 

**Rotarians Against Malaria**

**Role Description for District Chairs**

**Introduction:**

This document seeks to explain how Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) works within the 21 Australian Rotary Districts, how we are organised and communicate and what is expected of the most important members of the RAM team, our RAM District Chairs. Of course Rotary is a volunteer organisation with many and varied projects and opportunities to be involved with. Priorities and organisational emphasis vary from year to year and from Club to Club and District to District. So in some Districts the RAM Chair role suggestions, outlined in this document, might be more or less difficult to implement. For this reason the following role description might at times be an aspirational goal but hopefully it provides useful guidance as to best practice in promoting RAM’s vision and programs within each District.

**Short History of RAM:**

Australian Rotarians and Rotary clubs have been involved in numerous worldwide projects in the battle against Malaria since 1990. The project “Rotary Against Malaria” was launched in the Solomon Islands in 1995 and in 1997 thirteen of the then twenty-three Australian Rotary Districts began developing a more coordinated national approach to this worldwide problem by agreeing to pool resources and funds in a joint “malaria control project” in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) became an approved RAWCS activity in 1998 with the establishment of a RAWCS - RAM National Executive Committee. In 2006 RAM commenced supporting programs in Timor Leste as well as PNG and Solomon Islands as our three focus countries. Some early programs also included Vanuatu.

RAM’s programs have always operated in partnership with the Health authorities of the target countries and at times collaborated with other NGOs. The initial objective of RAM was stated as: **“The prevention of mortality, and a reduction in morbidity and social and economic loss caused by malaria through a progressive improvement and strengthening of local and national capabilities in malaria control.”**

For the first two decades of RAM programs, the focus was very much on vector control employing Long Lasting Insecticidal Bed Nets (LLINs) as the main intervention as well as other techniques to prevent people being infected by mosquito bites. In 2003 the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and malaria (Global Fund) took over RAM’s pioneering programs and commenced funding universal access to LLINs. Since then RAM has developed a close collaboration with the Global Fund, filling gaps in their programs and acting as the Principal Recipient for their grants to PNG. RAM have also continued support to local Health authorities in other ways such as supplying tools for village drainage and cleaning programs, building staff houses and warehouses to support LLIN distributions and funding logistics.

As malaria control programs have become effective RAM’s focus has increasingly moved to the elimination of malaria. At the 2015 Annual RAM Conference the following Mission Statement was adopted: **“Rotarians Against Malaria is a volunteer-run organisation working to eliminate malaria.”**

**Organisational Structure:**

RAM is represented within RAWCS at all organisational levels: the RAM National Manager is a Director of RAWCS Ltd, each RAWCS Regional Committee includes a RAM Regional Coordinator and each RAWCS District Committee includes the RAM District Chair. The structural relationships are shown in the following table:-

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rotary Body** | **RAM Representation** | **RAM Support Body** |
| **RAWCS Ltd Board** | **RAM National Manager** | **RAM Executive Committee** |
| **RAWCS Regional Committees** | **RAM Regional Coordinators** | **District Chairs in Region** |
| **RAWCS District Committees** | **RAM District Chair** | **District RAM Committee** |
| **Rotary Clubs** | **Club International Service Directors** | **Rotarians** |

The RAM Executive Committee:

The RAM Executive Committee exists to advise, assist and publicise on matters pertaining to the ongoing battle against malaria and to manage fund raising activities and RAM national projects. The Committee is organised according to the RAWCS Ltd Terms of Reference for the RAM Committee and the RAM Procedures Document. The Executive Committee coordinates fund raising in Australia and supervises the disbursement of funds to the active field programs in our target Countries.

RAM Regional Coordinators:

RAM Regional Coordinators are members of their RAWCS Regional Committee and are appointed under and comply with the procedures and requirements of that Committee. Within the RAM organisational structure Regional Coordinators provide liaison between the RAWCS Regional Committee and the RAM District Chairs whose Districts fall within that Region. They also provide coordination and information transfer between the RAM National Executive Committee and the RAWCS Regional Committee and direct liaison between the RAM National Executive Committee and the District Chairs.

