



## A. Reporting period - context

Rotarian Action Groups are required to complete their accounts on a Rotary year basis. All are required to submit accounts to RI by 1<sup>st</sup> October, following the year end. The Accounts are published for access by subscribing Members at [www.racsrag.ning.com](http://www.racsrag.ning.com) and formally submitted to the Action Group's AGM for adoption.

The accounts and this Report cover the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Figures for the year 2013/14 are also provided for comparison in the Accounts.

## Fiscal & legal status of the Action Group and issues arising

- Charitable status:** Regrettably, under RI Action Group rules, RACSRAG (RACS) and other Rotarian Action Groups are not permitted to obtain charitable status. RACS and its donors do not therefore have Gift-Aid (tax-reclaim) opportunities; RACS cannot benefit from lower Charity based fiscal charges for subscription and similar transaction levied by PayPal. Most significantly Fund giving bodies are often precluded from supporting non-charity registered bodies.
- Legal status:** The legal status of all Rotarian Action Groups and specifically the legal responsibility of its Directors are uncertain: This has not been tested in the courts, according to our RI adviser.
- RACS' insurance protection:** Neither RI nor District Insurance policies cover the activities of RAGS, its Members, Officers or Directors. Each RAG is advised to assess its needs and fund any necessary cover deemed appropriate. The Action Group Board will look to take out relevant insurance cover, when funds permit.

## B. Financial governance

Financial activities are governed by the Action Group's Bylaws, submitted to, and approved by the R.I. Board. A copy of the approved bylaws may be found on the public website [www.racsrag.org](http://www.racsrag.org).

Bylaws may be modified, subject to Membership, and subsequent RI approval, on recommendation by the RACSRAG's Board of Directors (*RACS' Board*) at each Annual General Meeting. Financial policies and arrangements, which do not frustrate the RI Policies, may be adopted by *RACS' Board*.

## C. Fiscal policies determined by the RACS Board

The RACS' Board has determined that:

- Membership fees shall be as follows:
  - Centennial (Life) Membership fees £80, net of transaction costs for the first 100 subscribers.
  - Charter Membership last for 5 years from the date of payment at £50, net of transaction costs.
  - Annual fees (commencing 1st July of each year) £20, net of transaction costs.
  - Rotaractor / alumni fees (commencing 1st July of each year) £10 net of transaction costs
- Life membership fees (now exhausted) are to be credited to the accounts over a 20 year period. Charter Membership shall be credited over 5 years.
- The Action Group shall have a primary current and savings account with HSBC Bank plc, headquartered in the UK. – See [Account details](#), and a PayPal account for use in receiving subscriptions and donations from PayPal Account holders and via Card payments. Either may be used to make disbursements.
- The Board appointed Rtn Ray Turner FCA as the Action Group's independent financial Advisor. Sadly Ray passed away in October 2014. The Board has subsequently appointed Rotarian Nigel Wordingham FCA to undertake an Independent Review of the Accounts. We thank Nigel for taking on this role.



## D. Membership & financial comments

### 1. Membership:

- **Numbers:** RACSRAG currently has 134 paid up Members. This comprises 100 Life, 14 Charter and 19 annual Members. We have 2 Rotaractor Members.
- **Distribution:** Membership represents 114 Clubs in 68 Districts across 14 countries in 18 Rotary Zones. The UK has 49 Members, the USA 43; Australia 24, Italy 6, Nepal 2, India 2. Members can also be found in Zambia, South Africa, Mexico, Egypt and elsewhere.
- Like most Action Groups, converting the acknowledged Rotarian interest in RACSRAG's work into paid-up Membership is problematic. Over 1,600 Rotarians and others receive the Newsletter and we hope over time they will apply for Membership. We are a young organisation, and no doubt momentum will build as RACSRAG's achievements are better understood and appreciated

### 2. Financial commentary:

- Total project receipts to date amount to £9,468 of which £4,230 were earlier spent on projects in India and Nepal. A further sum of £750 was applied in the year to help fund the [Mekong Club's](#) Mobile APP initiative which is assisting law enforcement and victim recovery programmes in Asia. At the year end the Action Group has £4,488 in hand to allocate to projects: Over half of which was received to support projects in Nepal, following the recent earthquakes.

