



Effective Worldwide Kindness!

The Rover aims to support RAWCS project teams to form, learn, grow, share, collaborate, and succeed!

Our cover photo shows school children who have been helped to resume their education by other school children, in their own country and in ours.

At the other end of the scale, we report on some massive Global Grants that involve hundreds of thousands of dollars and will impact maybe as many lives.

The cooperation between clubs, districts and even countries is something we can all take pride in.

Don't forget our RAWCS Eastern Region Quarterly Meeting is on in Orange 17th – 18th May 2025!



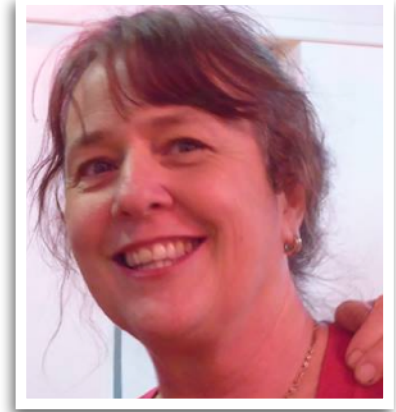
In this Issue

Kindness in Unkind Times.....	2
Cataract Surgery in Sri Lanka.....	3
E R Coordinator's Report.....	4
Invitation to Orange Quarterly Meeting...	6
Vanlika's Gift.....	8
Safe Water, Clean Toilets and More.....	9
Surgery in Sri Lanka-Photos.....	10
Contact Details.....	10

Kindness in Unkind Times

The US decision to eliminate more than 90% of foreign aid contracts, and cut some \$60 billion in funding has left millions of people without access to life-saving care.

It's a shocking reversal of the expanding circle of concern which has seen us recognise the humanity and consequent inalienable rights of all people, over the last century.

