

Rotary Global Grant Application #GG1866289 for malaria elimination in Timor Leste: Visit to Timor Leste 23 – 31 July 2018

Introduction

This report presents details from Dr. Jenny Kerrison's (Rotary Club of North Hobart [RCNH]) recent visit to Dili, Timor Leste, as a representative for Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM). The aim of the visit was to provide support to the Grant application partners during an advance site visit by Dr. Noel Alidio - The Rotary Foundation (TRF) technical cadre. The Grant partners are: Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek (RCDL) (the Host Partner), District 9550, and the National Malaria Program (NMP) (the Cooperating Organisation).

Background

The Rotary Club of North Hobart (RCNH) and Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) initiated a Rotary Global Grant application that was submitted in April 2018. The Grant application #GG1866289 is for USD251,334 for malaria elimination in border towns in Timor Leste.

The Global Grant funding will supply the Timor Leste National Malaria Program with 40,000 long lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) and 80 Hudson Sprayer machines for Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS). The NMP has requested that the LLINs be distributed to pregnant women. In addition, funding is available for training in community education on LLINs and IRS for community volunteers, midwives, and Rotarians from the RCDL

In Timor Leste, RAM has worked with the National Malaria Program since 2006, and with the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek since 2016. The Grant will provide targeted, timely assistance to Timor Leste's NMP to achieve World Health Organisation certification for malaria elimination by 2021.

TRF Cadre's advance visit to Timor Leste - 23 to 25 July 2018

A technical cadre's advance site visit is necessary for all large Rotary Global Grant applications that are above US\$100,000. Essentially, the cadre assesses if the project can be implemented given the project's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities.

Dr. Noel Alidio was the TRF cadre who visited Dili to assess our Grant application (Photo 1). His itinerary is included in Appendix 1.



Photo 1: Dr. Alidio, TRF Cadre

Outline of Cadre's Visit: 23 – 25 July 2018

The NMP held a meeting for Dr. Alidio at the Communicable Disease Centre (CDC) with Host Partner RCDL. Attendees at the meeting were: Dr. Merita (Head, CDC); Dr. Manel (Consultant Ministry of Health – previously, a WHO Consultant); Judite Martins and Mario de Jesus, *Rotarians Helping Timor* Office; RCDL Immediate Past President Acku Herculano and President Betty; Club Secretary Joao de Jesus; Project Officer Mainto; and RAM representative Dr. Jenny Kerrison (RCNH).

On day two, the NMP organised a visit for Dr. Alidio, to observe LLINs distribution to pregnant women at the antenatal care clinic, Comoro Community Health Centre (CHC), in Dili (Photo 2). A visit was also made to the CHC's Laboratory where Dr. Alidio met laboratory staff and checked the data collection on malaria cases. In the afternoon, a meeting was reconvened at the CDC Office. Acku and Jenny met to revise and re-sign the MOU; and a final discussion was held on the Grant application.

On day three, 25 July 2018, Dr. Alidio left Dili to return to the Philippines.



Photo 2: Visit to an Antenatal Care Clinic, Comoro Community Health Centre. Dr. Alidio (centre back), Dr. Merita, Head of Communicable Diseases Centre (CDC) (second on left); Acku Herculano (first on left); Dr. Manel (first right).

Highlights of TRF technical cadre's visit

In addition to undertaking the Grant project feasibility assessment, Dr. Alidio's visit also facilitated discussions between all three partners (RCNH, RCDL and NMP) in regards the Grant project design; and partners' roles and responsibilities; including the TRF requirement for a revised MOU. Other key accomplishments from the trip are presented below:

- Grant MOU / Framework of Cooperation Agreement was re-signed by Partners RCDL and RCNH – in line with TRF's request that revision to the MOU be made so that the timeframe for project implementation is 18 months. The MOU is now ready to be signed by the Director General (DG) of Health Services, Ministry of Health. Dr. Merita will follow up with the DG. On 27 July, a copy of the revisions to the MOU was emailed to Mr. Narciso Fernandes, Director of Cooperation for Ministry of Health, as advised by Dr. Merita.

