



RAM NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Number 5

My Rotary Friends and Friends of Rotary

Doesn't time fly when you're having fun! Sorry for the flippancy, but time simply got away from me, and I feel this is a little late.

I get, as I'm sure many who read this also get, a number of weekly advices of publications or articles on malaria. The majority are scientific and come from bodies such as the Pacific Malaria Initiative Support Centre and the Roll Back Malaria Partnership. What I see and read is extremely heartening. Until I started to get these I had no idea just how much research is being done around the world on malaria. To a non-scientist it really is staggering. At times too, as in the past week, it's also very pleasing to see acknowledgment of what we, in Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) are doing. The latest *This Week in Malaria* from the Pacific Malaria Initiative Support Centre, gave a reference to a recent Workshop held in Chiang Mai by the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN). If you go to -

<http://www.malariafreefuture.org/blog/?p=1303>

and look at the *Recent Posts* you'll see notes on a paper on work in Ysabel Province of the Solomon Islands that mentions RAM.

I'm sure everyone will be as pleased as I am with the response to our request for *Adopt A Village* (AAV) donations for Timor Leste. PDG Richmond Manyweathers, who looks after the donations for AAV advises that funds for Timor Leste now exceed \$60,000. Please continue to support the program there, as we really want to kick it off there early in 2012.

A significant milestone was reached recently in the AAV program with the receipt of the 1,000th donation. Well done everyone!

May I use this Newsletter as a vehicle to thank everyone involved with Rotarians Against Malaria, not only Rotarians but all our valued supporters, for your efforts in 2011. What you're doing is working – just look at the Solomon Islands report below.

Finally, may I wish everyone a very happy Festive Season and a happy, safe and successful 2012.

Ian Sayers
Chairman

Net delivery

I'm sure our friends at RAM Port Moresby could write a book about this, in fact I'd like to think that one day they might, but the delivery and distribution of mosquito nets in Papua New Guinea is something special. They don't use every means of transport – but almost. One of the reasons I've prepared this very short photo essay is that it will give you an idea of the types of photos we have on file. If anyone would like copies, please let me know. There are many, many more than these few.

The nets might arrive by ship



or by air



Many will be delivered in containers but this can be difficult when roads are like those on the right



In the end, the nets have to get to the recipient villages and, when all else fails, there is really nothing to beat the most basic form of transport.



But even this can be extremely difficult and hazardous at times



Regardless of the means of delivery, what matters in the end is that the nets are received. And what better way to illustrate that than these two photos.



Update – Solomon Islands

Recently, and in response to a request for information on the effectiveness of the anti-malaria programs we support in the Solomons, the following information was received from a senior officer of Ministry of Health and Medical Services. I know you'll agree that it confirms that we're on the right track.

Following the 2010 mass distribution of over 300,000 LLINs in Solomon Islands and an annual IRS campaign in which over 35,000 houses have been sprayed, 2011 has seen some of the greatest gains in reducing the burden of malaria over the past 10 years. In particular, the total number of reported malaria cases has reduced significantly, with just over 13,600 cases of malaria confirmed in the January to June period of 2011. In comparison to previous years, in the same January to June period of 2010 there were just over 20,800 confirmed cases, in 2006 there were 44,124 confirmed cases, and in 2001 there were 44,699.

As of end 2010, the Solomon Islands malaria program with the support of donors has increased the coverage of malaria diagnostic capacity to just over 80% of all health facilities meaning accurate diagnosis is accessible to most of the population. schools are being visited across the country promoting awareness of malaria, with over 220 schools visited in 2010 as part of the malaria awareness campaign.

RAM's Solomon Islands specialist, PDG Wayne Morris (District 9600) has added the following –

The distribution of bed nets and spraying has continued under the Global Fund Grant. The Solomon Islands has made a submission for phase 2 which will cover further supplies of bed nets and continuation of the grant program. The distribution of bed nets has seen a significant decrease in the number of malaria cases reported. The improvement in microscope training has also seen a better and more accurate reporting of cases.

Recently a team from the Rotary Club of Port Augusta completed the construction of a malaria staff house at Tulagi. Two more houses funded under the AusAID program are to be constructed at Seghe and Marau in the first six months of 2012, if you are interested in either, contact either PDG Wayne Morris or PDG Peter Thomas. Due to commitment of the funding of malaria infrastructure for 2012 being for the renovation of the malaria research centre any further housing is likely to be deferred to 2013.

Tools have been provided to two communities on Isabel under the Adopt-the-Village program, a recent visit to Isabel by a team from the Global Fund reported the success of the program. Nine communities on Guadalcanal have applied for tools under the program and these will be supplied later this year. It has been decided to concentrate on Isabel and Guadalcanal

Provinces before extending the program to other Provinces. The program has been adopted by the Ministry of Health as part of the Healthy Community Program.