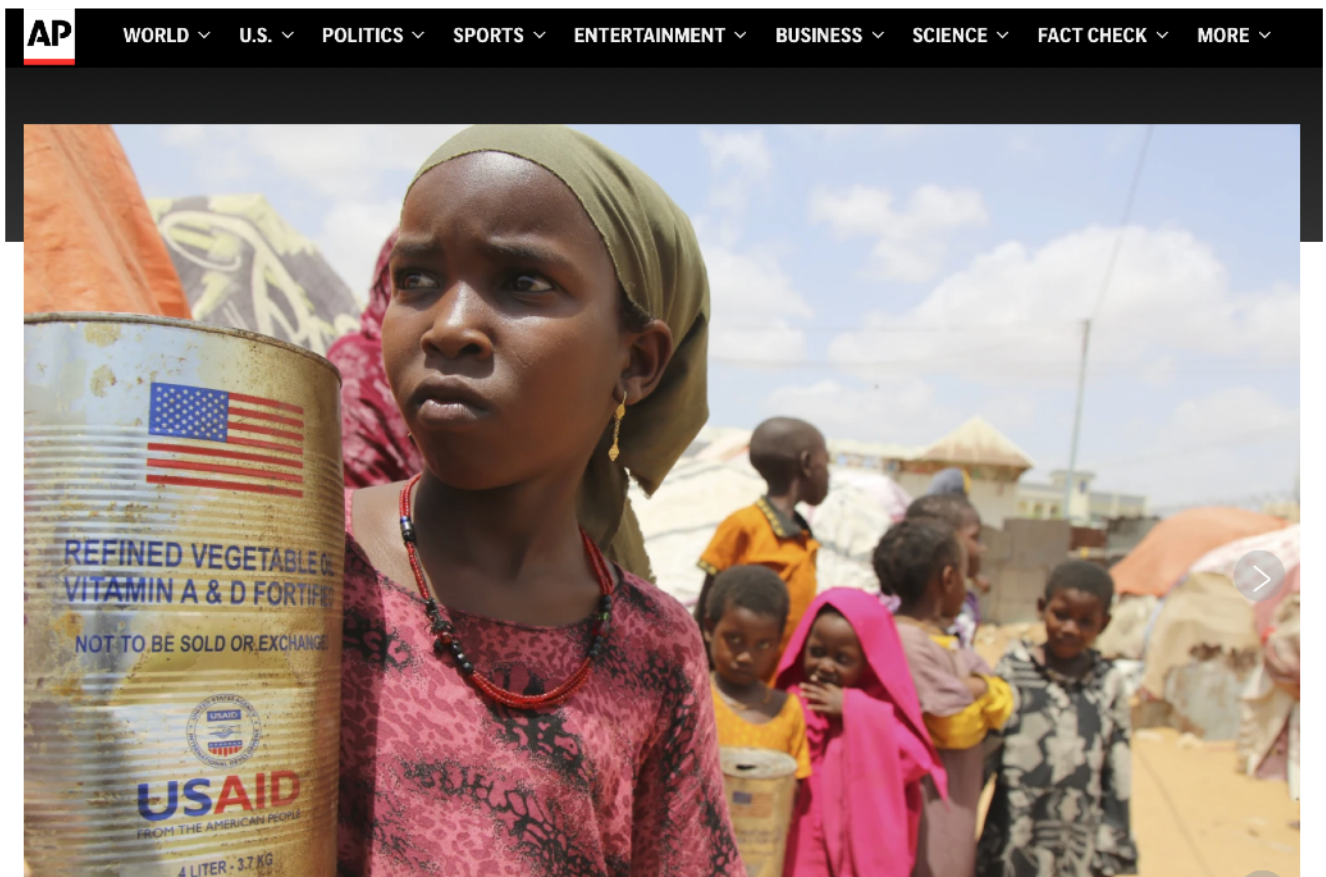


Thousands of lives will be lost around the world as a result of 10, 000 cancelled contracts with the US Agency for International Development.

Food provision in South Sudan, Congo and Ethiopia, Malaria control in Senegal, water supply to Mali and Burkina Faso, health services in Somalia, and protection from violence in Bangladesh, Colombia and Yemen are among the services suspended.

All this makes the work of RAWCS projects stand in sharper relief against the heartless myopia of this decision. Keep up your good work, the world needs it!

(Read [more](#))



Cataract Surgery in Sri Lanka



Cataract is the leading cause of visual impairment in Sri Lanka, especially among people over the age of 60. In regions like Vavuniya, where poverty, post-conflict recovery, and limited access to advanced healthcare services intersect, the burden is particularly heavy. Patients who lose their vision often also lose their independence, income, and dignity. Through this Global Grant project, Rotary enable timely and effective cataract surgery — a **transformative intervention**.

Expected Outcomes

- **Hundreds of cataract surgeries performed annually**, restoring sight and quality of life.
- **Training and upskilling of junior ophthalmology trainees**, ensuring sustainability and building local capacity.
- **Reduced healthcare costs** for families and the public system by preventing injury-related complications due to untreated vision impairment.
- **Increased economic participation and independence** for elderly patients who would otherwise face disability due to avoidable blindness.

The project also complements a **laser eye treatment unit** being donated separately by a U.S.-based NGO, expanding the overall capabilities of the hospital's Eye Unit.

Community Impact

Beyond the surgical outcomes, this project sends a strong message of hope to the Vavuniya community. It affirms that access to essential healthcare is a Rotary priority and that no one should be left behind due to geography or socioeconomic status.

As one of Sri Lanka's key regional hospitals, District General Hospital Vavuniya serves a wide catchment area of rural and post-conflict communities. This equipment will remain part of the hospital's inventory, maintained by its biomedical engineering team under the Ministry of Health's national healthcare framework—ensuring **long-term, government-supported sustainability**.

Funding and Call to Action

Thanks to the Sri Lankan diaspora and friends of Rotary, the International Sponsor has already raised **USD 44,000 in cash**, and **USD 35,000 in DDF and directed gifts from District 9685**. We are now seeking final support to close the **remaining gap of under USD 60,000** and submit the grant for approval by The Rotary Foundation.

We invite clubs and districts around the world to join us in bringing this project to life. Together, we can give the gift of sight—and with it, restore independence, dignity, and opportunity to hundreds in need.

(Photos on the last page!)

RAWCS Eastern Region Coordinator's Report

Eastern Region continues to be very active with 154 RAWCS projects with 132 ROAF (Rotary Overseas Aid Fund) projects, 21 RABS (Rotary Australia Benevolent Society) projects, and 1 RATE (Rotary Australia Trust for the Environment) project.

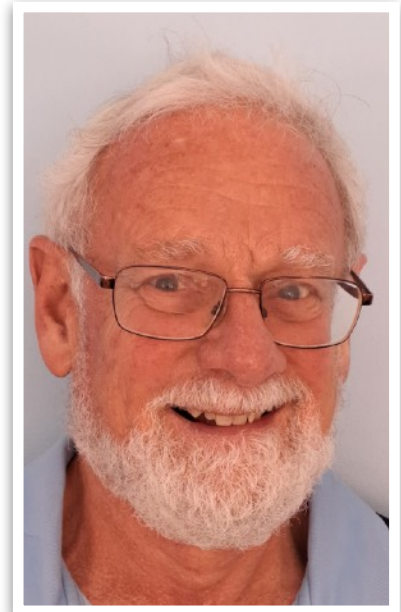
Child Safeguarding Policy, Criteria Required by ACFID

- As I highlighted in my last quarterly report CEO Mahir Momand and the National RAWCS Team have also been busy updating the RAWCS strategic plan and facilitating external funding of RAWCS projects through the accreditation of RAWCS by ACFID and by providing guidelines on the options for project managers to obtain external funding.

