleaner food sources, as well as personal hygiene, disinfection, and immunization.¹² Because of these efforts, contemporary civilizations have achieved high rates of prenatal and maternal survival, a reduction in infectious diseases, and an increase in life expectancy.¹³

Public health intervention includes health education, screening programs, vaccination, surveillance, blood donation, training, counselling and health promotion.¹⁴ These interventions can be broadly classified into two types: preventive interventions, which focus on preventing diseases from occurring and thus reducing the incidence of new outbreaks, and therapeutic interventions, which involve the treatment and mitigation of disease effects, thereby lowering case fatality rates.¹⁵ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health education is

a technique for enhancing the overall health and wellness of a population by disseminating knowledge and encouraging healthy behaviors.¹⁶ As a tool for health promotion, health education is essential to enhancing community well-being because it addresses a variety of health issues, from mental health to chronic diseases, and it influences policy and economic results. It also promotes knowledge and healthy practices for people of all ages.¹⁷

A screening program is vital to the fight against disease. It is among the most fundamental instruments in contemporary public health and disease prevention. Screening programs have a long and illustrious history of being used to enhance chronic disease therapy and contain infectious disease outbreaks. Reducing the risk of disease or detecting it early enough to get the best possible treatment is, in essence, the aim of screening programs.¹⁸ Immunizations and vaccines are regarded as a global health intervention that are essential to the containment and prevention of infectious disease epidemics. These interventions have saved millions of lives.¹⁹

The global eradication of smallpox and the elimination of measles, tetanus, and polio from most parts of the world are primarily attributable to widespread vaccination and immunization campaigns.²⁰ The World Health organization's (WHO) study reveals that vaccinations can prevent over twenty serious illnesses, extending the life expectancy and improving the health of individuals of all ages.²¹ It is reported that licensed vaccines are currently available for twenty-five (25) different preventable infections.²² Each year, diseases including measles, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and influenza cause between 3.5 and 5 million deaths that may be avoided with vaccination.²³

Public health surveillance is an important tool for disease prevention and treatment since it estimates people's health condition and behavior.²⁴ It entails the systematic gathering, analysis, and interpretation of health-related data, as well as the timely distribution of this information to those in charge of preventing and managing disease and injury.²⁵ An effective disease surveillance system is essential to detecting disease outbreaks before they spread, cost lives and become difficult to control. Effective surveillance can help detect disease outbreaks in emergency situations.²⁶ Blood donation is essential in a variety of medical conditions and has the potential to save lives. Blood transfusions are essential in the battle against disease, improving the treatment of accidents and other severe injuries, and stabilizing a patient's health.²⁷

Healthcare counseling is an essential component in disease prevention and the promotion of good health and well-being. Imparting healthcare counselling is crucial in treating all forms of psychological problems, instilling good mindsets, and promoting healthy lifestyle. During counselling, the counselee will be able to examine critical areas, discover the reasons of health issues, and develop health-related knowledge, therefore enhancing ways of dealing with the difficult situation.²⁸ Health promotion strives to contribute to the prevention of disease, minimize the risk factors or behaviors associated with particular diseases, nurture lifestyles and situations favorable to good health, and permit the increased use of accessible health services.²⁹

International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have been identified as key global health actors and facilitators of public health intervention programs.³⁰ A study conducted by Shin, Yeo and Jung³¹ discovered that INGOs have been essential in raising the standard of basic healthcare for people in underdeveloped countries. Anbazhagan and Surekha³² posited that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have long helped define the

role of health professionals in national programs and set standards for practice, training, and education. They concentrate on initiatives for the underprivileged and disabled in rural areas, as well as specific health conditions (such as leprosy, poliomyelitis, TB, or cardiovascular disorders). Burkle's work³³ emphasized that INGOs nonetheless have expanded their role in supporting public health across the globe.

