One Ambassador, One Million Dollars: Inside Rotary's Global Push to End Polio

Backgrounder — Yinka's Coco Challenge

Rotary International President Yinka Babalola and District 6330's Ambassador of Impact, Coco, are challenging fellow Rotarians and friends around the world to raise $1 million (USD) to vaccinate 1 million children.

Meet Coco: A Small Ambassador on a Big Journey

Coco is the District 6330 Ambassador of Impact carrying the message alongside President Yinka at club visits, district events and international gatherings as a visual symbol of the campaign.

With Coco, we plan to raise a million US dollars to immunize a million children — imagine it, one million children who will never get crippled. That is **real lasting impact**, stated President Yinka.



End Polio Now video links below

Video 1

Video 2

A Global Mission, Nearly Finished

In the 1980s, polio paralyzed an estimated 1,000 children every single day. Rotary launched its PolioPlus program in 1985 and became a founding member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, alongside the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Gavi, and later the Gates Foundation.

The results have been dramatic: global polio cases are down 99.9% since 1988, and more than 3 billion children across 122 countries have been protected through vaccination. Wild poliovirus remains endemic in just two countries today, Afghanistan and Pakistan. But health officials caution that the job isn't done until it's done everywhere — a single undetected case can reignite outbreaks in places long considered polio-free.

How the Challenge Works

Yinka's Coco Challenge is structured to give everyone — from individual donors, Rotary Clubs, to major corporate partners — a way to participate:

- Individual donations of any size, made directly through Rotary's Raise for Rotary platform, with tax receipting where applicable.
- A four-tier corporate and major-donor sponsorship structure, from Mission Supporter ($5,000+) to Eradication Partner ($50,000+), each with its own campaign recognition.
- 100% of every dollar raised is directed to Rotary's PolioPlus program — and through Rotary's partnership with the Gates Foundation, every dollar given is multiplied: $100 becomes $300

The campaign runs until June 30, 2027.

Where it Began

At Rotary's Presidents-Elect Learning Seminar (PELS) in Kalamazoo, Michigan in March 2026, then District Governor Elect Lorna Gunning Fratschko presented Rotary International President Elect Yinka, the inaugural Coco. After a moment of consideration, Yinka asked Lorna if she would like a challenge. “How much will you give for every country that Coco and I visit together to support ending polio”, asked Yinka.

Team COCO, a volunteer committee of Rotarians was formed and now supports the campaign's website, marketing and global outreach to Rotary districts, clubs, and End Polio Now coordinators worldwide.

Your Role in the Yinka’s Coco Challenge

- **Sponsor** the campaign at the corporate or major-donor level, with recognition across the campaign's website, press materials, and events.
- **Pledge** an amount for every country Coco visits through the campaign's Pledge Wall.
- **Donate** online through the campaign website. Rotary members should give using their Rotary club/district email address, so the gift is properly credited to them, their club, and their district (PHF points, Major Donor credit, etc.).
- **Share** the word about Yinka’s Coco Challenge with your club or district using the Digital Press Kit and activation toolkit, available on request.
- **Follow** the journey and track Coco and President Yinka's stops at the campaign website.

In Their Words

“Dear friends and family of Rotary, I am so pleased to introduce you to Coco. Coco is our Ambassador of Impact,” said Rotary International President Yinka Babalola. “Coco represents something every Rotarian can connect with: connection, care, community. With Coco, we plan to raise a million US dollars to immunize about a million children. That is real lasting impact — just imagine it, one million children who will never get crippled. Together, we will create lasting impact. Together, we will immunize children against polio, and together, we will end polio now.”

“District 6330 is proud to help President Yinka carry this challenge to the world,” said District Governor Lorna Gunning Fratschko. “Every Rotarian, every club, every friend reading this can be part of reaching a million children — a $25 gift or a $25,000 sponsorship both move us closer to the goal. I'd ask anyone who wants to help end polio for good to visit yinkascocochallenge.org today.”

Campaign at a Glance

Campaign	Yinka's Coco Challenge
Goal	$1,000,000 USD — to vaccinate 1 million children
International Launch	September 1, 2026
Campaign Closes	June 30, 2027
Website	yinkascocochallenge.org

About Rotary International

Rotary is a global network of more than 1.2 million neighbors, friends, and civic and business leaders who come together in more than 46,000 clubs across over 200 countries and geographic areas to create lasting change in their communities and around the world.

About PolioPlus

Since 1985, Rotary has led the global effort to eradicate polio through its PolioPlus program, contributing more than $2.9 billion and countless volunteer hours to help protect over 3 billion children across 122 countries. Rotary is a founding member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, working alongside the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Gavi, and the Gates Foundation.

Note to Editors

High-resolution photos, b-roll, and interview availability with District 6330 organizers can be arranged through the media contact below. Media requests involving Rotary International leadership are coordinated through Rotary International's global media relations team.

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