**A considerable larger amount (c £ 175,000) has been raised and applied by Members and their Clubs to support projects promoted and supported by the Action Group.** Whilst not part of the formal Accounts, I have taken the opportunity to celebrate the movement's collective achievements in Annex 1.

- Subscription receipts to date amount to £9,812. These are written down as outlined in Para C2. At 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 £7,719 is available to meet future operational funding needs.
- Sponsorship & donations received towards running costs and expenses amount to £2,887. Just £326 has been applied since the formation of the Action Group. We are grateful for support during the year from D1260, and the Rotary Clubs of Watford, Louth and Norwich Blackfriars. As a result of their generous support, and by restraining costs the Action Group has a working balance of £2,729 which may be applied to fund promotion and other operational costs needed to help develop this Rotarian organisation as a global player in the fight against slavery.
- Until Membership and sponsorship revenues increase substantially, the Board has agreed to keep a tight rein on costs. If we are to be a world force in combating child slavery, RACSRAG cannot rely on personal goodwill and financing. Corporate funding and a bigger Membership base remain key challenges for the Board.

## E. Creation of a Rotary Foundation (TRF) Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

The *RACS Board* would like to establish a Donor Advised Fund. It will allow the TRF Trustees to grant-aid contributions made from the DAF towards appropriate child slavery projects at the rate of 50% of DAF contributions. To benefit from a DAF initial donations totalling \$10,000 are required.

## F. Sponsorship and donations

RACS websites, coupled with its Facebook and Twitter accounts provide global opportunities for businesses to expand their global recognition.

If you know a corporate or an Small / Medium Enterprise (SME) who:

- Manufactures goods in sensitive areas, and wants to be acknowledged as a slave-free producer
- Would commercially benefit from association with this (right time) Rotarian movement

Do provide contact details. Better still, why not talk with your *contact*, and ask them to *contact* me. I can then discuss business or social opportunities we might explore to suit their needs.

Stephen M. Sypula, Cipfa (Ret'd)  
RACSRAG Hon. Treasurer,  
August 2015



### Fund raising and project activity undertaken by RACARAG members, supporters, Rotary Clubs and other Rotary entities 2009 - 2015

**The Rotarian Action Group looks primarily to promote awareness of projects and to take action in furtherance of its aims. In most cases the projects, although promoted & advised by RACSRAG will be sponsored by Rotary Clubs, and other organisations.**

To avoid double exchange rate charges RACSRAG encourages donors Clubs and others to pledge / send funds through Clubs directly to the primary sponsor or project's charitable organisation. RACSRAG will however accept funds for onward transmission if this is the donor's wish. Until such time as funds are received to set up a Rotary Foundation Donor Advised Fund, RACSRAG is unable to benefit from The Rotary Foundation's Global grant leverage programme, available to Rotary Districts and its constituent Clubs,

In consequence, the Action Group's accounts reflect just the tip of what is a very impressive and progressively developing global programme of Rotarian energy focused on raising funds for and progressing RACSRAG endorsed anti-slavery projects.