- Support for malaria elimination beyond current Grant application - Dr. Alidio recommended that all partners apply for another Rotary Global Grant in 2019, as a Phase II to the current Grant application. This is to support Timor Leste in its efforts to achieve malaria elimination certification by World Health Organisation, by 2021.
- The promotion of Rotary via the use of its logo is important. Dr. Alidio suggested that the Rotary wheel should be on all media where possible. For example, the 55 malaria flipcharts, 16 banners (4 x Municipality Oecussi, Bobonaro, Cobalima, and Dili) for land crossings at border towns, airports and harbours; and on bed nets produced by Sumitomo.
- Rotary Community Corp (RCC) in Grant project locations - Dr. Alidio recommended that RCDL organise communities into a Rotary Community Corp (RCC) in Grant project locations. The RCC has several important roles such as the mobilisation of the communities to achieve the Grant's project goals. It can also participate in Grants project development and lead projects. The RCC can contribute to project sustainability through the development of commitment to, and ownership of, projects. See My Rotary site for more details <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/rotary-community-corps#page-content>

Grant related information gathered in Timor Leste

Dr. Kerrison was in Timor Leste between 23 and 31 July 2018. In addition to participating in meetings with Dr. Alidio and partners, Jenny also attended a District Malaria Officers' study day on Thursday 26 July and the RCDL meeting on Sunday 29 July.

The information below was compiled to provide a better understanding of the context for the Grant project implementation.

- The Host Partner for this Global Grant is the RCDL. There are two Rotary clubs in Timor Leste and both are under Australian Rotary District 9550, these are: RCDL and Rotary Club of Dili (RCD). The RCDL was chartered in 2016 and now has approximately 32 Timorese only members. At their monthly meeting on 30 July, only six members were present (Photo 3). Expatriates interested in Rotary are referred to the RCD that was chartered in 2012.



Photo 3: Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek's monthly meeting held at the *Fundasaun Ahisaun*, 30 July 2018.

The RCD now has approximately 14 members. Several members have left for either health or work reasons, and one was deceased. The RCD was the Host Partner for a Grant for LLINs in 2014-15 led by PDG Phil Dempster, who is the RAM country coordinator for Timor Leste.

During this trip, Jenny met informally with a RCD Board Member. As noted, RCD currently has five (5) Global Grant projects and will not take on any more Grant projects. RCD is supportive of RAM's work in malaria elimination.

The RCDL membership fees are waived until July 2019. Thus, members have not paid fees since the club was chartered in 2016. This approach would have facilitated growth in club membership. A question that needs to be flagged is 'what are the implications for Rotary Australia, if the RCDL members do not pay the yearly membership fee in 2019 and beyond?'

- Timor Leste achieved zero indigenous malaria cases in the first quarter of 2018. In 2017, there were 17 indigenous cases of malaria and 13 imported cases (see photo 4). Improvements were noted in 2018 with zero cases of indigenous malaria in first quarter of 2018 and 5 imported cases.