RAM District Chairs:

RAM District Chairs are members of their RAWCS District Committee and are appointed under and comply with the procedures and requirements of that Committee. Within the RAM organisational structure, District Chairs represent RAM on their District RAWCS Committee and to the Rotary Clubs and Rotarians within that District. RAM District Chairs should form a local committee to assist with and to support their work. Ideally that committee would have a representative from each Cluster of Rotary Clubs within the District.

**RAM District Chairs roles:**

The role of RAM District Chairs includes:

* Raising awareness within Rotary, Rotaract and the general public, of the huge humanitarian benefits that are gained through the control and elimination of malaria in endemic countries. These benefits include saving lives, improving maternal and child health, improved educational outcomes, improved economic productivity and reduction of poverty.
* Raising funds and support for RAM’s National programs.
* Encouraging Rotary Volunteers, travelling abroad, to seek medical advice on avoiding malaria infection and providing advice on avoiding mosquito bites.
* Contributing to RAM strategic planning and program development through forums at the RAM Annual Conference and routine communications.
* Identifying Rotary Projects within their District that could contribute to RAM’s objectives and seeking RAM endorsement, assistance and coordination for such projects.
* Seeking support from their District Governor and District Management team for RAM initiatives such as Rotary Foundation Global Grants in support of RAM programs.

**Key activities of RAM District Chairs:**

Form a Committee:

RAM District Chairs can be much more effective if they have the support of a Committee within their District. Committee members located across geographically large Districts make it easier to provide for visits to Rotary Clubs to speak about RAM and to coordinate local malaria awareness and fund raising activities. In this way RAM’s message will receive wider penetration without over burdening the District Chair. Committee members can also share the work in representing RAM at District functions and provide for succession planning.

Visit Clubs as guest speaker:

Delivering presentations on RAM as the guest speaker at Rotary Club and Rotaract Club meetings is the most important activity for District Chairs and their Committee members. Inspiring as many Rotarians and Rotaractors as possible about RAM and the need to eliminate malaria, has been the main source of fund raising for RAM and also contributes to our goal of influencing Rotary International to take up a significant role in a future Global Immunisation program to eradicate malaria following eradication of Polio.

RAM has lots of resources to help with this including numerous PowerPoint slides, videos and photos to help speakers develop their own personalised presentations. Demonstration LLINs, colouring books, RAM badges, pull-up banners and leaflets are some of the physical resources that can also be supplied. District Chairs are encouraged to share their own ideas for effective fund raising and awareness activities through the RAM network. In 2014 RAM Conference delegates agreed to an aspirational annual District fund raising target of $20,000. This target has been reached in some Districts by routine activities and in others by special activity such as D9670’s Ride around Australia and D9820’s DG’s partners program.

Use RAM’s web site: [www.ramaustralia.org](http://www.ramaustralia.org)

The website has project descriptions, recent reports as well as archived reports and Newsletters, photo galleries, resources including RAM leaflets and Contact details for all RAM Exec Committee, Regional Coordinators and District Chairs. The site also has the RAWCS Donations page pre-set to RAM’s funding project for on-line donations. District Chairs should familiarise themselves with the on-line donation routine as this is the most efficient way to handle donations.

Contribute to District enews or DGs Newsletter:

The RAM National Manager circulates a newsletter on a quarterly basis highlighting new developments in RAM’s programs. Other material is contributed to the RDU magazine and comes to RAM for circulation from WHO, UNITAID, Roll Back Malaria partnership (RBM) and International Summits and Conferences. This material is routinely circulated by the Executive Committee and regional Coordinators and RAM District Chairs are encouraged to ‘cherry-pick’ the material to post their own stories into District circulation as well as enhancing their presentations with recent developments.

District Newsletters or enews is also a good way to advertise availability of Guest Speakers for Clubs and to call for support or advertise Malaria Awareness Day activities and the Annual RAM National Conference. They are also a way to advertise for expressions of interest from Rotarians in joining RAM Volunteer teams, which travel to our target countries from time to time, to participate in RAM programs. Some District Chairs have also issued their own RAM Newsletter to Clubs in their District and interested groups outside Rotary.

