



# RAM NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Number 8

My Rotary Friends and Friends of Rotary  
Again a long time has elapsed between Newsletters, but I've been waiting for confirmation of the dates for this year's Conference. We now have them so it's possible to proceed.

Since the last Newsletter a couple of major things have occurred.

The first was the major international conference on malaria, *Malaria 2012*. The conference brought together some 300 delegates from more than 30 countries and 134 organisations. It was conducted by AusAID on behalf of the Australian Government, and was possibly the most important conference on malaria ever held in the Asia Pacific Region. Two reports have been prepared. The first was a Preliminary Report prepared immediately the conference ended, and which was circulated to RAM District and Regional representatives, and much of which is repeated below. The second, much more detailed, was only circulated to the RAM Executive. It is not a report on the conference because it only covers the sessions I attended. Obviously, during the breakout sessions, I could only attend one. If anyone is interested in receiving a copy of this report, please let me know and I'll happily forward it to you.

The second event was the distribution of long lasting insecticide treated nets in Timor Leste. You will recall that we'd been working towards this for some time and it finally happened in October and November. The Timor Leste Ministry of Health had requested that Australian Rotarians accompany net distribution teams. We circulated requests for expressions of interest last year, and finally PDG Phil Dempster led a team of Australia Rotarians to Timor Leste. During, what proved to be a very useful, but tiring, trip, the team finished up doing a bit more than simply accompany the distribution teams. In fact from what I've heard, the distribution may not have happened if they hadn't been there. Be all that as it may, it was very successful and the nets were satisfactorily distributed. Many thanks to everyone who was involved.

Right at the moment we are having quite a deal of trouble with Rotary International. In fact, more correctly, we're in trouble. Our name isn't legal. We will be discussing this at the Conference, and I'm hoping someone, much cleverer than me, can come up with an appropriate name.

See you in Caboolture.

Ian Sayers  
February 2013

## 2013 RAM Conference

The Conference will be held on weekend 1-2 June 2013. Details are –

<b>Venue:</b>	<b>St Columban's Catholic Secondary College 100 McKean Street CABOOLTURE. QLD</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>From 11.45 am Sat 1 Jun ends by lunch Sunday</b>
<b>Dinner:</b>	<b>Venue As above</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Saturday 1 June 2013</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>6.15 pm for 7.00 pm</b>

We acknowledge that this date varies from that previously advised but we couldn't get a booking at the College so decided to shift.

## Papua New Guinea Update

The following was reported at a recent Northern Region RAWCS meeting.

The last quarter has presented many distribution problems due to the remoteness of many villages, late arrival of nets and tribal issues. An example of which was the refusal to allow transit through a tribal area to the remote village of another tribe and then having the nets delivered by air to the wrong village. The lack of infrastructure in the provinces of Western, East Sepik, Sanduan are delivery problems themselves. On the brighter side, delivery of 163,294 nets, under the circumstances, was commendable. Total LLINs distributed to date now totals 2,886,413. To improve our distribution in 2013 we have increased the number of teams on the ground from two to three.

With all the trials and tribulations of the last quarter we now have the monsoon season upon us and the need for nets increases. The additional team should allow us to return to our normal distribution numbers. The program will expand into Manus, New Ireland, Oro and Gulf during Q14.

### Nets delivered to household level.

Team	Dates	District	Province	Nets Delivered
<b>Phase Two</b>	<b>Nov 09 - Oct 11</b>	<b>50 Districts</b>	<b>18 Provinces</b>	1,890,448
Q9	Nov 2011	Angoram, Nuku, Aitape, Ihu and Kerema	East Sepik, Sanduan and Gulf	101,642
Q10	12-Feb	Nawae, Bulolo	Morobe	9,223
Q11	Jan/May 2012	Kainantu, Daulo and Ungai Benna	Eastern Highlands	114,584
Q11	Jan/May 2012	Kundiawa, Gembodl and Sinasin, Yonggomugl	Chimbu	66,462
Q11	Jan/June 2012	Bulolo, Lae and Huon	Morobe	166,343
Q11 /12	Jan/June 2012	Mount Hagen and Jimi	Western Highlands	85,666
Q12	Jul/Sep 2012	Nawaeb, Menyamya, Kabwum and Finschafen, Huon (Salamaua and Morobe)	Morobe	138,435
Q12	Jul/Sep 2012	Middle Ramu, Sumkar, Usino, Bundi	Madang	128,085
Q12	Jul/Sep 2012	South Fly	Western	31,960
Q12	Total			<b>305,480</b>
Q13		North Fly	Western	34,692
Q14		Telefomin	Sandaun	22,842
Q15		Ambunti, Drekkiekier, Wosera Gawi	East Sepik	73,660
Q16	Dec 2013	Goilala, Rigo, Kairuku	Central	32,100
Q13	TOTAL			163,294
<b>Total Q9 + Q10 + Q11 + Q12 + Q13</b>				<b>995,965</b>
Overall Total Phase One and Phase Two				2,886,413

## Update – Solomon Islands

As above, the following was reported to the recent RAWCS Northern Region.

No update as not much has happened due to funding issues. RAWCS multi district teams have completed two malaria houses at Seghe. We are currently waiting for Government to advise what assistance if any required for 2013. Tools programme is waiting for a Health employee to advise names of villages so we can procure the tools necessary under the Healthy Village Program.

Breaking news. The tsunami that hit the eastern Solomons, in particular the islands in the Santa Cruz group, did not, repeat did not, damage the houses and shed Rotary constructed at Lata. PDG Peter Thomas advises that Sir Richard Feacham always said we had over-designed the sheds and houses, but he was glad we did.