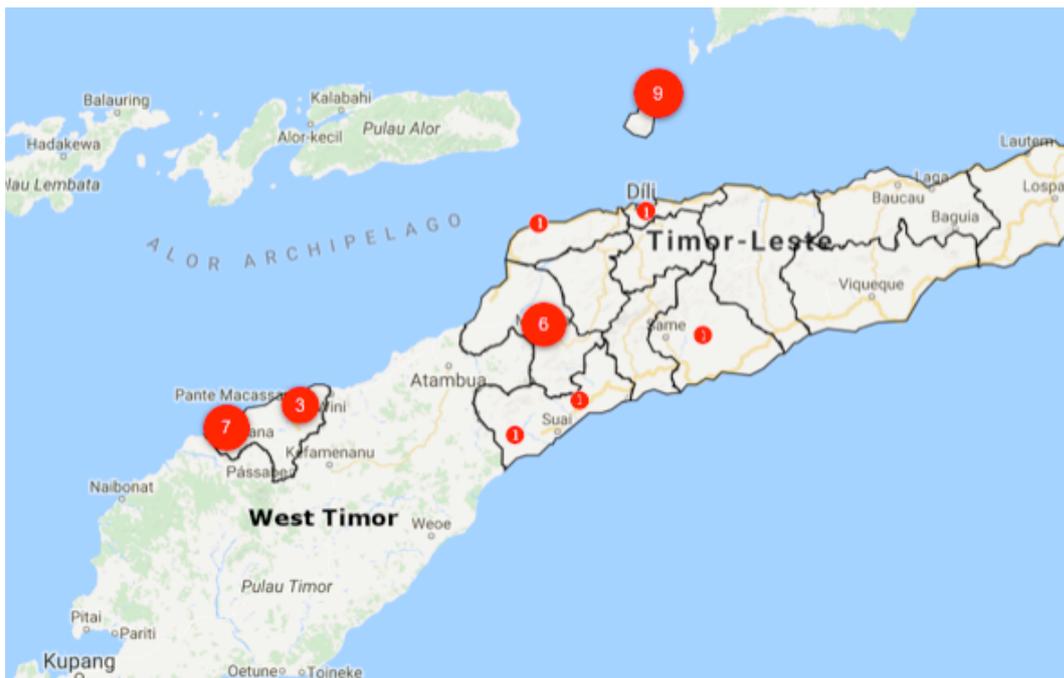


Photo 4: Distribution of malaria cases in 2017 with 17 indigenous and 13 imported malaria cases, Timor Leste (Dr. Merita, July 2018)

- Lack of funds for mass LLINs distribution -The Global Fund round will run over three years 2017-2020 with mandatory co-financing commitment from the Government of Timor Leste (GoTL). However, co-financing by the GoTL is not guaranteed. In the first half of 2019, the Global Fund will purchase LLINs for Timor Leste but co-financing is uncertain for operational costs for the mass bed nets distribution. There is also no funding for monitoring and evaluation of mass bed nets distribution.

Training for RCDL members - All partners agreed to training the Rotarians in community education for mass LLINs distribution. The NMP emphasised that the Healthy Village cleaning is not a NMP priority.

Logistically, as the RCDL members are either fulltime students or working, they may not be able to participate in all activities in mass LLINs distribution that are implemented over 15 to 26 days (see Table 1 below). The mass LLINs distribution program includes a series of activities conducted sequentially and over many days. The NMP is aware of the RCDL's limitations.

Dili Municipality	Households per day	Promotion in villages (days)	LLINs Distribution (days)	Compilation of Data (days)	TOTAL DAYS
Metinaro	300	3	7	8	18
Nein Feto	300	2	5	8	15
Nen Fetho	300	6	12	8	26

Table 1: Mass LLINs distribution in three (3) locations in the Dili Municipality

- Budget for training RCDL members – As displayed in Table 2 (below), a total of USD45,000 is available for operations in the Rotary Global Grant budget (see items #2 and #5 in the Grant application).

	Population protected	No of LLINs distribute	Estimate Cost US\$
Five (5) Municipalities funded Rotary #GG1866289			
LLINs Distribution in Dili	20889	11605	4,786
LLINs distribution in Bobonaro border villages	22949	12749	7,666
LLINs Distribution in Alas	8470	4706	3,285
LLINs distribution in Manatuto	23796	13220	7,285
LLINs Distribution Los Palos	1463	813	1,040
Cost for the stationary for LLINs distribution Sub Districts			383
TOTAL Budget from RCDL community education activities allocation			24,445
Training of midwives and Sub District malaria Officers on LLINs distribution to Pregnant Women			18,662
16 Banners at the entry points (4 airport, 2 each at 2entry point2 in Oecusse, 2 at Bobonaro, 2 at Covalima, 2 at Harbour)			560
Printing of 55 Flip charts on malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment			1,375
TOTAL Budget from NMP Operational costs allocation	77567	43093	45,042
GRAND TOTAL Budget allocated in Grant Application US\$45,000 [\$25,000 + \$20,000]			45,042

Table 2: Total Budget of US\$45,000 allocated in #GG1866289 for 2019 (Dr. Manel, 2018). The LLINs are funded by the Global Fund.

The Grant funding allocation for operations will be used for mass LLINs distribution program that will include training for Rotarians from the RCDL. Training will also be

provided to midwives and nurses to distribute LLINs through their antenatal care clinics. The balance of funds will be used to purchase malaria flipcharts and banners (Table 2 above).

- This Grant application has included RCDL as an active and not a passive Host Partner. The cadre, Dr. Alidio, reinforced the active participation of Rotarians in Grant projects. He believed that Grants need to provide opportunities to build the capacity of Host Partner Rotarians.
- Grant contingencies are not factored into the Grant budget.
- Gaps in the funding for mass LLINs distribution - as advised by the NMP, there are two (2) Municipalities with no funding for mass LLINs:
 - Manufahi Municipality needs US\$6,657 to distribute 18,308 LLINs
 - Ainaro Municipality needs US\$4,174 to distribute 4,111 LLINs
- An important output from this visit was that Jenny was able to complete the training curriculum and training plan for mass LLINs distribution from information provided by NMP during the visit.
- Anecdotally, West Timor has 5 times more malaria than Timor Leste
 - More than 95 % of cases were reported in the border areas
 - The Global Fund facilitated cross-border collaboration with West Timor – the MOU between Timor Leste and Jakarta, Indonesia was signed, and the first meeting was held in January 2017. Dr. Merita was hopeful that RAM will facilitate further discussions between the two countries at the Annual RAM Conference, on 25 – 26 August, at the Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.
 - International Health Regulation (IHR) – The NMP advised that both Indonesia and Timor Leste are signatories to the IHR and this can be applied to cross-border collaborations with Indonesia. The IHR is a legal commitment for countries to cooperate, to prevent and control risks that threaten populations across borders and globally (World Health Organisation, 2018. IHR. From http://www.who.int/topics/international_health_regulations/en/)