#### Over \$275,000 has been raised since 2009

Since the formation of the informal group – Rotarians Against Child Slavery, the then supporters, now RACSRAG members, friends and clubs have raised funds for a variety of projects. These range from the purchase of motor cycles for anti-slavery activists and staff to monitor the survivors of slavery to the construction of buildings for accommodating and rehabilitating the temporary residents of Trafficking Shelters and Safe Houses. These may be viewed in greater detail [here](#)

Examples of anti-slavery projects completed to protect children from slavery and its consequences are:

1. **Purchase of an 8 seater vehicle** for use by activists in Uttar Pradesh, India, to rescue children from slavery in northern India. The vehicle, costing **US\$14,700**, was purchased with the aid of a TRF Matching Grant and personally delivered to Bal Vikas Ashram (a Child Slave Rehabilitation Centre) by UK members of RACSRAG.
2. **Establishment of a Vocational Training Centre** at Kalimpong, East Bengal, India at a total cost of **US\$ 69,000**. The project, which was funded with the help of a TRF Global Grant, is expected to be completed in September 2015.
3. **Construction of a brick built Gazebo** at a cost of **US\$6,900** at Punarnawa Ashram , (a Trafficking Shelter in Bihar State, India). The Gazebo, which has no walls, enables the resident girls to have outdoor lessons in the heat of the summer. The Gazebo is also used for staff and other meetings.
4. **Purchase of vocational training and other equipment** at various Rehabilitation / Trafficking Centres at a total cost of c.**US\$25,000**. The training equipment is used a) to teach survivors skills needed for them to be self sufficient in their future life; and b) as a gift to the survivors when they leave their Rehabilitation Centres to help them reintegrate into their own homes and villages.





5. **Installation of solar lamps** at Punarnawa Ashram at a cost of **US\$ 9,800**. The lamps are floodlighting the perimeter walls of the Centre to deter slave masters and pimps from scaling the walls to recover their former "investments", ie the escapees from sex slavery.
6. **Further protection of the girls at Punarnawa Ashram** by extending the height of the perimeter walls surrounding the Ashram by 5 feet at a total cost of **US\$ 18,500**.
7. **Research and development of an APP designed to help determine the identities of victims of human trafficking** Costing some \$4,400, the bulk of the funding was provided from RC Norwich St Edmunds **\$3,120** with the balance provided through RACSRAG. The APP has been developed by the Mekong Club, a group of business men, based in Hong Kong, dedicated to combatting human trafficking in SE Asia.
8. **Construction of a brick built bio gas oven** for Punarnawa Ashram, in order to generate energy for the Shelter's kitchen which has to feed 40 young girl survivors of sex slavery. The oven, fed with dung from the cows, was also funded by RACSRAG supported clubs. Total cost of the brick built oven plus 4 cows was **US\$ 5,500**.



### In the Rotary year 2014-2015 global fundraising activity reached new levels

Responses from our Coordinators and Officers suggest that no less than **\$82,450** (£52,770) has or will be generated through events, promotions and appeals launched this year. These funds were / are held mainly by Rotary entities and have, or will be dispensed to RACSRAG supported projects. Here is a selection of those made known to RACSRAG.

1. **South Australia Coordinator, [Teresa Evans](#)**, her late and much missed Rotarian activist mother, Val Kirk and the team have held a Rock Night, a Movie Afternoon (12 Years a Slave), a Music4Freedom Concert (local music students). They have also held garage sales, fairs (selling donated goods) and sold Sausage Sizzles and Chocolate.

Since the Sydney Convention when they were formed they have raised a magnificent **US\$8,470** in support of a RASRAG promoted project called [Schools4Freedom](#).

2. **Coordinator [David Black](#) (Oceania)** coordinates donations for the care and protection of the Akha children at the [Rescue Mission for Children Centre](#) in Northern Thailand (RM4C) through his Club's Charitable Trust.
3. **[Tony Stokes](#) – Coordinator for Victoria, Australia organised** a 'Cluster talk' for Mebourne Clubs with guest speaker RACSRAG Member and Coordinator for Western Australia, Dr Gillian Booth Yudleman.

With subsequent support of his Club and its Members on a matched basis, a total of AUD6,212 (**US\$ 4,570**) has been lodged with the Rotary Australia Worldwide Community Service charity ([RAWCS](#)) for the benefit of [Maiti Nepal's](#) Transit Homes in Kathmandu.