Mount RAM displays at District functions:

Creative displays backed up by videos, opened bed nets, leaflets etc. in the Hall of Friendship at District Conference is a great way to inform Rotarians about RAM, to book speaking spots and recruit Volunteers for RAM overseas teams as well as the local District RAM Committee. Other District functions such as Showcases, Musters, PETS and District Assemblies are great venues to reach more Rotarians. Joint Club meetings or Cluster events also provide a chance to reach several Clubs with one presentation.

Promote Malaria Awareness Day 30th April:

Malaria Awareness Day (MAD) is held in Australia and (New Zealand) on 30th April to publicise our work and collaborate with research groupsand to get as many Rotary Clubs as possible to have an activity around this time to celebrate what has been achieved and highlight what still needs to be done to eliminate malaria. Rotaract has determined that the whole month of April should be malaria month while the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared 25th April as World Malaria Day we don’t want to clash with ANZAC Day.

Organise RAM dinner functions:

Special dinner events with guest speakers from RAM and local malaria research Institutes, if they exist in your District, are a great way to raise funds and awareness. These could celebrate MAD or other appropriate times in the year.

Liaise with DG & Management team:

Were possible, RAM Chairs should be active members of their District RAWCS Committee keeping them informed with reports and seeking opportunities for collaboration with other RAWCS projects. It is also important to keep the DG of the day familiar with RAM and developments in RAM programs. This will include asking the DG and his District Management team to consider supporting multi-District Global Grant applications to the Rotary Foundation (TRF), to support targeted RAM programs, by contributing some of their District Designated Funds (DDFs). In Global Grants TRF will match DDFs on a 1:1 basis.

At times Districts and Clubs will develop projects which will deliver outcomes that are in keeping with RAMs programs or strategic goals. In these cases District Chairs can seek the endorsement and support from RAM for the project or, if appropriate, direct collaboration.

Attend the Annual RAM Conference:

The annual RAM Conference is the best way to get informed about what is being achieved in RAM programs, the latest malaria research developments and to contribute to RAM strategic planning. The Conference is held every year and is rotated between Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney to reach more Rotarians. It is a great way to network, gain inspiration and practical ideas and get a deep understanding of what RAM has achieved and the next steps on the road to eliminating malaria in our region. The Conference is highly recommended to all RAM Committee members and it is important for District Chairs to attend and vote at the AGM which is embedded.

**Annual District Activities report and suggested benchmarks:**

The RAM District Activities Annual Report is a proforma document designed to provide feedback to the Executive Committee on how effectively the RAM message is being delivered and where new approaches and different support may be required to assist District Chairs. The report lists basic benchmarks as an indication of what could be achieved as well as providing an annual feedback opportunity. District Chairs are encouraged to fill this out and submit it through their RAM Regional Coordinators each July.

**Rotarians Against Malaria **

**District Activities Annual Report for:**

**Rotary Year / .District:**

(Please fill in expandable yellow highlighted areas where applicable)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **This Year** | **Guide** |
| Number of Club RAM presentations/visits |  | 10 |
| Number of multi Club events where RAM was presented |  | 2 |
| Presentation &/or display at District Conference |  | Yes |
| Articles submitted to District newsletter (e.g. RAM Conference information) |  | 2 |
| Number of Clubs with Malaria Awareness Day activity |  | 5 |
|  |  |  |
| Funds raised during this Rotary year |  | $5,000 |
|  |  |  |
| Attended RAM Annual Conference |  | Yes |
|  |  |  |
| Number of RAM Committee members – Cluster representatives |  | 5 |
| District Deputy Chair appointed ? |  | Yes |
| RAWCS regional meetings attended |  | 1 |
|  |  |  |
| Short reports posted on RAM Facebook |  | 2 |
| RAM information published in local print |  | 2 |
| Other PR successes, please detail in comments below |  |  |

**Comments and Suggestions:**