One of the prominent INGOs actively promoting disease prevention and treatment globally is Rotary International (RI). The organization is committed to halting the spread of deadly diseases such as poliomyelitis, HIV/AIDS, malaria, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and diabetes around the world.³⁴ The organization states that "we believe good health care is everyone's right. Yet 400 million people in the world can't afford or don't have access to basic health care."³⁵ Besides, the organization has made significant efforts to provide underprivileged communities with infrastructure, health education, medical supplies, and training facilities in order to promote healthcare access among rural populations.³⁶ However, the organization's attempts to intervene in public health in Nigeria, particularly in rural communities, have received little to no scholarly attention. In view of this gap in the literature, this paper investigates the role of Rotary clubs in preventing and treating diseases through public health intervention programs in rural communities of Ogun State. The following research questions guided the conduct of the study:

- i. How did the Rotary Clubs in Ogun State facilitate and implement health intervention programs in rural communities?
- ii. What were the challenges that Rotary Clubs faced during the implementation of their health intervention programs in rural communities of Ogun State?

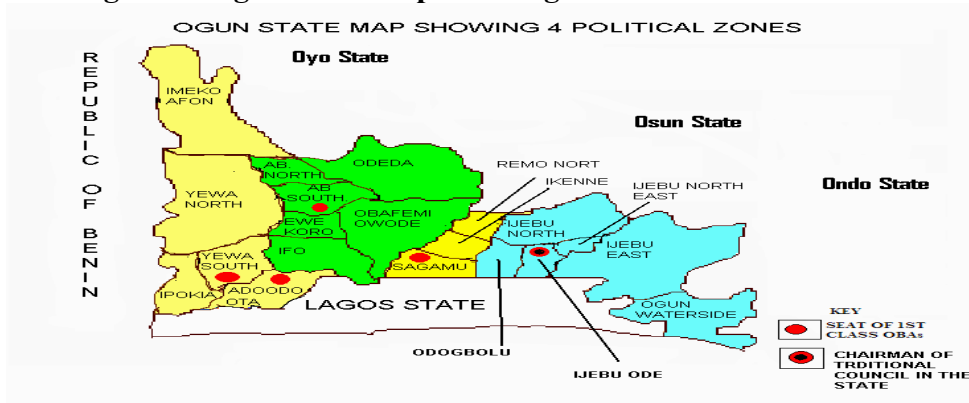
Research Methodology

The paper employed historical research design. Secondary and primary sources were adopted in the collection and collation of data. The secondary sources included books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, and official documents, as well as government publications, press reports, published and unpublished theses and dissertations. These documents were procured from libraries and the Internet. The primary data were obtained through face-to-face and telephone interviews. Overall, forty-four (44) respondents were interviewed. Samples included 30 members of the Rotary Clubs in Ogun State, seven (7) officials of Ogun State Primary Health Care Development Board (PHCDB), two (2) staff members of the Ogun State Ministry of Health, and five (5) Local Government Primary Health Centres (PHCs). Data collected from the interview sessions were transcribed, processed, discussed and applied thematically in the study.

Study Area

Ogun State is a state in the Southwest Nigeria comprising twenty (20) local government areas and has its capital located in Abeokuta. The state was created in 1976 out of the then Western State. The State has an estimated population of 4,245,107 in the year 2009 using projected 2006 population census figure, 5,217,716 as at 2016³⁷, and an estimated population of 5,945,275 as of 2019.³⁸

Figure 1: Ogun State Map Showing Four Geo-Political Zones



Source: Ogun State Primary Health Care Board³⁹

The figure shows that the light yellow colored-area identifies five local government areas under Yewa geo-political zone; Imeko Afon, Yewa North, Yewa South, Ipokia and Ado-Odo Ota; the green colored-areas includes six local government areas under Egba geo-political zone: Odeda, Abeokuta North, Abeokuta South, Ewekoro, Obafemi Owode and Ifo; the dim yellow colored-areas includes three local government areas under Remo geo-political zone, namely: Remo North, Ikenne and Sagamu; and the teal colored-areas includes six local government areas under Ijebu geo-political zone: Ijebu North, Odogbolu, Ijebu-Ode, Ijebu North-East, Ijebu East and Ogun Waterside. The state is divided into 236 political wards in four (4) geopolitical zones, as well as 148 health districts. Ogun State is home to around 20 Rotary clubs. Rotary Club Akute, Rotary Club Elegu, Rotary Club Ewekoro Ifo Metro, Rotary Club Ijagun, Rotary Club Ijebu-Ife, Rotary Club Ijebu-Ode, Rotary Club Ilaro, Rotary Club Ilaro Oronna, Rotary Club Obantoko, Rotary Club Oke-Ona Egba, Rotary Club Ota, and Rotary Club Sagamu are just a few examples. These Rotary clubs belong to Rotary International District 9110 Nigeria.

