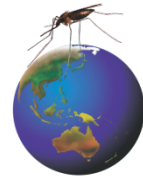




ROTARY AUSTRALIA
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RAM

Rotarians Against Malaria Annual report 2015 – 2016

As a result of the wonderful progress made in controlling malaria around the globe the World Health Organisation (WHO) has now crystallised plans to eradicate malaria by 2040 and the Asia Pacific Leaders' Malaria Alliance (chaired by Australia) has developed a roadmap to eliminate malaria from our region by 2030. The period 2000 to 2015 has seen a 37% decline in malaria incidence worldwide and an impressive 60% decline in deaths. WHO has estimated that malaria control in this period has averted the deaths of 5.9 million children. At the same time the incidence of probable and confirmed malaria cases in our region has declined by 65% in PNG, 87% in Solomon Islands, 99% in Timor Leste and 98% in Vanuatu. Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) has had an active role in PNG and the Solomons, since 1995 and more recently in Timor Leste in contributing to these results.

In PNG, RAM continues as the Principal Recipient for the Global Fund Grant and a member of the Country Coordinating Mechanism. Using this grant, RAM has managed the distribution of more than 1 million LLINs (Long Lasting Insecticidal bed nets) to households and vulnerable groups in the last 12 months. Most provinces have now received two rounds of bed net distribution to all households since 2009.

The pilot program 'Chasing Malaria', mostly funded by RAM, is making great progress in Central Province and the National Capital District (NCD). This program trains local health clinics to use accurate Rapid Diagnostic Test kits (RDTs) and record patient information so that malaria outbreaks can be mapped. RAM also supplies protective LLINs to all positive cases. In 2015 Central Province reported 19,759 suspected cases, 93.1% were tested with RDTs of which 22.7% were positive.

Villages with locally transmitted malaria are identified and visited by RAM teams to recruit and train volunteers, to map and plan local disease prevention works and to assist with tools, LLINs and education to control the outbreak. Malaria incidence in Central Province is 11 cases per 1000 people but in high burden villages such as Adio the incidence is 307/1000. Detailed on-ground knowledge, such as that generated by the 'Chasing Malaria' program, is what will be required as elimination programs are developed.

In the Solomon Islands, RAM pioneered the universal distribution of LLINs but that role has since been taken over by the Global Fund working with the Ministry of Health and Australia's DFAT. To assist these programs RAM has constructed warehouses and staff accommodation and is actively supporting the 'Healthy Villages' program. RAM supplies sets of tools to assist villages which have developed approved plans of earth works and construction aimed at reducing mosquito

breeding sites and generally creating an improved tidy and hygienic village environment.

Since 2013 a total of 100 villages have been provided with tools at an average cost of \$1750 per village, including 32 villages in the past 12 months. Malaria incidence has fallen markedly in these villages. Many more villages have been approved and it is proposed to seek a Rotary Foundation Global Grant to service 33 communities in Malaita Province. The Healthy Villages project received tremendous support over the past year by funding from the D9820 DG's partners project and a grant from the Pink Umbrella Foundation. It is also very pleasing to also acknowledge local corporate support from the Solomon Forest Association who have pledged SDB 100,000 per annum (AUD\$16,000) for the next three years.

In Timor Leste a program to distribute LLINs, supplied by RAM, to pregnant women was completed during the year with the distribution of 28,230 LLINs. RAM has been asked to assist further by funding the distribution to vulnerable population of LLINs provided by the Global Fund under their latest grant. Under the terms of this grant the Timor Leste Government had agreed to fund the distribution costs however the budget has been frozen due to lower than expected oil revenues. RAM has offered to help get the program back on track by offering to match funding \$ for \$ and to send Rotary Volunteers to assist.

During 2014/2015 RAM D9670 Chair Steve Carroll and his team raised \$30,000 to fund malaria control programs in PNG. After travelling to PNG, however, Steve found that RAM PNG had the current control programs well in hand and so he is now negotiating with the Government of Vanuatu to contribute to malaria control there. RAM is watching these developments with interest and will support the project with additional funding if required.

A record number of delegates attended the 2015 RAM Conference in Brisbane and contributed to program planning whilst hearing highlights of current research and the development of the all-important malaria vaccine. RAM adopted a new simplified mission statement: **"RAM - A volunteer-run organisation working to eliminate malaria"**. Delegates were provided with an up to date information and presentation resources package and training. A highlight was a presentation by Rotaract who have adopted the fight against malaria as their Australian national project and have made a great contribution to awareness and fund raising during the current year.

Registrations are now open for the 2016 RAM Conference in August in Melbourne where research by Melbourne based malaria scientists will be featured alongside our regular presenters and delegates will meet RAM sponsored PhD student Edgar Pollard who has commenced his research at JCU in Cairns.

During the past year RAM has featured in several publications of the RDU magazine and with the assistance of RDU we have published a 'new look' leaflet and regular postings on Facebook. The RAM web site is up to date and integrated with the new RAWCS site. Further work will be undertaken in the coming year to make the site more tablet and phone friendly.

One of RAM's core objectives is to help to convince Rotary International of the merit of making a substantial contribution to eradicating malaria after the job of eradicating polio has been completed. RI has much to offer to the global campaign against malaria, once an effective mass producible vaccine has been developed. We hope that both the vaccine and Rotary's willingness to commence will roughly coincide in the early 2020's. To assist with this RAM has developed a briefing paper describing the challenges and opportunities inherent in a 'PolioPlus' scale campaign to inform senior Rotary leaders.

All in all 2015 – 2016 has been a productive year in the fight against malaria as programs plan to move beyond controlling to eliminating the disease.