- *Rotarians Helping Timor* Office in Dili

This Grant, if successful will ship 40,000 LLINs and 80 sprayers into Dili. We are fortunate to have the service of a registered Timorese non-government organisation called *Rotarians Helping Timor* (RHT). This Office is managed locally by two Timorese Rotarians with oversight and funding from Rotarians in Australia. Some of the amazing work they do are: distribution of donated goods, assistance with Rotary instigated in country projects, and the organisation of ROMAC patients to Australia and New Zealand for life saving surgery.

Once this Grant project is approved, the RHT will provide a seamless transfer of equipment from supplier to Dili. As suggested by Dr. Alidio, a MOU was drafted to partner with RHT. However, this did not proceed as the RHT was not documented as a Partner in the Grant application. Including RHT at this late stage could involve more complex negotiations with TRF.

Dr. Alidio highlighted several key points in the Grant-RHT relationship, as follows:

- RCNH cannot release funds to RHT
- RHT cannot manage funds for RCNH
- RHT cannot release funds directly to NMP
- RCNH can release funds via RCDL for NMP
- RCDL can obtain, safe-keep documents and receipts from any purchases

Conclusion & Recommendation

RAM's funding for Dr. Jenny Kerrison's visit to Timor Leste was an important investment for the Grant application. The returns on investment from the visit were: the facilitation of a positive experience for Dr. Alidio who saw the capacity of NMP for malaria elimination; the development of trust and friendship between all partners; the agreement on training for RDCL; the re-affirmation of RCDL's commitment to the Grant application; and the development of training curriculum and plan for TRF. Importantly, Dr. Alidio left Timor Leste with the conviction that malaria elimination is the next most important Rotary business once polio eradication is achieved.

In general, it is recommended that RAM continues to financially support NMP in Timor Leste until achievement of malaria elimination certification. The specific recommendations are that RAM:

1. If the Grant is approved, fund Grant contingencies in project implementation.
2. Fund remaining municipalities (Manufahi and Ainaro) for mass LLINs distribution for approximately US\$10,831, in first half of 2019.
3. Fund monitoring and evaluation post-distribution in the seven (7) Municipalities where mass LLINs distribution were conducted (NMP will provide budget estimate).
4. Advocate to Rotary Clubs in Australia and internationally, to support Rotary Global Grants for:
 - (i) Phase II implementation in 2020. Work on the Grant application should begin in mid-2019.
 - (ii) West Timor Province - For cross-border malaria elimination between NTT (West Timor) and Timor Leste; and other NTT malaria high-risk locations.

Appendix 1: Itinerary for Dr. Noel Alidio, TRF Cadre

RAM Rotary global grant GG1866289

Name of project: Malaria elimination in in border towns in Timor-Leste

Funding requested: USD\$251,334

Key activities: Purchase of 40,000 LLINs, 80 Hudson Sprayers, and implementation of community education activities

Feasibility study of the Rotary Global Grant Application: Technical Cadre 3-day visit to Timor Leste

Introduction

In April 2018, a multi-district Rotary Global Grant application for USD251,334 was submitted by the Rotary Club of North Hobart, Rotarians Against Malaria and the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek, to support the National Malaria Program (NMP) in malaria elimination in Timor Leste. With a large Grant application such as ours, The Rotary Foundation (TRF) requires a review of our application by a Cadre.

In line with TRF requirement, Dr. Noel Alidio, a volunteer Rotarian and a Rotary Technical Cadre will conduct feasibility study of our Grant application. He will visit project sites to collect information on the project, and feedback to TRF Board of Trustees. Dr. Alidio's visit is an important part of the Board of Trustees' decision-making on our Grant application.

Cadre members are experts in their field and can serve as excellent resources to project sponsors, who can ask Dr. Alidio for ideas on how to strengthen or improve the project.

