

Rotarians Against Malaria

National Manager's Newsletter

April 2017

RAM - A volunteer-run organisation working to eliminate malaria

The latest information from the WHO is that, for the first time in 10 years, they have published new policy guidance on malaria elimination. The 2017 “**Framework for malaria elimination**” provides countries with a set of tools and strategies for achieving and maintaining elimination. WHO states that the malaria landscape has changed significantly since they launched the first field manual for malaria elimination in 2007. Funding has increased, lifesaving tools have been scaled up, burden has decreased and more countries than ever are pursuing elimination.

The Framework is built around the following ‘Key Principles’:-

- **Enhancing and optimizing vector control and case management.** (up to date bed nets & spraying)
- **Increasing the sensitivity and specificity of surveillance.** (Elimination cannot be achieved without quality surveillance systems.)
- **Accelerating transmission reduction.** (e.g. Finding and destroying mosquito breeding sites)
- **Investigating and clearing individual cases.** (Following-up surveillance)

Follow this link to read the Framework document: <http://www.who.int/malaria/publications/atoz/9789241511988/en/>

Interestingly, these principles are already guiding the RAM PNG ‘Chasing Malaria’ program described below.

RAM PNG

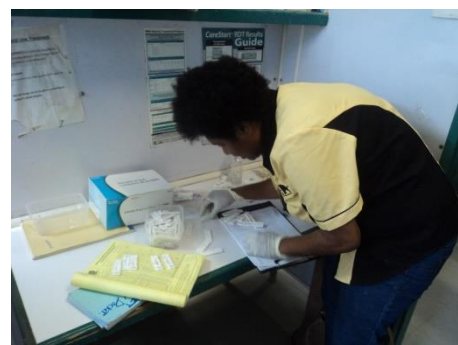
During March I was privileged to spend a week in PNG reviewing RAM’s programs there and getting into the field with the Chasing Malaria team.

Chasing Malaria Pilot Project:

The Chasing Malaria project is trialling strategies and approaches that will be required to drive down malaria to elimination in areas of low disease incidence. The program is funded by RAM and works in the National Capital District (NCD) and Central Province where malaria rates are already low.

The first component is Surveillance. RAM has designed and printed standard record books for all of the health clinics which record details of all malaria diagnostic tests including the home address and recent travel for all positive cases. These sheets also feed information into the monthly reports to the National Health Information data base. The positive cases are mapped across the regions and malaria clusters are identified for follow-up.

RAM works closely with the National Department of Health (NDoH) and



regularly visits all the clinics to check that the record keeping is complete and accurate, to audit the Rapid Diagnostic Test kits (RDTs) that have been used and to check that all the RDTs and treatment drugs are in date. Where required, RAM supplies RDTs and Drugs to the clinics as well as bed nets. All positive cases are given a family size net and all expectant mothers also receive a new net under this program.



Where malaria case clusters are identified, Ross Baibuni (RAM's Manager of Community Based Malaria Control) and his team recruit local volunteers and work with the local schools to teach the students about malaria and mosquito life cycles and to search out all the mosquito breeding sites around the cluster location. Breeding sites are mapped by GPS and regularly checked, when they are active (i.e. contain mosquito larvae) specific strategies are developed to destroy the larvae. These include draining or filling, introducing fish to eat the larvae or spraying larvacide. Local households are informed of the risk and the presence and use of

bed nets is checked.

The pilot project is a work in progress with new and refined approaches being developed and assessed but it is already having an impact on malaria rates and I observed that all the local people I spoke to were very supportive, understood the aspects of malaria transmission and valued their bed nets.

[The photos show RAM Programme Officer Nelly Jerry checking recently used RDTs at a Tokara Clinic in NCD and Ross Baibuni and local Community Health Volunteers preparing Class 3A & 3B at Bereina Station School (Central province malaria hot spot) to go out looking for mosquito breeding sites.]

Retail Project:

The Retail Project which is designed to put affordable LLINs into retail outlets around the country so that families can buy more nets or replace damaged ones as required, has been halted for the past six months whilst the GST arrangements were clarified. This has now been resolved and a new salesman will be recruited to get the project back on track.

RAM bed net distribution funded by the Global Fund:

This program has seen RAM involved in the distribution of more than 10 million nets since 2009. The Global Fund is so impressed with RAM's achievements and record that they benchmark other national malaria programs against RAM and have indicated that for the next Grant commencing at the start of 2018 RAM will be the sole Principal Recipient for PNG. During my visit RAM teams were working routinely distributing bed nets to the outlying islands of Milne Bay Province.

Madelaine and her husband Joseph live in the village of Kivori Poe in Central Province where there are still high levels of malaria infection. Their current bed net is nearly two years old and they value the protection that it gives them from sundown to sunup every day.



Award for Ron Seddon OL.

During my time in Port Moresby I visited the Rotary clubs of Port Moresby, whose committee manages RAM PNG, and Boroko where I was able to present Ron Seddon with a RAWCS Humanitarian Service Award as long overdue recognition of his outstanding service to RAM. In the mid 1990's Ron and fellow Rotarians from RC Port Moresby witnessed a baby die from malaria in its mothers arms in hospital and ever since he has been committed to stamping out this dreadful disease. As Ron remains Chairman of the RAM PNG Committee and his dedication, negotiation skills and willingness to put his personal business behind RAM has seen the relationship with the Global fund develop, RAM's programs expand, >10 million LLINs delivered, thousands of lives saved and a 70% reduction in malaria in PNG.