Findings and Discussions

A. Rotary Clubs and Health Intervention Programs in Ogun State

Rotary is an international service organization whose major goal is to bring people together to battle poverty, disease, and illiteracy while also promoting peace and community development. Rotary International was created in 1905 by Paul Harris and three other friends with similar visions with the goal of creating an international non-governmental organization (INGO) that would mobilize resources to address the world’s numerous issues. One example is disease outbreaks, which have been prevalent in both developed and developing countries since the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ The Rotary year lasts from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. Rotary International’s programs are divided into six areas: maternal and child health promotion, basic education and literacy provision, disease prevention and treatment, clean water and sanitation provision, peace promotion and conflict prevention and resolution, and economic and community development.⁴¹

Specifically, Rotary International (RI) prioritizes disease prevention and treatment. Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer’s, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, and polio are just a few of the diseases that RI combats. It focuses on introducing individuals to regular hearing, vision, and dental care, as well as health education. Rotary International gave grants for worldwide initiatives and activities. To combat diseases, the organization has distributed grants worth over

\$65 million. Rotary's activities have included the establishment of temporary clinics, blood donation centers, and training facilities in impoverished areas plagued by outbreaks and limited access to healthcare.⁴² Therefore, the health intervention programs by Rotary Clubs in rural communities of Ogun State are examined based on the following:

Health education or enlightenment/awareness program

Rotary International District 9110 in collaboration with Rotarians for Family Health and Aids Prevention (RFHA) in 2013 organized a 3-day program to promote family health and create awareness around polio, HIV/AIDS, malaria, diabetes, and eye cataract, among other ailments affecting the residents of Ogun State. On May 9, 2013, the 3-day free healthcare program was held in several locations such as community halls, medical facilities, and Rotary centres throughout Ogun State. Coca-Cola supported this program through the Coca-Cola Africa Foundation.⁴³ In June 2019, the Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ode in collaboration with Abdul-Mojeed Omotayo Omo-Owo Islamic Centre and Daisy Sickle Cell Foundation, walked to create awareness and sensitize the public in Ijebu-Ode about Sickle Cell disease.⁴⁴

Over the years, women are enlightened on how to breastfeed, how to stop mother-to-child HIV transmission, and how to keep themselves and their kids healthy.⁴⁵ In 2018, Rotary Club of Ota handled the issues concerning disease prevention and treatment through education and enlightenment programs. The Club achieved this by holding rallies to sensitize the public on the need to stay away from those things that could expose them to diseases of any kind.⁴⁶ Rotary Club of Elegba between 2008 and 2019 organized health week every year where free health talks and medical care would be given to people around Elegba and its environs. Some of these included free malaria screening, typhoid test, high blood pressure check, blood sugar test and treatment.⁴⁷

Since 2009, Rotary Club of Akute would organize free health services once every year and professional guest lecturers would be invited to give lectures on health management.⁴⁸ Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba organized health talk and distributed drugs for various medical treatments.⁴⁹ Rotary Club of Ota has from 2010 organized Family Health Week carried out in November each year. During this week, families gathered together and all aspects of health care were rendered. It used to be a one-week affair. The Club held rallies to sensitize the public on the need to stay away from those things that could make them to be exposed to diseases of any kind.⁵⁰

