



D9670 RAM Jottings #1.

This is Edition #1 of an occasional series of RAM info gleaned from various sources by John Bennetts, D9670's recently appointed RAM (Rotarians Against Malaria) chair.

Please let me know of errors and omissions and the oversight will be corrected.

RAM Australia's web site is at <http://www.ramaustralia.org> . This site is well worth visiting. The National Chair, PDG Ian Sayers, posts his newsletters there under the tab "Newsletters".

PDG Richmond Manyweathers has provided D9670 with two sample bed nets and a hundred or so fliers - the blue pamphlets. Clubs seeking either the fliers or a guest speaker on the subject of RAM may enquire via the D9670 RAM Chair.

Several clubs in D9670 have contributed via the Adopt-a-Village program, which is continuing after about 10 years. This program has raised and distributed over \$1M and is still going strong, although available records suggest that D9670 clubs have not donated for several years. Prior to 2008, donations from our District included the following, with the PNG recipient village's name alongside :

Singleton and Singleton on Hunter	Jogi
Dubbo South	Mirakere
Narromine	Sorape and Okaivai
Dubbo Macquarie	Mirakere (S)
Dubbo West	Kokoda Blocks and Plantation
Dubbo	Mirakere (S)
Charlestown	Heavala
East Maitland	Li (Teriteri #2)
Rylstone Kandos	Turiboro (S)
Narromine	Momarego

Are any clubs still in contact with their adopted village? If so, please drop the RAM Chair or RAWCS Chair a note describing progress.

RAM in the Solomon Islands.

In the Solomons, all nets are paid for by international funding arrangements. Funding donors include AusAid and a large grant spread over five years from The Rotary Foundation. Our work centres on village level eradication of mosquitos and their breeding places and education programs via Adopt-a-Village. The government of the Solomon Islands has shown strong commitment and support.

- Nets. While funding has been arranged, delivery can be very time consuming and expensive, because this can involve transport by sea using small barges of large, heavy bundles of nets to islands which have no other form of transport.
- Education campaigns - Rotary's work has led to government education programs and coordination, region by region, involving health centres, local coordinators and real depth and strength.

- Rotary's involvement is now more conventional, along the lines of recent projects in PNG – assisting poorer communities to get functioning schools, medical aid posts and to fill gaps in the other programs. Many microscopists' houses have been constructed by Rotarians through the past decade in remote areas for health workers. These have been reported as being very well maintained. This enables microscopists to do their work effectively, because reliable diagnosis and treatment of malaria relies on the work of microscopists.
- The developing government-supported model is a good one – it indicates a transition towards local responsibility and control, not only of malaria programs, but also HIV/AIDS, STD's, TB, healthy birthing, early motherhood programs and more, all supported by the schools program.
- The Solomons seem to be leaders in the Western Pacific with this model.

RAM in PNG

- The Rotary Foundation's grant for bed nets and related has assisted enormously, as in the Solomons.
- The Adopt-a-Village Program has been managed since its inception by a Rotarian from Port Moresby. Australian funds are managed by PDG Richmond Manyweathers from D9680.
- The Adopt-a-Village program first started in PNG, from where it has now spread to the Solomons and Timor Leste. It has been reported that a regional focus has improved results by reducing the reinfection rate amongst the mosquito populations, thus reducing the infection pressure on the villagers.
- Salamander Bay's "Save the Kula Babies" RAWCS project in the Trobriand Islands included from the outset a focus on malaria, as well as the other diseases mentioned for the Solomons. I have not discussed progress and aims with Wendy Stein recently, but her project's success in establishing a doctor, the first for years in the Trobriands, indicates that clubs from D9670 can be confident that the aims of the project will be met efficiently. Donations of effort or money will be put to very good use.
- One of the advantages of fighting malaria on an island group is the decreased risk of re-infection of the mosquitos and thus of the island's human population.

RAM in Timor Leste

The World Economic Forum's "Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010" covering 132 countries was released last month. PNG did not participate, so comparative figures are not available. Timor Leste's figures include:

- 4.01 Business Impact of Malaria. Worst in the world, at 2.6 on a scale of 1 (serious impact) to 7 (No impact). The next worst 14 countries are all from Africa.
- 4.02 Malaria Incidence – worst reported, at 52,881 incidences per year per 100,000 population.
- 4.03 Business impact of TB. Timor-Leste again has the worst figures, at 2.6 on the business impact scale and (4.04 TB Incidence) ranked 119/133 with 322 cases reported per 100,000 population.
- HIV/AIDS outcomes are much better, ranked 30/133, less than 0.2 percent prevalence in adults.
- Infant mortality, life expectancy and primary education enrollment figures are also in the lower quarter of reported results internationally.

- As for PNG and the Solomons, The Rotary Foundation has provided substantial grant money for the nets. As for the other two countries, there is much work to be done on the ground, with distribution, education, mosquito eradication and associated health and education programs.

I suggest that clubs and Rotarians seeking to assist a near neighbour consider projects in Timor Leste, which lies within the Queensland/NT Rotary District 9600.

From the December 2011 national RAM newsletter comes the following quotation: "PDG Richmond Manyweathers, who looks after the donations for Adopt A Village, advises that funds for Timor Leste now exceed \$60,000. Please continue to support the program there, as we really want to kick it off there early in 2012." Donations may be forwarded via the D9670 RAWCS Treasurer, George McLoughlin (Wallsend-Maryland, 27 Redbill Drive, Woodberry NSW 2322, Ph 0249662016). Tax deductible receipts for donations will be arranged if requested.

Any questions? I'll do my best to find an answer.

I'd be delighted to speak at your club. Please email or phone to arrange a date.

Yours in Rotary Service,

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RAM is an ongoing project of RAWCS