

Quick recap

The meeting featured a presentation by Rebeca Mendoza, Regional Grants Officer with The Rotary Foundation, who shared her experience managing grants across Mexico and Latin America. Rebeca discussed her portfolio of 218 grants totaling \$13.2 million across southern Mexican districts, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Bolivia, with disease prevention and treatment being the primary focus area. She highlighted challenges including remote geographic locations, limited local capacity, compliance requirements, and banking restrictions that impact project implementation. The discussion covered specific projects including medical equipment for cancer hospitals, kidney transplant initiatives, water sanitation programs, and community economic development efforts. Participants asked questions about polio initiatives in Mexico, construction eligibility in Global Grants, and the role of CADREs in level two grants. The meeting concluded with announcements about the upcoming Grants Management Seminar and plans to potentially discuss community assessment and monitoring and evaluation sections in future Global Grant applications.

Next steps

George

- Send out information for the first grants management seminar starting next Monday to all PEs and AGs.
- Post the recording/PDF of the slides of the meeting on the international section of the district website within the next month.
- Finalize and send out the plan for the November meeting, which may cover specific sections of global grant applications such as community assessment and monitoring and evaluation.

Rebeca

- Ask around and let George or Bruce Howard know if she finds any information regarding the need for addressing polio survivors in Mexico, specifically for surgeries, calipers, braces, or vocational training.

Summary

Opening and Welcome

George opened the meeting and introduced Rebeca Mendoza, a Regional Grants Officer with The Rotary Foundation. He highlighted her extensive experience managing over 218 grants worth \$13.2 million across multiple

countries in Latin America. The meeting transitioned from casual pre-meeting conversation to the formal presentation.

Guest Speaker Background

Rebeca Mendoza shared her background as a Regional Grants Officer with TRF, explaining her transition from managing the fifth most active district in the world in Africa and Europe to working in the less active Latin American region. She now oversees grants across southern Mexican districts, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Bolivia.

Grant Portfolio Overview

Rebeca presented her current portfolio:

- **Total grants:** 218 grants
- **Total value:** \$13.2 million
- **Geographic coverage:** Southern Mexican districts, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Bolivia
- **Primary focus area:** Disease prevention and treatment (particularly kidney transplants)

Key Project Areas

Rebeca detailed the main focus areas and notable projects in her portfolio:

Disease Prevention and Treatment

- Medical equipment for cancer hospitals
- Kidney transplant initiatives
- Maternal and child health programs

Water Sanitation and Hygiene

- Water and sanitation projects in schools
- Transformative project outside San Miguel de Allende benefiting over 45 rural women

Community Economic Development and Basic Education

- Community economic development initiatives
- Basic education programs

Environmental and Other Initiatives

- Coral reef restoration
- Peacebuilding initiatives

Rebeca emphasized that grants have been effective in connecting resources to communities and driving sustainable change.

Regional Challenges

Rebeca outlined significant obstacles facing project implementation in her region:

Geographic and Environmental Barriers

- Remote geographic locations, particularly in southern Mexican states
- Environmental challenges

Capacity and Compliance Issues

- Limited local capacity
- Compliance issues related to government changes
- Banking restrictions
- Difficulties in monitoring project impact

Resource Constraints

- Human resource constraints
- Limited cooperation from local organizations
- Fewer project initiatives in Mexico compared to other regions like Tanzania

To address these challenges, Rebeca outlined her approach:

- Conducting thorough due diligence
- Providing capacity building support
- Strengthening financial systems
- Ensuring community involvement
- Developing local leadership
- Measuring impact beyond metrics to ensure lasting change

Q&A Highlights

District Partnership

Bruce highlighted the strong partnership between District 5240 and sister district 4140, mentioning successful collaborative projects including:

- Palliative care center in Mexico
- Mobile library initiative

Rebeca noted that districts 4140 and 4170 have strong compliance systems due to their long partnership with Heart2Heart.

Polio Initiatives in Mexico

James Lewis inquired about the need for addressing polio survivors in Mexico, specifically for surgeries, calipers, braces, or vocational training. Rebeca responded that she was not aware of any significant need.

LuzMaria added context about Mexico's vaccination system:

- Mexico has a strong vaccination system
- Polio issues are typically addressed differently in Mexico than in the United States
- Mexico's robust vaccination campaigns likely contribute to fewer polio initiatives compared to other regions

Rebeca agreed to ask around and let George or Bruce know if she finds any information regarding the need for addressing polio survivors in Mexico.

Construction Eligibility in Global Grants

Rebeca clarified that while construction projects are not eligible for Global Grants, repairs and additions to existing facilities can be included as complementary expenses.

Role of CADREs in Level 2 Grants

Rebeca explained that CADRE members visit Level 2 grants projects (\$50,000 or more from the World Fund) for interim site visits to check progress halfway through the project.

Closing and Announcements

George concluded the meeting with several announcements:

- **Grants Management Seminar:** The first session is scheduled for Monday at 6 PM, with George and Chas Wilson splitting duties
- **Meeting Recording:** Will be posted on the international section of the district website within a month
- **November Meeting:** May cover specific sections of global grant applications, including community assessment and monitoring and evaluation