Palliatives/financial assistance & blood transfusion

In 2014, Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba took up the medical bills of a girl with kidney problem, who was a pupil of a public primary school in Abeokuta and had been operated on twice.⁵¹ In 2015-2019, Rotary Club of Abeokuta organized health talks in schools in Abeokuta, and regularly made visitation to patients of the Children's wards in hospitals with gifts.⁵² Nutrition was also part of the Rotary's family health project and sometimes, it was done apart from the family health week. With regards to nutrition, most of the time, it is education on proper feeding. While some Rotary clubs gave free meals or food packages, others provided education or giving out subventions to the mothers for proper feeding of their children with nutritional meals.⁵³

Blood transfusions improve health and save lives, but many patients who need them frequently lack timely access to healthy blood, which has caused many patients to pass away too soon and left many more in poor condition. Subsequently, acts of blood donation by individuals could help save millions of lives indeed one pint of donated blood could be what may be required to save up to three or more lives. In this regard, blood donation has remained a continuous project carried out by the Rotary International, District 9110 at intervals every Rotary year which begins from 1st July to 30th June of the following year. Through several blood donation exercises conducted across Ogun State over the years, the district has gathered over 500 pints of blood donated by voluntary, unpaid donors which included Rotarians and non-Rotarians from the two states. The blood donation exercise continued in the district as more pints of blood are donated to save more lives.⁵⁴

Rotary Club of Ota in 2017 intervened in the area of blood donation to the State hospitals. The Club called on people who were ready and willing to donate blood in this regard. Those that came for donation were gathered for screening, and those who were medically fit were asked to go ahead for their donation of pints of blood. Donated pints of blood were distributed to the State (general) hospitals in the State.⁵⁵ Rotary Club of Abeokuta in 2015-2019 also mobilized people for blood donation to a special blood bank for the government hospitals in Abeokuta.⁵⁶

Testing, screening and treatment

Rotary clubs equally carried out programs known as National Family Health Day which takes place once in a year in which several diseases and sicknesses are treated. Rotary Family Health Days (RFHDs) is a community-based health-initiative which addresses health challenges by bringing life-saving health services into the communities most vulnerable.⁵⁷ Rotary International District 9110 Nigeria embarked on Rotary Family Health Day with funding support from The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation (TCCAF) in an effort to support sustainable healthcare delivery by offering free health testing services to underserved populations. tuberculosis screening, blood pressure and diabetes screenings, cervical cancer screenings, dental examinations, and others.⁵⁸

Rotary International in collaboration with medical health centres also treated some health problems with some degree of effectiveness.⁵⁹ Rotary clubs across Ogun State provided treatment for diabetes, malaria, and HIV screening test. They also provided mosquito nets and anti-malaria drugs for the affected persons.⁶⁰ In July 2019, Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ode successfully concluded the Hepatitis Zero Project at Adeola Odutola Vocational Centre, Ijebu-Ode where 305 residents of Ijebu-Ode benefited from the free Hepatitis B and C screening tests.⁶¹

Rotary International District 9110 Nigeria conducted free medical outreaches and provided free eyes screening, glasses, and surgeries for eye cataract, cleft lip and palate patients. The free surgery project was executed in collaboration with an American-based not-for-profit organization known as Alliance for Smiles in collaboration with Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) Lagos State, and Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital (OOUTH) Ogun State. The district also carried out post-surgery speech therapy and other speech aids for patients. There were also free medical screenings for malaria, child care, and worm treatments. The screening and surgery exercise was held in November 2018.⁶²

There was also Rotary Surgical Mission (RSM) that performed free surgery on fibroid, cataract, and limb deformity, etc. Most of these programs were carried out in collaboration with the Ogun State Government. Cataract and glaucoma operations were within the major projects that Rotary carried out over the years. The Rotary Eye Foundation also collaborated with the private sector, and treatment was free of charge.⁶³ Rotary clubs in Ogun State, such as Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ode, Rotary Club of Ijebu Ife Sunrise, Rotary Club of Obantoko, and Rotary Club of Ijagun, among others, have participated in several Rotary Family Health Days to ensure that people enjoy free health screening and services. Rotary Club of Ijebu Ife Sunrise provided health screening for Malaria parasite, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, and HIV. The club donated five (5) new adult and children's mattresses each to three Maternity health centres in Ijebu Ife.⁶⁴

