

## **ROTARIANS AGAINST MALARIA**

### **FREE BED NET DISTRIBUTION IN ABAU DISTRICT PAPUA NEW GUINEA USING LLIN'S DONATED BY THE AGAINST MALARIA FOUNDATION**

#### **FINAL REPORT**

In 2009 The Against Malaria Foundation (AMF) arranged for 20,000 treated mosquito nets to be sent to the Port Moresby Rotary Club's ROTARIANS AGAINST MALARIA team (RAM). RAM had previously agreed with AMF that these nets would be distributed in the Abau District of the Central Province. The district is a rural area located approximately 190 kilometres east from the nation's capital Port Moresby, of which 75% is sealed road. There are some rough areas where the road is potholed or washed out due to the high rainfall received each year during the rainy season.

The population in the Abau District was 38,378 according to the last census which was carried out in 2000. RAM estimated that with the average population increase the current population should be around 50,774 people and that by using a ration of 2.5 persons per family sized LLIN a total of 20,000 bed nets would provide coverage of the whole population of Abau district. Most people live in traditional huts made of local timber with thatched roofs.

RAM contacted the local member of Parliament Sir Puka Temu who is also the Deputy Prime Minister and he enthusiastically agreed to the bed net distribution to take place in his electorate.

RAM then arranged with the District's health administrator for a household survey to be undertaken to see how many nets were required for each household. The allocation was to be made on the basis of two people sleeping under one family sized net.

The survey and distribution commenced in August 2009. On 11 November 2009 Ron Seddon the Chairman of RAM and Leo Makita the head of the malaria division of the National Department of Health traveled to the district to see the bed net distribution going on in the villages and to photograph and videotape the event. They left Port Moresby at around 5:30am. and arrived at Kupiano Station at around 9:30am.

They were met by Etene the district's health administrator and then they traveled to Gavuone village nearby. Gavuone village has a population of around 3000 people. The villagers had already gathered in the centre of the village and were sitting and waiting for their turn to come up to receive their allocated bed nets.

Following the formalities of the day (Speeches by local representatives, dance groups and parades) Ron Seddon made a speech to the gathering and told the villagers where the nets had come from (AMF) and then presented the first net to the local district councilor. Mr. Makita then made a short speech in which he emphasized the importance of the people looking after the nets and to ensure that they slept under them at night especially the young children.

### **Summary**

The bed net distribution went very well in this particular district. Most of the villages in the district were easily accessible from the main road so actually getting the nets to each village was not a problem. Unless you count having to move more than a third of the nets by sea. Actually getting to Kupiano was no difficult as it was the dry season so the roads were passable. The distribution of the bed nets went very smoothly and the villagers were very happy to receive the nets from the AMF.

Thank you to the Against Malaria Foundation for their kind donation. RAM will now continue distributing to the rest of Papua New Guinea over the next five years.