



## Empowering Girls: A Rotary International Presidential Initiative District Advocates: 2022-2023 Role and Responsibilities

### Overview

Empowering Girls is a continuing Rotary International (RI) Presidential Initiative for Rotary years 2022-2024, building on the education and awareness created around the globe in 2021-22.

The initiative is focused on **Rotary and Rotaract club-level projects** through which clubs **can create positive change** in the lives of girls. Specifically, the initiative challenges clubs to:

- Engage in a project or projects of their choice that empowers girls.
- Address the needs and inequities that girls throughout the world face daily.
- In addition to implementing a project, monitor and measure the impact of the project.
- Disseminate and create awareness of Rotary resources and subject matter experts, including but not limited to: Rotary Action Groups, Rotary Foundation cadre and Peace Fellows.
- Tell the stories of successful projects and their impact to the general public, using a variety of media channels.
- Share the stories of success and their impact across their region and post them on Rotary Showcase, as well as on social media channels.

### The Challenge

Club and district leaders alike need encouragement, information, and resources to engage and support club members in this initiative. This is especially the case in the current environment as we emerge from a pandemic and face multiple challenges in our communities.

One of the most effective ways to encourage and inspire is to tell the stories of clubs and districts that are engaging in projects that empower girls. It is also important to provide information that allows club members to connect with others who are implementing projects in their region, as well as, across the world.

Keeping this initiative alive and vibrant for club and district leaders on a district basis will increase participation and emphasize its importance in Rotary's mission to **Imagine Rotary**.



## **Empowering Girls: A Rotary International Presidential Initiative District Advocates: 2022-2023 Role and Responsibilities**

### **The Empowering Girls Advocate Concept for Districts**

With guidance and backing from the leadership of Rotary International, this initiative continues a long history of support for our women and girls. Club leaders observe what leaders in Rotary say and do, and take action based on their perceptions of our words and actions.

Our roles in Rotary or Rotaract have multiple responsibilities and our schedules are busy. It can therefore be helpful to identify a Rotary and Rotaract Advocate for this initiative in each of our respective Districts. Depending upon District level needs, each Rotary and/or Rotaract *District Advocate* may also select assistants (or *Area Advocates*) and assign them to specific roles, clubs or clusters of clubs. District (and Area) Advocates can help to promote the Empowering Girls initiative by communicating with clubs and district structures to facilitate clubs with resources and guidance, as well as, encourage them to implement projects or even form [new clubs with a specific cause](#).

Advantages to this approach are that it can:

- Help to keep the initiative at the forefront of club project activity.
- Encourage clubs not only to engage in projects, but also to monitor them and measure the impact and report the results.
- Capture lessons learned and community approaches.
- Champion and help to tell the stories of successful projects.
- Provide updated information and resources, as appropriate, to the RI website page created to house information on the Presidential initiatives – Rotary Showcase.
- Create energy and connection among members to retain and grow membership.

Perhaps most importantly, the Advocate concept allows each District Governor to define the role of a District Empowering Girls Advocate and to work with the initiative in the ways that are the most effective and relevant for the district.



## **Empowering Girls: A Rotary International Presidential Initiative District Advocates: 2022-2023 Role and Responsibilities**

### **Youth Protection**

The safety and well-being of young people and youth program participants is Rotary's highest priority. Girls are an especially vulnerable population. It is critical that clubs and districts understand and follow Rotary's youth protection policies before planning and implementing projects that include significant involvement with children under 18 and include one-on-one contact or repeated, prolonged engagement.

Advocates are an important and effective channel of communication for Rotary's Youth Protection Guidelines and the importance of safeguarding children from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. Encouraging clubs and districts to follow these guidelines as they implement Empowering Girls projects is an important responsibility in the Advocate's role. Advocates are also encouraged to create awareness among clubs and districts to collect and use the names, photos, videos, and other information of children carefully and responsibly. Rotary provides a variety of resources to support clubs and districts and District Governors are encouraged to connect clubs with their District Youth Protection Officer or appropriate other district leader.