Rotary Club of Abeokuta Metro in collaboration with the Rotary International District 9110 has over the years invited workers in the medical field to test people on their HIV status, diabetes, malaria, and give drugs at the end of the exercise.⁶⁵ In the same Family Health Week held every November at Rotary Club of Ota, treatments are given to those who need them. HIV tests were done for those who wanted it. Also, other tests, such as malaria and blood sugar were also carried out.⁶⁶

Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ife Sunrise participated in several Rotary Family Health Days to ensure that neighbouring communities enjoyed free health screening and services. In 2016, the club carried out the Rotary Family Health program project which took the club to three remote (hard-to-reach) villages in Ijebu East Local Government Area, including Ojelana, Onipetesi and Gbamugbamu. These villages are about 70km from Benin-Ore Expressway. The following year, 2017, same project was executed in Owu Ikija, Itele Ijebu and Ogbere Ijebu, respectively, with not less than 150 natives each in attendance and were tested for various diseases.⁶⁷ Rotary Club of Ijebu Ife 'Sunrise' provided health screening for malaria parasite, diabetes, high blood pressure, and HIV in 2016, 2017 and 2018, respectively, in Ijebu Ife Community and its environs.⁶⁸

Rotary Club of Abeokuta conducted free eye tests, free hernia surgery for 250 patients, and free community health tests on hypertension, diabetes, etc., and carried out de-worming exercise for 3,000 pupils in primary schools within Abeokuta.⁶⁹ Similarly, Rotary Club of Ilaro 'Oronna' participated in Rotary health weeks where products like paracetamol, vitamin C and other drugs and toiletries were contributed to Yewa South Local Council. Two nurses were invited in collaboration with doctors within the club. Canopies were rented and people from towns were invited for free medical consultation and were checked for blood pressure, malaria, blood sugar level and free treatment and drugs, such as anti-malaria, paracetamol, etc. were given to them.⁷⁰

Infrastructure and health facilities

The Rotary clubs in Ogun State actively pursued this aim through initiatives that offered birth kits, mobile health clinics, and much more. For instance, Rotary Club of Abeokuta Metro donated drugs and mosquito nets to Ijaiye State Hospital. It also built toilet at the Baptist Day Primary School, Ijaiye, in order to prevent the outbreak of cholera and associated diseases.⁷¹ Rotary Club of Akute built the first health centre for Akute in Ifo Local Government Area, commissioned and handed over to the government in 2012.⁷² Rotary Club of Abeokuta made

provisions for free drugs and supportive materials to some physically-challenged students of higher institutions across Abeokuta. It equally donated treated nets to prevent malaria, artificial limbs to amputees, free eye glasses, and wheel chairs.⁷³

Rotary Club of Ijebu Ife ‘Sunrise’ purchased HIV screening kit, RDT kit for malaria, ITNs, glucometer for blood sugar level test, and drugs to support the malaria, HIV, and glaucoma patients.⁷⁴ Drugs were distributed to members of the community where the health talk organized by Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba at different locations. Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba also built a health centre in conjunction with Rotary Club of Dundee Canada at Federal Housing Estate, Elega in 2003.⁷⁵ Rotary clubs helped in the renovation of health centres in Ijebu North-East, such as the Erunwon Health Centre, supply of some health equipment, including ambulance and incubators to the (State Ministry of Health) provision of water for sanitation in various localities of the state, building and equipping some health centres, like the Akute Health Centre.⁷⁶ The Rotary clubs in Ogun State also donated wheelchairs to primary healthcare centres. On July 11, 2019, Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ode presented a wheel chair to the Erunwon Primary Health Centre in Erunwon-Ijebu, Ijebu North-East Local Government Area.⁷⁷

Rotary Club of Ota visited the State General Hospital in Ota and donated items to the hospital generally and particularly to the maternity ward. The items included beddings, drugs and other equipment for personal use. There were also community health projects where the whole community, especially women and children, were invited to do consultations and drugs were distributed to the people as required. The last one was done at Atan Ota Community. Meanwhile, the Club also renovated the Primary Health Centre at Ado Odo-Ota town in 2018. The Health Centre was completely renovated; painted and provided with new beddings and medical equipment.⁷⁸

