

ROTARIANS AGAINST MALARIA

ADOPT A VILLAGE PROGRAM – FUTURE DIRECTION

Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) is committed to the prevention of mortality, and a reduction in morbidity and social and economic loss caused by malaria through a progressive improvement and strengthening of local and national capabilities in malaria control.

RAM provides leadership, financial and strategic support to implement its mission through:

- Control Strategies;
- Education;
- Research;
- Partnering with other funding providers; and
- Working collaboratively with Governments in our Region (Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste).

RAM is working on this combination of ways of combating malaria as we recognize that no one approach in isolation will be successful.

The flagship RAM program is the very successful bed netting program which is a highly effective preventative strategy. In Papua New Guinea a program being run for the next five years will ensure that everyone can sleep under an appropriate Long Lasting Insecticide Treated bed net (LLIN). In addition funds will be available for the treatment of malaria victims using Artemisinin Combination Therapy or ACT. ACT is a very effective drug treatment but its widespread use is restricted by its cost.

In the Solomon Islands there is also a major LLIN bed netting program. This is supported by the Australian Government providing funding for the establishment of infrastructure for the netting program to operate. Rotary through Rotary Australian World Community Service is working cooperatively with AusAid in implementing this program through our Project Volunteer Teams to assist in construction and Donations-In-Kind to transport materials.

LLIN bed nets currently in use do, over time, result in a decrease in natural immunity achieved as a result of a lifetime of suffering malaria. Bed nets wear out and if the nets are not replaced and a major medical breakthrough is not forthcoming, we could see a massive malaria explosion or epidemic in the future. It is therefore essential that the RAM Adopt A Village program is sustained to ensure the replacement of the current nets until such time as an affordable anti-malaria vaccine is developed.

Very significant grants from the Global Fund are supporting the bed netting program in both Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands for the next few years with the Australian Government providing additional support in the Solomon Islands. However, Adopt A Village is the means of ensuring this program is sustained and guaranteed into the future

Another part of effective malaria control involves the cleaning up of villages and eliminating possible mosquito breeding sites. The Solomon Island's Ministry of Health's Senior Malaria

Officer has recommended that the Adopt A Village model, developed by RAM in Papua New Guinea, be given a new focus. Villages which agree to implement appropriate management structures will receive tools, equipment and training to enable them to eliminate breeding sites in and around their villages. Their efforts will be monitored by the SI Ministry of Health and by RAM. Your Adopt A Village contributions will help fund the supply of necessary equipment.

In summary, it is essential that Rotary Clubs, Rotarians and the community, continue to provide long term support for our nearest neighbours in the fight against malaria. The combination of strategies adopted by RAM remains the best way to reduce mortality and morbidity or a possible malaria epidemic.

Thank you for your past support and we look forward to winning this battle with your continued assistance.

May 2010.