### **The District Advocate's Role**

The Rotary and Rotaract Advocate for each District shall be appointed by the Governor of that District. Depending upon District needs, the Advocates may appoint Area Advocates. The key responsibilities for the District Rotary and Rotaract Advocates (and Area Advocates) are:

- Inform district and club leaders about the initiative.
- Build enthusiasm for participation in the initiative.
- Simplify the process for a club to select a project, by providing access to resources, such as connecting with other Advocates, Rotary Action Groups and organizations with missions and programs focused on Empowering Girls. Resources continue to be updated on the [Presidential Initiatives page of My Rotary](#), as well as, will be made available on the [Zone 33/34 website](#).
- Provide ongoing resources, encouragement and support to clubs as they implement projects.
- Encourage Club leaders to include Empowering Girls club projects in trainings, assemblies, conferences and other events.
- Document success stories and communicate them to the District and Zone 33/34 Public Image Teams for external and community distribution.
- Encourage clubs to post their success stories on Rotary Showcase, social media channels and community media outlets.



## **Empowering Girls: A Rotary International Presidential Initiative District Advocates: 2022-2023 Role and Responsibilities**

- Identify and collect district-level success metrics, such as the number of clubs and projects, types of projects, as well as the impact of individual projects, such as the number of beneficiaries and the increase/decrease in key conditions as a result of the project.

### **Resources**

The following resources are currently being developed, updated and prepared to support the Empowering Girls initiative:

- [Presidential Initiatives on My Rotary](#) – access to resources and information as they are developed, including brochures, presentations, videos and templates for clubs
- [Youth Protection Resources on My Rotary](#) – access to guidelines and resources focused on working with youth and youth-centered projects.

### **Empowering Girls Project Ideas**

For specific examples of projects already completed or underway by clubs, visit [Rotary Showcase](#).

Some general ideas for Empowering Girls projects which clubs can adopt and adapt include:

- A WASH in schools project that provides girls with access to education by providing gender-segregated toilet facilities, improving sanitation in schools and enabling girls to attend regularly. (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene).
- Enrollment and retention of girls in schools (Basic Education and Literacy).
- Scholarships for girls to continue education (Basic Education and Literacy).
- Distribution of items, i.e., Bicycles, solar lights, etc. that help motivate the girls to continue education (Basic Education and Literacy).
- Teaching self-defense techniques to girls (Basic Education and Literacy).
- Skills development project for girls (Economic Development).
- A project that provides girls with reusable sanitary napkins and hygiene education also allows girls to stay in school, provides health education and creates a sustainable solution to disposable menstrual hygiene products. (Disease Prevention, Environment, Economic Development).
- Nutrition programs for girls (Material and Child Health, Disease Prevention).



## **Empowering Girls: A Rotary International Presidential Initiative District Advocates: 2022-2023 Role and Responsibilities**

- A project that supports a safe house or recovery program for girls who are victims of human trafficking, by providing supplies, repairs, equipment, funding for counseling or other needs, to enable abused girls to re-enter a normal, nonviolent life. (Peace, Economic Development).
- Counseling for victims of violence and discrimination (Peace).

### **Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team and Call To Action**

The Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team is here to provide districts and clubs with guidance and support towards facilitating projects centered on Empowering Girls in our region and across the globe.

Within Zones 33/34, our *Call To Action* for this initiative is: **Empower Girls Now**

These words are meant to rally, inspire and energize districts, clubs and members, as well as, reinforce our position on and commitment to the initiative. To help accomplish this, the Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team shall design a campaign around this call to action and providing districts and clubs with additional campaign resources which may in turn be used to brand and promote activities. The hashtag **#EmpowerGirlsNow** is already in use and more material for use in presentations, social media and print media will be provided.

With Empowering Girls being just one of Rotary's initiatives and goals, club and district leaders need to be kept aware of and up-to-date on the latest developments, offerings and strategies. To this end, the Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team also serves to help clubs and districts keep focus and on-track with the initiative. Through a series of webinars, emails, guidelines and other resources catered specifically for clubs and districts in Zones 33/34 and scheduled throughout the 2022-2023 Rotary year, the Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team aims to provide as much support as possible to encourage, facilitate and achieve great projects and success stories.

Lastly, the Zones 33/34 Empowering Girls Ambassador Team thanks you for your leadership as you begin the 2022-23 year to **Imagine Rotary** even more.

**PDG Dawn Rochelle**, District 7730 – Zone 33 Empowering Girls Ambassador

**PDG Tina Fischlin**, District 6910 – Zone 34 Empowering Girls Ambassador