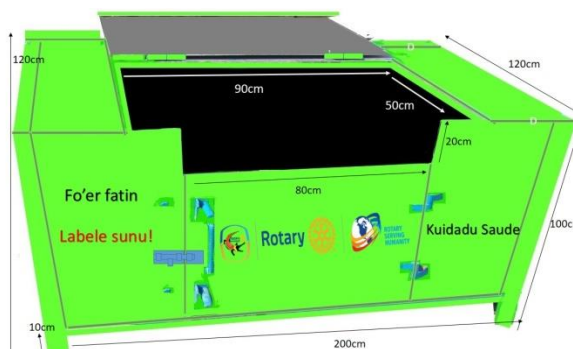


Pictured are President Togaro Asiba of RC Boroko, me, Ron Seddon and President John Velecott of RC Pt Moresby at the presentation. (The following Monday Ron was able to explain the pin to Sir Peter Cosgrove.)

RAM Timor Leste

Team Leader and D9830 RAM Chair Jenny Kerrison is well advanced in preparing her team of **Rotary Volunteers** to travel to Timor Leste in late May. The team will review progress and actively support the Healthy Villages project with the Rotary club of Dili Lafaek. Whilst in Timor Leste the team will also meet with the National Malaria Control program staff and get an update on progress towards eliminating malaria in Timor.

RAM will support the extension of the Healthy Villages project to a further four villages (bringing the total to 8). In this next phase, pre-constructed 2.4 m³ welded steel rubbish bins will be installed in villages and markets to become the focus of community clean-up programs. Together with malaria disease awareness and bed nets it is hoped that these measures will locally eliminate malaria.



Tools presented by Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek and new 2.4 cubic meter bin design.

The Oecusse LLIN distribution carried out by the National Malaria Control Program is proceeding with logistics and support funded by RAM. During this program more than 40,000 LLINs (bed nets) funded by the Global Fund will be distributed in four sub-districts starting with Pante Macassar. The RAM Volunteer team will meet with the NMCP to review progress on malaria control and explore ways in which RAM can further support the program in future.

Malaria Vaccine Development

RABS project 16 / 2016-2017 aimed at raising sufficient funds to support the next stage of the development of **PlasProtect®**, the promising malaria vaccine is off and running with donations already exceeding \$100,000 towards the goal of \$500,000. The project was launched by Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove at the Institute for Glycomics, Gold Coast Campus Griffith University and was attended by over 200 people including many distinguished Rotarians and Academics. It was pleasing to see past RI President Glen Kinross in attendance and several of the speakers alluded to RI's record with defeating polio and expressing the hope that our international organisation will also have a significant role in eradicating malaria. I was able to add RAM's endorsement of the project and to record our interest and impatience to see the vaccine become a reality and to contribute to the goal of eliminating malaria.



The first photo shows me presenting the fund raiser "Gold Coast Benji" with a RAM badge supported by RAM's Funding Coordinator PDG Richmond Manyweathers and supervised by RAM PNG Chair Ron Seddon.

The second photo shows Steve and Doreen Carroll (RAM Chair D9670) with His Excellency Sir Peter Cosgrove.

For more information about this project please contact Project Manager PDG Graham Jones on 0406 040 038 or graham.a.g.jones@gmail.com or visit the project web site <http://rotary9640.org/page/malaria-vaccine-project/>. A report on the launch can be read at:- <https://app.secure.griffith.edu.au/news/2017/03/27/griffith-ramps-up-world-first-malaria-vaccine-campaign>

Annual RAM Conference

Our annual Conference and AGM will be held in Sydney over the weekend of 19th and 20th August 2017. We have secured the conference facilities of 'Rowers on Cooks River' (St George Rowing Club) which is located adjacent to Sydney airport within a short walk from several hotels. Please save the dates in your diary and ask your District Secretary to add the dates to your District's calendar of events and regular DG's newsletter.

Malaria Awareness Day.

New Malaria Awareness Day leaflets have been printed and will be distributed in April. We are also working on a fresh design for RAM pull-up banners that will be consistent with RAWCS branding.

Researchers at Griffith University are planning a sausage sizzle for MAD where they will pin a mosquito onto a bed net for all sausages sold or donations received. This is a creative idea and I would love to hear about other ways of fund raising and observing MAD that are developed in all our Rotary Districts.

New look RAM Web site.

The new RAM website is up and running thanks to the dedication of RAM PR and Media Coordinator Holstein Wong. Check it out at www.ramaustralia.org or www.ram.rawcs.com.au . Holstein is building more resources into the Gallery section and here you can view the new Malaria Awareness Day leaflet.

RAM's Facebook page has been getting regular postings since Holstein took over and will be easily accessible from the website and www.facebook.com/ram.australia/ .

New RAM District Chairs.

I am delighted to announce we have three new District RAM Chairs. Trish Davies from RC Junee has agreed to represent and promote RAM in **D9700**. Trish is an experienced Rotarian with plenty of past RAWCS experience.

In **District 9650** Bruce Moy from RC Taree has accepted the position of District RAM Chair for the coming Rotary year. Bruce also has a depth of Rotary experience to bring to the role fresh from a stint as AG for his cluster of Manning Great Lakes.

Mark Hanrahan will replace John Paskin in D9630 as John takes on other RAWCS responsibilities. Mark is a very capable Project Manager with very useful Solomon Islands experience.

For any RAM related enquiries please contact:

Dave Pearson: dave@sugarloafne.com or Virginia Turner: vm.turner@bigpond.com

RAM is a National Activity of RAWCS



David Pearson :

National Manager RAM, 2nd April 2017.