Moreover, Rotary clubs in Ogun State also contributed to what was known as the Rotary Medical Cabin Project. This is when a water cabin was turned into a Rotary Health Centre. In the Centre, one was expected to see everything that were supposed to be found in a primary healthcare centre. It was a place for consultation and treatment, thereby making it a complete health care unit. Rotary Medical Cabin Project was done by the Rotary Global Project in which the Rotary Club of Ota among other clubs as contributors. The cabins could be found in three locations around Ogun State: Ota, Ijebu Igbo and Okungbolu.⁷⁹

Rotary Club of Obantoko renovated a health centre at Obantoko. New nets and curtains were provided for all the windows of the health centre. A glucometer, and a new generator set (3.5 KVA) were also purchased for the centre.⁸⁰ In 2017, The Club of Ijebu Ife ‘Sunrise’ donated five (5) new adult and children’s mattresses each to three Maternity health centres in Ijebu Ife.⁸¹ Rotary Club of Elega donated window blind, bed sheets, stethoscope to two health centres at Abeokuta North Local Government Area in 2017.⁸² Rotary Club of Abeokuta Metro donated about two hundred and fifty pregnancy kits to pregnant mothers at Ijaiye Health Centre in 2018.⁸³

Training, counselling and immunization or vaccination

Rotary made a lot of impact on the health sector in Ogun State. Rotary International engaged their host communities through several health interventions. During the immunization exercises against contagious diseases like polio, measles, smallpox, chickenpox, and monkey

pox etc., they have made significant efforts to involve health officers.⁸⁴ The outreach organized by Rotary International District 9110 in collaboration with Rotarians for Family Health and Aids Prevention (RFHA) in 2013 with the support received by Coca Cola Africa Foundation provided counselling on how to protect parents, kids, grandparents, friends, and family members from contagious diseases such as polio, malaria, diabetes, cholera, among others, offered free testing and vaccinations to those at risk of contracting them.⁸⁵

In a Family Health Week carried out every November by Rotary Club of Ota, counselling would be provided on various diseases.⁸⁶ The Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ode in collaboration with Abdul-Mojeed Omotayo Omo-Owo Islamic Centre and Daisy Sickle Cell Foundation conducted free genotype screening tests, and did counselling sessions in June 2019.⁸⁷ In Ogun State, Rotary International also supported the training of health workers in e-capture of maternal and child health related cases. Having trained workers, they also assisted with the resource persons in the training of medical record officers for the data capture of maternal deaths in the state thereby enhancing data quality and database of the state Government.⁸⁸

Challenges faced by Rotary Clubs during Health Intervention Programs in Ogun State

This section covers the analysis of the interviews conducted with the respondents on the identified challenges confronting the Rotary clubs during the implementation of their health intervention programs in Ogun State. These include:

Insufficient funds: It has been revealed that Rotary clubs in Ogun State have confronted the challenge of insufficient funds while implementing health intervention programs to address various health conditions of rural dwellers. They believe that health intervention initiatives necessitate significant financial resources for healthcare infrastructure, medical equipment acquisition, and the provision of vital medications to their target beneficiaries. Despite the fact that funds could be raised through the Paul Harris Fellow, Bequest Society, Arch Klumph Society, Rotary International, District and Club dues, Endowment Fund, annual subscription known as Every Rotarian Every Year (EREY), and member donations at meetings, Rotary clubs in Ogun State have found it difficult to implement health intervention programs due to inadequate funds. In fact, financial constraints have prevented a number of projects that should have been carried out from being done so.⁸⁹

Low membership strength: Rotary membership is founded on a set of ideals and ideas, and there are several methods to gauge how strong a club's membership is. The respondents stated that one major challenge facing Rotary Clubs in Ogun State has been low membership. Their capacity to collect money, enlist volunteers, and extend the scope of their health intervention initiatives throughout Ogun State's rural communities has been hampered by a low membership drive. It is observed that low membership might be the result of poor outreach, low awareness, or a failure to draw in new members. This may also be the consequence of members' disengagement from club activities, such as missing meetings, not taking part in volunteer work, or not making monetary contributions.⁹⁰