4. **Coordinator for Western Australia, [Dr Gillian Booth Yudleman](#)** has wonderfully engineered support for Maiti Nepal over the years.

At the time of writing some AUD40,000 (**US\$ 29,400**) is lodged with RAWCS in readiness to develop a TRFGlobal Grant application.



5. **RACSRAG Member [Carol Metzker](#)** (West Chester, Pennsylvania – One World e-Club) provides talks, organises “Dress for a Good Cause’ fundraising events and more. Carol is the driving force behind one of RACSRAG promoted current projects ‘Schools4Freedom (S4F), sponsored by [Voices4Freedom](#). This project already has pledges of over **\$US 21,000** towards its \$US36,000 target.
6. **Fundraising by others.** Remaining Coordinators, with the exception of David McCleary, advise that no fundraising activity took place in 2014/15: I have not been advised of any financial activity undertaken by Dave McCleary in his capacity as RACSRAG's Coordinator for the Americas.
7. **RACSRAG has also inspired Rotary Clubs, schools and individuals to provide funds directly for the following project beneficiaries** (sums shown are in US dollars equivalent).
- Funding of Vocational Training Equipment, eg Singer sewing machines for Maiti Nepal (Individual member of RC of Norwich St Edmund) - **\$2,150**
  - General donation to the Mekong Club (Individual member of RC of Washington DC) **\$1,000**
  - Funding of Human trafficking APP designed by the Mekong (RC Norwich St Edmund) **\$3,200**
  - Donations to Basu Rai for NGO Registration fee (Individual member of RC of Norwich St Edmund) **\$150**
  - General donation to [Maiti Nepal](#) (Individual members of RC of Norwich St Edmund & RC Diss) **\$270**
  - [Maiti Nepal](#) – Immediate earthquake relief (RCs of Norwich St Edmund, Norwich Blackfrairs and Norwich plus a local school) **\$5,000**
  - [Asha Nepal](#) – Immediate earthquake relief (RC of Norwich St Edmund and two individuals) **\$ 1,000**
  - [Maiti Nepal](#) and other anti-slavery projects in Nepal will also benefit from a matched funded public appeal organised by RC Stevenage Grange following the recent earthquakes up to £4,000 **\$6,240**

**Funds received and included in the formal Accounts for 2014-2015 will be dispensed to project beneficiaries** (£ to \$US conversion of 1.56)

- RC West Perth & D9455, Australia £1,485 - **\$2,315** to be determined by the Board
- The Rotary Clubs of Swaffham, together with RC Burnham on Crouch & Dengie Hundred have each contributed £500 towards a longer term project of benefit to [Maiti Nepal](#) following the recent earthquakes. In addition a further £500 has been received and sent to Punarnawa Ashram on behalf of RC Burnham on Crouch & Dengie Hundred for immediate cyclone relief. These Clubs collectively donated **\$2,340**
- A private donation, with funds from RC Stevenage Grange, also channelled through RACSRAG, completed the funding of the [The Mekong Club's](#) victims support APP, The APP assists Police and rescue agencies identify and assist victims across in Asia irrespective of language **\$1,140**.



### In summary

Consistent with RI policies for Rotarian Action Groups, the Board of RACSRAG continues to encourage anti-slavery projects through engagement of Clubs and others. As will be seen by viewing this summary, and the formal accounts, total funds processed through RACSRAG reflect a very small part (5%) of total Rotarian activity.

At no time has RACSRAG held funds in excess of RI Policies, namely \$25,000.

Project funds, held by RACSRAG at the year-end (30<sup>th</sup> June 2015) amount to £4,488, say \$7,000. The bulk of which is earmarked to assist Maiti Nepal through a prospective TRF Global Grant application, being developed by RACSRAG Coordinator and project leader Dr Gillian Booth Yuddleman in Australia

Thanks for taking the time to review RACSRAG's progress in making that difference to a cause you care about. If you are not a Member why not [sign up now](#)

Stephen Sypula  
Treasurer  
August 2015

