



## RAGAS Financial Update, April 2017

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### A. Context

This update is primarily written for Members attending the AGM at the RI Convention, in Atlanta. Formal papers covering the last accounting year were submitted to RI, and published in October 2016. They may be viewed at these two links [Treasurer's Report](#) and [Accounts for 2015/16](#) on our website [www.ragas.online](http://www.ragas.online).

This note covers the financial status of the Action Group at the ¾ year stage. Key changes since 30th June 2016 are shown below. Technical comments are overleaf.- notes E-G.

### B. Since June 2016, RACSRAG has had a name change and continues to build its Membership and financial base

- Membership increased by 25% to some 220. Our attendance in Atlanta will increase that.
- Net financial assets have risen by 23%. RAGAS has a bank balance of £20,900 (say \$23,000), of which £8,626 (\$10,780) is held in trust for projects. Some £9,570 (\$11,960) is held in advance subscriptions. Its operations budget has a balance of £5,663 (\$7,080)
- Our TRF, Ending Slavery Donor Advised Fund (No 566) is established. It has a fund balance of some \$11,280.

The year-to-date accounts & balance sheet summary is provided in a separate attachment.

### C. Investing in the future

From inception of the RAG, prudence and conservatism have steered financial matters, in order to build a sound financial base. Operating costs have been kept low, thanks to personal funding by the Officers and Coordinators, and the generosity of sponsors.

Our new website came on stream early in April 2016. It is already showing signs of drawing in paid up Members, as well as extending our reach throughout the Rotary world and beyond.

RAGAS and its Members have helped fund the Schools4Freedom project, recently featured in 'The Rotarian'. This was promoted by RAGAS Founder Member, Rotarian Carol Metzker (*Rotary E-Club of One World D5240*). The project, provides education, plus freedom for some 130 villagers near Varanasi, in India. Further details and [case study](#) are available on the website.

Following the generous donation of some \$10,000 by the Rotary Club of Luton North (D1260) our Rotary Foundation Donor Advised Fund (DAF) No 566 has been boosted by a generous donation of \$1,000 from 'End Human Trafficking'. The DAF provides tax-beneficial donation opportunities for our friends in the USA. It will also leverage opportunity for future Club or District sponsored Global grant projects. We are hopeful that RIC17 Atlanta will boost funds considerably.

### D. Major grant-aided project opportunities

Keep an eye out for announcements via the website and [Newsletters](#) about two major TRF supportable 'global grant' projects being developed. The first, which is led by Dr [Gillian Booth](#) (Australia), in support of [Maiti Nepal](#). The second, will support the first Rotarian-based anti-child cyber-trafficking project in the Philippines. It is being developed by a team led by President Irene Garcia, RC Manpasan D3800 and US Coordinator [Caleb La Plant](#) (RC Greater Grant's Pass,



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D 5110.. Caleb will be talking about the project at our Business meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June at the Atlanta Convention.

### E. Technical commentary - Reporting period

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.

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

1. **Charitable status:** Regrettably, under RI Action Group rules, RAGAS and other Rotarian Action Groups are not permitted to obtain charitable status. RAGAS and its donors do not therefore have Gift-Aid (tax-reclaim) opportunities; Most significantly Fund giving bodies are often precluded from supporting non-charity registered bodies.
2. **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 advisers.
3. **RAGAS insurance protection:** Neither RI nor District Insurance policies cover the activities of RAGS, its Members, Officers or Directors.

### F. Technical commentary - 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 our website

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

### G. Technical commentary - Fiscal policies determined by the RAGAS Board

The RAGAS Board has determined that:

1. Membership fees shall be as follows:
  - a. Centennial (Life) Membership fees £80, net of transaction costs for the first 100 subscribers.
  - b. Charter Membership last for 5 years from the date of payment at £50, net of transaction costs.
  - c. Annual fees (commencing 1st July of each year) £20, net of transaction costs.
  - d. Rotaractor / alumni fees (commencing 1st July of each year) £10 net of transaction costs
2. 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.
3. The Action Group shall have a primary current and savings account with HSBC Bank plc, headquartered in the UK. 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.

Stephen Sypula,  
Treasurer, April 2017