Inconsistent payment of membership dues: was also identified as one of the challenges facing Rotary clubs in Ogun State. The capacity of the clubs to provide a consistent flow of revenue to fund their health intervention activities has been hampered by this problem. Rotarians who fail to pay their dues on time have caused a number of problems for the club

and its members, including unstable finances, dwindling resources, trouble budgeting and planning, disruptions to club activities, and possible legal repercussions. The irregular payment of membership dues has caused financial instability for the clubs, in addition to violations of the bye-laws. Due to this issue, the clubs' resources have decreased, which has affected their capacity to assist members, carry out volunteer work, and fulfill their purpose and objectives.⁹¹

Inadequate public awareness campaign on the activities of Rotary is considered one of the challenges facing the Rotary clubs. Inadequate public awareness campaigns pose a significant challenge for Rotary clubs, as it appears to have hindered their capacity to raise funds, attract new members, and implement health intervention programs. The public may not be aware of the organization's mission, goals, or the specific projects and strategic initiatives that Rotary clubs in Ogun State have undertaken. Additionally, it is critical to draw attention to the positive effects of Rotary's work and to encourage public support, participation, and sponsorship. By providing information about Rotary's mission and goals, the public is made aware of the organization's dedication to service, its focus areas—such as health, education, and community development—as well as the specific projects and initiatives it supports.⁹²

Poor maintenance culture of projects implemented by Rotary clubs is another challenge. It has been observed that some of these projects experience a decline in their effectiveness, efficiency, and overall success over time due to inadequate maintenance and support. This has led to a reduction in the asset's lifespan, a decrease in operational efficiency, safety concerns, the need to pay fines or sanctions, and a loss of public trust. Inadequate maintenance practices have led to expensive repairs and replacements, which have lowered the project's overall sustainability and cost-effectiveness. The public's trust in an organization's capacity to manage and sustain infrastructure and services can be damaged by poorly managed projects. Projects may become more prone to disrepair if regular maintenance chores like inspections, repairs, and upgrades are neglected.⁹³

Conclusions

This study has established that Rotary Clubs has implemented wide-range health intervention programs in rural communities of Ogun State. The identified health intervention programs include health education or enlightenment/awareness program, palliatives/financial assistance and blood transfusion, testing, screening and treatment, infrastructure and health facilities, as well as training, counselling and immunization or vaccination. The study, however, identified insufficient funds, low membership strength, inconsistent payment of membership dues, inadequate public awareness campaign, and poor maintenance culture of projects, as the challenges that Rotary clubs faced and still facing during their health intervention programs in Ogun State. It concludes that Rotary clubs should intensify efforts to surmount these challenges with a view to strengthening their health intervention programs in underserved communities in Ogun State.

Based on the foregoing conclusions, the study recommends that Rotary clubs should work together with other businesses, government agencies, or other non-profits to broaden their outreach and draw in new donors who might not be acquainted with the organization. In order to increase awareness of their health intervention programs and the results of their work, Rotary clubs should interact with the local media. They have to make contact with colleges, universities, polytechnics, institutions, and even secondary schools in order to enlist instructors and students who could be interested in working with them. These people have the potential to

revitalize the club and expand its membership base by bringing new ideas, abilities, and enthusiasm. In order to assist members in staying on top of their dues, Rotary clubs can also offer to send automatic payment reminders to those who have missed a payment.

In addition, Rotary clubs should endeavor to send out newsletters, emails, or postings on social media on a regular basis to update their members on the accomplishments, activities, and future events of the organization. They should leverage social media and other digital platforms to raise awareness about their activities and engage with the public by creating engaging content, sharing updates on their projects, and using relevant hashtags. In order to promote their health intervention programs and assist spread the word about their activities, they should also work with celebrities, influencers, and other popular personalities in Nigeria. Finally, in order to improve maintenance culture for their projects, Rotary clubs should collaborate with local residents. These plans can include the precise maintenance duties, how often they should be performed, and what materials are needed to maintain projects in excellent operating order.

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