Objective of visit:

Over the 3-day visit, Dr. Noel Alidio will conduct on-site evaluation on the technical feasibility of our proposed project. This visit will identify risks to achievement of the project's outcomes.

Participants in this global grant project:

1. **Host Partner in Timor Leste** is the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek, Rotary District 9850. Represented by Acku Herculano.
2. **International Partner** is the Rotary Club of North Hobart, Rotary District 9830. Represented by Dr. Jenny Kerrison.
3. **Cooperating Organisation** is the National Malaria Program, Timor Leste. Represented by Dr. Merita Monteiro.

Draft itinerary for Dr. Noel Alidio, a volunteer Rotarian & Technical Cadre for The Rotary Foundation

Date	Activity	Notes
Day 1 Mon. 23 July Morning	<p>12.20hr – Dr. Alidio arrives at Dili Airport</p> <p>14.00hr - Rotary Meeting with Dr. Alidio:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Key members of Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek 2. Rotary Club of North Hobart 3. <i>Rotarians Helping Timor Office</i> – Judite M Martins & Mario de Jesus (to discuss logistics of receipt of nets and sprayers). <p><u>Tentative Agenda:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation by RC North Hobart on Grant Application 2. Presentation by RC Dili Lafaek on the Village Cleaning projects 3. Presentation by <i>Rotarians Helping Timor Office</i> 4. Meet RYLA Alumni; and other young volunteers for the village cleaning activity – to showcase their support for RCDL 	<p>Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek & Dr. Jenny Kerrison to meet Dr. Alidio at Airport.</p> <p>NOTE: RCDL to prepare presentation to Dr. Alidio to display club capacity for participation in project. Include district leaders so the Dr. Alidio can learn more about the locations.</p> <p>RCDL to contact Judite and Mario judite.rotaryindili@gmail.com; and mario.rotaryindili@gmail.com</p> <p>Address: <i>Rotarians Helping Timor</i> Studio 3, Timor Lodge Hotel Rua President Nicolao Lobato, Dili TIMOR LESTE Tel: +670 77651386 / 77332248</p>
	<p>15.30hr - Meeting with National Malaria Program, and Rotary Clubs of Dili Lafaek and North Hobart.</p> <p><u>Tentative Agenda:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation by Dr. Noel Alidio on the Cadre visit; his role; and the inputs he need for the impending assessment of our grant application. 2. Presentation by NMP on malaria statistics, and rationale for the Rotary Global Grant Application. 3. Discuss and finalise itinerary for site visits with Dr. Noel Alidio 4. Discuss logistics for site visits 	<p>The National Malaria Program is not available until 15.30hrs on Mon 23 July.</p>

Date	Activity	Notes
Day 2: 24 July	<p>All day: Site Visit to be organized by NMP. Program for the visit would be similar to the one conducted when the RAM 2017 team visited NMP.</p> <p>Possible sites: Dili, District Liquisa</p> <p><u>Tentative program:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet Head of District Health Office and malaria officers; sub-district malaria officers, CHVs. 2. Hold community meetings with community leaders 3. Visit antenatal clinic to meet midwives and pregnant women 	<p>NOTE: Include district leaders so the Dr. Alidio can learn more about the locations.</p>
Day 3 25 July	<p>08.00hr - Meeting with NMP, RCDL & RC North Hobart:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback and recommendations from Dr. Alidio - on how to strengthen our Grant Application and Framework from 2. NMP to share key documents with Dr. Alidio e.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <i>National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination</i> (ii) Outline training curriculum (iii) Outline training plans for Sprayers and Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek (Integrated Vector and Pest Management for Farmers) <p>13.20hr – Dr. Alidio departs Dili for Denpasar</p>	<p>NOTE: An outline Training Curriculum and Plan can be drafted by Dr. Jenny Kerrison during visit with inputs from NMP, to have ready prior to Dr. Alidio's departure.</p>
26 July	<p>Follow-up meeting – date and time at the convenience of NMP and RCDL with Dr Jenny Kerrison.</p> <p><u>Tentative Agenda:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the Grant Application and amendments to the Framework of Cooperation Agreement. 2. Agree on timeline & date for signing of amendments to the Framework 	<p>Dr. Jenny Kerrison departs for Australia on 30 July.</p> <p>She will finalise all revisions / amendments prior to her departure.</p> <p>Submission of documents needs to occur in end of July/ early August, for the Trustees meeting in August.</p>