## Update – Timor-Leste

In late October/early November Rotarians, and a Rotaractor, led by PDG Phil Dempster assisted in the distribution of LLINs in Timor Leste. The distribution occurred in the Districts of Manatuto and Bobanaro as follows –

### Manatuto District

Sub Districts	Population	No of Nets
Manatuto	12484	8322
Laleia	3834	2556
Laclubar	9599	6399

### Bobanaro District

Batugade	1984	1323
Belola	650	433



All in all, a very satisfying trip

## Conference - Malaria 2012

The conference addressed the following goals and targets

- Promote high level regional political leadership and collaboration
- Close the financing the gap
- Expand access to quality medicines and technologies
- Achieve universal coverage of key malaria interventions in priority areas
- Accelerate highest priority research and development

What was very telling was the increasing use of the word “elimination” when speaking about malaria. Throughout the presentations we were constantly reminded of a number of matters and issues, these included –

- Our fight against malaria is hampered by the increasing parasite resistance to anti-malaria drugs. In recent years artemisinin resistance in the Greater Mekong sub-region has become a major and urgent concern. This was raised constantly, by many speakers. There is a fear that if this isn't contained, it could spread, with disastrous consequences, to the rest of the malaria endemic world.
- In addition to drug resistance there are also increasing examples of insecticide resistance. At present there is a heavy reliance on very few insecticides, in particular pyrethroids, in two key interventions – long lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) and indoor residual spraying (IRS).
- The key importance of sustainable financing.
- The close relationship between our malaria targets and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and how we now have only 38 months to achieve these.
- The critical importance of inter-country and interregional cooperation and collaboration.
- Those at risk are the most marginalised, and increasingly include migrant workers and adult males.

In case this all sounds a little negative and concerning, we also heard many “good news” stories.

- Since 2007, four countries have been certified malaria free
- Since 2000, a total of 34 countries outside Africa have reduced cases by 50 per cent and deaths have reduced by 30 per cent.
- Another 17 countries are in pre-elimination or elimination stages of malaria control and poised to eliminate malaria soon.
- There are now only three malaria endemic countries in the Pacific region – Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu.
- We learned of a new drug, OZ439, being developed by Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) in partnership with three academic institutes: University of Nebraska Medical Center, USA, Monash University, Victoria, Australia, and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. With the threat of artemisinin resistance and its potential to jeopardize recent wins in malaria control, fully synthetic peroxides, such as OZ439, could provide the urgently needed alternative.

What was also very pleasing was that *Malaria 2012* was very much outcome oriented. A “Consensus” document was prepared, circulated, and agreed during Friday's “Ministerial Action Meeting”. What was agreed is vital and is re-produced below –

- To strengthen political and technical leadership in the region and establish the Asia-Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance.
  - The alliance will be country-led and comprise eminent persons charged with advocating for rapid action to combat drug resistance, and for accelerating the fight against malaria.
  - Working with existing regional institutions the alliance will check our progress.
- To convene a taskforce to explore options to close the financing gap.
- To convene a taskforce to improve access to quality antimalarial medicines and technologies in the Asia-Pacific region.
- To expand the coverage of effective malaria interventions, in partnership with non-government organisations and the private sector.
  - In areas where Artemisinin resistance has emerged, at risk communities and building health system capacity will be priorities.
- Identify and coordinate priority research and development to create new tools or improve existing tools for better program and policy impact.

For those who would like to read the consensus document in full, go to

<http://www.usaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/malaria-consensus-document.aspx>

Also very important was the financial commitment made by Senator Carr during the “Ministerial Action Meeting”. Details can be seen in his media release at

[http://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2012/bc\\_mr\\_121102.html](http://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2012/bc_mr_121102.html)

## Snippets

### CAMBODIA’S VILLAGE MALARIA WORKERS (VMWs)

In 2002 Cambodia’s National Malaria Centre established the VMW Project to address the needs of those living in highly endemic communities beyond realistic reach of public sector health facilities. Within each target community volunteers were taught how to diagnose and treat malaria using RDTs and ACTs. The volunteers were provided with kits and were routinely monitored, trained and resupplied during monthly meetings.

The project was quickly recognised as an important new component of the NMCP, greatly improving access to quality diagnosis and treatment in Cambodia’s most underserved communities in a very cost effective manner. With support from WHO, the Global Fund and others, the project underwent a phased expansion and by 2008 the scheme had been rolled out to cover 400 of Cambodia’s most malaria endemic villages. Following the success of the project at tackling malaria its scope was expanded to include diagnosis and treatment of acute respiratory tract infections and diarrhoea in children under five – increasing the impact and the costs effectiveness of the project still further.

In 2010 the VMW Project accounted for 47,222 (45 per cent) of the 106,000 confirmed malaria cases detected and treated by the public health services.

The project has recently expanded considerably to provide a crucial surveillance function for Cambodia’s artemisinin resistance containment effort. As a consequence it now covers 1,523 villages with a population of approximately 1.2 million. There are plans to extend the network further in order to provide crucial surveillance support for the broader malaria elimination effort.

Based on: Nguon, C et al *Cambodia’s Village Malaria Workers – from emergency control to malaria elimination*, in preparation 2012.

### Did you know:

In the island campaigns of World War 2 malaria sickened tens of thousands of troops, grounding whole divisions felling more soldiers than enemy combat.

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*Contributions and comments are welcome.*