**RAWCS Northern Region RAM Report**

Russ Stephenson, Rotary Club of Nambour, D9600

**June 2020**

**Awareness by Clubs of RAM**

Awareness of the devastation caused by malaria and great work done by RAM towards its elimination remains an essential to gain greater, on-going financial support from Rotary Clubs. The restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic have disrupted plans but, to date, two RAM presentations have been made to Rotary Clubs in D9600 via Zoom. Since this situation will persist for some time, a concerted effort is planned to promote RAM talks to Clubs by Zoom.

**Club Fundraising**

Covid 19 has also disrupted the fundraising plans of many Rotary Clubs, including my own. This may impact adversely on RAM fundraising in the short term \_ All the more reason to promote an awareness of RAM’s work.

**New Ireland malaria elimination initiative**

In November 2019, RAM Australia was invited to send a representative to New Ireland, PNG to review the progress made by the New Ireland Provincial Malaria Alliance (NIPMA) in a preliminary scoping study and demonstration projects (IRS, Village Malaria Treatment Providers and Healthy Villages) leading to a proposed Definitive Feasibility Study (Implementation) for which the NIPMA team were seeking support financially, and through partnerships and collaboration. Since I was already in PNG at that time, I represented RAM Australia at the Kavieng meeting.

Malaria incidence in New Ireland (NI) is very high with 324 cases/1000, exacerbated by . swampy terrain. Malaria elimination is being pursued by NI PMA, largely because of the strong political support from Provincial Governor Sir Julias Chan. This will be invaluable in tackling the many issues needed to reduce the burden of malaria and, ultimately, to achieve elimination.

The NIPMA proposal to reduce the malaria burden in one of the most intensely affected malaria Provinces in PNG is courageous, a multi-faceted plan of attack that may guide future projects of this kind to eliminate malaria. It addresses the 3 pillars of the WHO Global Malaria Program:

* Universal access to malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment,
* Accelerate actions towards malaria elimination and malaria free-status
* Transform malaria surveillance into a core intervention

Supporting elements are:

* Encourage the harnessing of innovation and increased research
* Encourage strengthening of the enabling environment

The sustained commitment of Government, NGO and community groups to the project augers well for the success of the project.

The project approach uses the best of RAM PNG (Chasing Malaria - Rapid Response Teams) and RAM Solomon Islands (Healthy Villages - Healthy Village Malaria Volunteers ) concepts , backed up by enhanced LLIN distribution, rejuveniated IRS and thorough, real-time reporting) to carry out timely hot spot testing and treatment.

The NIPMA project will seek significant international funding (US$4.1 million over 3 years, such as the Global Fund) and seeks RAM support to enhance their case. Success of the project will be underpinned by the thoroughness and comprehensive nature of the NPIMA approach. Hence, after due diligence, active involvement of RAM Australia should reflect favourably on RAM, and effectively leverage its modest funding.

**Proposed Global Grant Project to Eliminate Malaria in New Ireland, PNG (As part contribution to the NIPMA Project)**

The Rotary Club of Kippa Ring-North Lakes in D9600, of which Dr Ivor Harris is a member, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Nambour, is proposing to develop a Global Grant Application to undertake one of the part(s) of the NIPMA Project that the international funding bodies decline to fund, but which RAM Australia supports. This application will receive funding from D9600 District Designated Funds (DDF) and other Districts within Northern Region (D9630, D9640), who might also be asked to support the Global Grant for West Timor ( eg 9550, D9570) will be approached to similarly support this application.

Dr Ivor Harris is highly qualified and experienced for the role of Project Leader.

**Russ Stephenson**

**RAWCS Northern Region RAM Coordinator and D9600 RAM Chair**

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