Update – Timor Leste

The following report has been prepared by PDG Phil Dempster (District 9550, RAM's Timor Leste specialist).

During my recent trip to Dili, I met with the Malaria people to discuss our progress on the initial Adopt A Village (AAV) request. The meeting I had with Mr. Raul Sarmiento (Program Manager for Malaria-Timor Leste) and Mrs Maria Mota was positive and informative. They were brought up to date on the progress of our current AAV funding project and the approximate time lines. With over half the funds required in the bank, it looks fairly positive we can look forward to the project going ahead in the first half of the new year. It is our aim to report to next year's RAM Conference that that the first delivery under the AAV project is complete.

The Timorese Ministry of Health (MOH) has advised us of the particular type of LLIN they require for Timor. This net is a polyethylene net and is available from two suppliers. Both are currently in the process of supplying us with quotes. They will be slightly more expensive than the PermaNet© nets manufactured by Vestergaard Frandsen that are used in Papua New Guinea and the Solomons.

The Timor Leste malaria people are quite keen to attend next year's conference and are approaching the MOH for funding. We should know by year end if this will be forthcoming.

Report RAM PIRMCCM Representative

The following report has been prepared and submitted by the RAM representative on the Pacific Islands Regional Multi-Country Coordinating Mechanism (PIRMCCM), PDG Peter Thomas.

Being a member of the PIRMCCM Executive Committee has kept me on the move this year. Three meetings in South –East Asia representing the Pacific at Global Fund gatherings, the annual meeting of the PIRMCCM in Nadi, Fiji, and a week in Honiara assisting with the RAM building and procurement activities accounted for many days away from home. Long haul air flights are boring and very exhausting.

As this newsletter goes to press I will be in Suva attending yet another executive committee meeting where we will be making decisions that will effect the health and well-being of many Pacific people.

The worldwide financial situation, especially the latest problems in Europe, has created a difficult situation for the Global Fund. The funds that were committed by donor countries to combating malaria, HIV/Aids, and TB in the next allocation round have not eventuated. This has resulted in the reduction in the funds available to meet requests world –wide from US\$1.6 billion to about US\$0.8 billion. This dramatic cut will see many programs run into huge financial problems. The Pacific is not isolated from this.

We are in the process of submitting requests for funding ongoing programs in HIV/Aids and TB. Fortunately the malaria grant for Solomon Islands and Vanuatu recently received approval for further funding of that program (a little good luck with timing!) That program is meeting deadlines and targets with excellent results.

The Global Fund will be imposing very rigid selection criteria for all proposals. Some countries in the Pacific are likely to be unsuccessful in obtaining funds in the next allocation. The PIRMCCM is going to have to work hard at preparing the very best submissions, and we are under no illusion that we will be successful. We are preparing to look at other funding sources to cover the possible shortfalls. We will be looking at AusAID, and NZ Aid as two possible sources close to home for assistance. The United Nations, World Health, and US Aid (various agencies) will all be approached for help.

The Global Fund situation will improve as funding becomes available in future years. In the meanwhile we have a responsibility to ensure that ongoing health programs are sustained.

As the only private sector representative on the PIRMCCM I see my role of providing a business-like approach to oversight and management of the multi-million dollar Global Fund grants to improve health in the Pacific as a unique opportunity to show, in a practical way, the Objects of Rotary and The Four Way Test. It is time demanding, sometimes quite stressful, but most rewarding.

I'm sure everyone joins me in thanking PDG Peter for his efforts.

Malaria Awareness Day 2012

As discussed in previous Newsletters, the World Health Organisation has declared 30 April as *World Malaria Day*. As you know, in deference to the significance of 25 April in Australia, the National Rotarians Against Malaria Committee decided to recognise *World Malaria Day* on 30 April. We call it *Malaria Awareness Day*.

Rotary Clubs, in particular, should start to think about what they might do at that time to recognise the date. In 2012 30 April is a Monday. One suggestion would be at your Club meeting during week commencing Monday 30 April 2012, invite someone to speak on malaria. Another would be to get an item in your local newspaper – highlight any donation you may have made to, for example, the *Adopt A Village* program.

In general terms start thinking about *Malaria Awareness Day* now.

Did you know:

In the seventeenth century in some English counties, such as Kent and Essex, mortality rates from what we now know was malaria, rivalled those of present day sub-Saharan Africa.

Reserve the Date.

2012 RAM National Conference

Date: Weekend 26/27 May 2012
Place: Australian Army Malaria Institute
Weary Dunlop Drive
Gallipoli Barracks
ENOGGERA QLD

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Contributions and comments are welcome.