

**WOMEN IN ROTARY**

The women and men of Rotary share ideas and take action to bring positive, lasting change at home and around the world. Since women first became Rotarians in 1987, their numbers have steadily grown, and they now represent 20 percent of our membership. Women serve in leadership roles throughout the organization, both on the club level and as members of Rotary’s Board of Directors.

**DIVERSITY MATTERS**

Clubs with membership that reflects the communities they serve are best able to engage those communities to meet their needs. Gender diversity is vital to help Rotary [attract and engage members](https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/learning-reference/learn-topic/membership) worldwide, in line with the first of the three strategic priorities in our [strategic plan](https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/strategic-plan): support and strengthen clubs.

**ROTARY GLOBAL WOMEN OF ACTION**

Six Rotary Global Women of Action were recognized during Rotary Day at the United Nations in New York City on 7 November 2015 for their dedication and service in improving lives around the world.

* **Dr. Hashrat A. Begum, Rotary Club of Dhaka North West, Bangladesh**
  + Implemented several large-scale projects to deliver health care to poor and underserved communities.
* **Stella S. Dongo, Rotary Club of Highlands, Zimbabwe** 
  + Leads the Community Empowerment Project in Harare, which provides business and computer training to more than 6,000 women and youths affected by HIV/AIDS.
* **Lucy C. Hobgood-Brown, Rotary E-Club of Greater Sydney, New South Wales, Australia**
  + Co-founded [HandUp Congo](http://handupcongo.org/), which promotes and facilitates sustainable community-driven business, educational, social, and health initiatives in underprivileged communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
* **Razia Jan, Rotary Club of Duxbury, Massachusetts, USA**
  + Spent decades fighting for girls’ educational rights in Afghanistan. An Afghan native, she is founder and director of the [Zabuli Education Center](https://raziasrayofhope.org/zabuli-education-center.html), which provides free education to more than 480 girls near Kabul, Afghanistan.
* **Kerstin Jeska-Thorwart, Rotary Club of Nürnberg-Sigena, Germany**
  + Launched the [Baby Hospital Galle](http://www.babyhospitalgalle.de/cms/) project after surviving the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka. With a $1.8 million budget and the support of 200 Rotary clubs, the project rebuilt and equipped the Mahamodara Teaching Hospital, in Galle, Sri Lanka. The hospital has served more than 150,000 children and over 2.2 million women.
* **Dr. Deborah K.W. Walters, Rotary Club of Unity, Maine, USA**
  + A neuroscientist who has served as director of Safe Passage (Camino Seguro), which provides educational and social services to families who live in the Guatemala City garbage dump.

**FIND OUT MORE**

Learn more about the [history of women in Rotary](https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/history-women-rotary).

See the reference sheet on Membership Development, posted on the Board and Trustees portals, for best practices and tools for attracting and engaging members, along with links to other resources.

More information on membership is available in the [Member Center](https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/member-center) and [www.rotary.org/membership](http://www.rotary.org/membership).

The Secretariat staff contact on Membership Development is Membership Development Director [Brian King](mailto:Brian.King@rotary.org).

Send questions to [RotarySupportCenter@rotary.org](mailto:RotarySupportCenter@rotary.org).