



# **Rotarians Against Malaria**

## **National Manager's Newsletter**

### **February 2017**

*RAM - A volunteer-run organisation working to eliminate malaria*

Recent good news from around the world is that the WHO has declared Sri Lanka malaria free and reported great progress in reduced cases and reduced death rates in the last three years across the Greater Mekong Sub Region. In his bi-annual (Dec '16) letter to partners Dr Pedro Alonso, Director, WHO Global Malaria Programme stated that :-

**"In 1999, there were more than 250,000 confirmed cases of malaria in Sri Lanka. In the face of civil unrest and considerable exposure to mobile and migrant populations, the country managed to interrupt transmission in record time without significant external assistance... In November, Kyrgyzstan was also certified by WHO as malaria-free. At least 3 countries will seek the elimination certification in early 2017, including Algeria, Argentina and Paraguay."**

In his latest letter to Warren Buffett, a major sponsor of the Gates Foundation, Bill Gates says:-

**"Polio will soon be history. In our lifetimes, malaria will end. No one will die from AIDS. Few people will get TB. Children everywhere will be well nourished. And the death of a child in the developing world will be just as rare as the death of a child in the rich world."**

**We can't put a date on these events, and we don't know the sequence, but we're confident of one thing: The future will surprise the pessimists. "**

Sure and steady progress is being made! This newsletter is intended as a brief update on recent developments in RAM and our part in the fight to eliminate malaria.

#### **RAM Solomon Islands.**

Mr Ben Rickie, National Healthy Settings Coordinator with the Health Promotions Department of the MoH&MS has reported on the presentation of RAM sponsored tools to villages in the Russel Islands and Malaita in December. As part of the 'Healthy Villages' program these tools will assist in removing mosquito breeding grounds and improving village hygiene. About 600 people witnessed the tools hand over and training and Ben reported that :-

**"In this activity, these communities were grateful indeed when hand over the basic manual tool to them. Thus, these tools will enhance and motivate them to improve and promote a healthy environment in their village."**

## Nukufero Village



## Karumalon Village



It costs about \$1700 to provide a village with tools and the project is proceeding well thanks to active fund raising in Australia and local Corporate sponsorship arranged by PDG Wayne Morris who is coordinating RAM's contribution in Honiara.

## Rotary Ride Around Australia Against Malaria RRAAM

Following the careful evaluation of possible independent malaria control programs in PNG, Solomons and Vanuatu, RRAAM organisers Steve and Doreen Carroll of D9640 have decided to direct all the funds raised (\$28,000) to RAM's 'Healthy Villages' projects in the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.

I would like to take this opportunity to record my admiration for the massive effort that Steve and Doreen put into RRAAM and their passion to drive down malaria.

## RAM Timor Leste

The latest LLIN distribution in the Oecusse enclave, by the National Malaria Control Program staff, is currently underway with logistics and support funded by RAM. During this program more than 40,000 LLINs (bed nets) funded by the Global Fund will be distributed in four sub-districts starting with Pante Macasar. The estimated cost is USD\$20,000.

RAM has also commenced funding the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek "Healthy Villages" project in Dili and Liquica districts. To date the villages of Aldeia Manleuana and Lauloran have been successfully serviced by this project and we have agreed to fund a further three villages as the project evolves. The proposal encompasses Community health and hygiene awareness training, establishing Community Committees, planning health interventions and building permanent rubbish disposal facilities, aimed at reducing mosquito breeding as well as improving village hygiene.



Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek members at Aldeia Manleuana.

A team of **Rotary Volunteers** is currently being assembled by Team Leader and D9830 RAM Chair Jenny Kerrison to travel to Timor Leste in early May. The team will actively support the Healthy Villages project as well as assisting poorly resourced schools and assisting with, or at least observing, active programs of the NMCP whilst there.

## **Malaria Vaccine Development**

The official launch the RABS project 16 / 2016-2017 aimed at raising sufficient funds to support the next stage of the development of **PlasProtect®**, the promising malaria vaccine being developed by the Institute for Glycomics at Griffith University, is planned for the morning of March 27. This will be a big media event and the project team are delighted that, the Governor General, **His Excellency General The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retired) and Lady Cosgrove will launch the project.**

The official launch will take place at 10:15 am at the Institute for Glycomics, Gold Coast Campus Griffith University.

So far more than \$38,000 has been raised for the project with significant donations so far from Murwillumbah, Hornsby, Camberwell, Broadbeach, Southport, and Hope Island Rotary Clubs. This project is an initiative of D9640 and is strongly supported by RAM.

For more information about this project please contact Project Manager PDG Graham Jones on 0406 040 038 or [graham.a.g.jones@gmail.com](mailto:graham.a.g.jones@gmail.com) or visit the project web site <http://rotary9640.org/page/malaria-vaccine-project/>



## **Annual RAM Conference**

Our annual Conference and AGM will be held in Sydney over the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017. We have secured the conference facilities of 'Rowers on Cooks River' (St George Rowing Club) which is located adjacent to Sydney airport within a short walk from several hotels. Please save the dates in your diary and ask your District Secretary to add the dates to your District's calendar of events and regular DG's newsletter.

## **Malaria Awareness Day.**

RDU is currently assisting RAM to create a new Malaria Awareness Day leaflet to be available for April. We are also working on a fresh design for RAM pull-up banners that will be consistent with RAWCS branding.

## **RAM Schools Video Competition.**

An enthusiastic Committee has been formed in Southern Region to progress the idea of a competition among Primary Schools to develop short videos about malaria. The experience gained in this program could lead to a National Competition to coincide with future MAD activities. We wish the Committee and all the students involved good luck and hope they have fun with the concept. I'm looking forward to seeing what they come up with!

## **New look RAM Web site.**

RAM PR and Media Coordinator Holstein Wong, Reg Emmet and Bob Catchpole are currently working on up-grading the RAM web site to make it phone and tablet friendly and styled more in line with and more easily connected to the RAWCS site. They hope to launch the refreshed web site in February.

RAM's Facebook page has been getting regular postings since Holstein took over and will be easily accessible from the website and [www.facebook.com/ram.australia/](https://www.facebook.com/ram.australia/) . I encourage you to view the recent post of an interview between Bill Gates and British Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne on what it will take to end malaria.

### **New RAM Eastern Region Coordinator.**

I am delighted to announce that RAM District 9710 Chair John Macpherson has accepted the role of Eastern Region Coordinator. John has had a long and active involvement with RAM and many other RAWCS programs and brings a wonderful depth of experience to the role.

**For any RAM related enquiries please contact:**

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## **RAM is a National Activity of RAWCS**



**David Pearson :**

**National Manager RAM, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017.**