One of the criteria required by ACFID, that RAWCS is currently addressing, concerns projects which involve contact with children and will involve an additional statement during the registration of a project. When registering a project, it will be necessary to answer the question whether the project will involve volunteers' contact with children. Specifically, it will be necessary to state whether volunteers will interact or engage with children during their volunteering for this project. This can include direct physical or face-to-face contact, as well as indirect forms of interaction, such as communication through digital platforms or being in a position to influence a child's environment or wellbeing. Where the answer is "Yes", then it will have consequences for all volunteers to that project and will require extra steps in registering the Volunteer Team to be completed at least one month before departure.

All volunteers for these projects will be required to answer additional questions and provide details of two referees. The referees will then be contacted by automated email with a series of Yes/No questions about that volunteer. If a referee answers "No" to any of the questions, then that volunteer must be interviewed by their Regional Volunteers Supervisor and Regional Co-ordinator who must decide if the volunteer is acceptable. If any of the volunteers refuse then they will have to be removed from the volunteer team.

It is essential that we comply with these changes and that each Region has officers who are prepared to work with these changes to check the volunteer teams. This will involve additional lead time to register volunteer teams.



There is concern that currently too many teams submit their applications late making it difficult for the Regional Volunteer Supervisors to complete the registration process before the team leaves. Once the additional requirement to scrutinise all team members is incorporated into the volunteer team registration process it will unfortunately be necessary to cancel a team where they do not comply with the time deadline.

Also with this change there will also be a requirement for RAWCS to retain the registration information from the volunteers and referees for 25 years (or longer) as the legislation allows for prosecutions up to 25 years after the event and RAWCS needs to be able to defend the processes in regard to the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Environmental Projects - Rotary Australia Trust for the Environment (RATE)

– RAWCS has now received approval for clubs to register environment projects to receive Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) status. Projects that protect and enhance all aspects of the natural environment both in Australia and in developing nations can now be registered in the same way as overseas aid projects and benevolent society projects. Information about registering a RATE project is available on the RAWCS website under RATE Project Criteria:

<https://rawcs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RATE-Project-Criteria-January-2025.pdf>.

RAWCS – Management Changes – At the end of this Rotary Year there will be several changes of the management teams, both for the RAWCS Board and for the Eastern Region Management Team. Nationally Board Chair, David Pearson will hand over the reins to the current Deputy Chair PDG Heather Chong, Treasurer Jim Wilson will be handing over the reins to Rosemary Everett and Manager Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) PDG Bruce Anderson will hand over to PDG Andrea Grosvenor. In Eastern Region I will be handing over the Regional Coordinator position to the current District Chair for D9685, Jan Pryor. For Eastern Region, the handover will be following the Eastern Region AGM at our August quarterly meeting.

Brian Goldstraw

RAWCS Eastern Region Coordinator

May 2025

Join Us for

RAWCS Eastern Region Quarterly Meeting

17th –18th May 2025

Hosted by Rotary District 9705

Weekend Program Venues

Saturday Afternoon and Evening

Meeting Venue - Ex Services Club, Orange
231-243 Anson St Orange NSW, 2800

Sunday Morning

Meeting Venue - Borrodell Vinyard
298 Lake Canobolas Road, Orange, NSW, 2800

Saturday Afternoon Session -

Ex Services Club - 2:00 - 4:30pm

Mental Health Training and Support -

Ms Robyn Murray

On innovative work to improve services to individuals with mental illness in Nepal

Nepal Friendship Community Development and Training

Members of different teams will present various aspects of their project

Didi Foundation, Nepal - Jan Pryor

Update on the continued growth of the highly successful Didi Foundation project

Sexual Health Education by Pictures - Shirley Cornish

Experience of the project which has been delivered in many developing countries



[Home](#) [Our Story](#) [Didi HQ](#) [Get Involved](#) [Didi News](#) [Donate](#) [Contact Us](#)

Creating
a **future** &
changing
a **destiny**



Saturday Evening Dinner - Ex Services Club – 6:30pm

Order your own dinner at the bar on arrival.

Guest Speaker: - Christopher Ochaya, - “A story from Tamarind, Uganda”

Christopher was born in Uganda and grew up amidst the civil war that started in 1986 and ended with a peace deal in 2006. He grew up in rural areas, at five years old was looking after goats, sheep, chickens and graze cattle for his great grandfather, when he then started school.

In 2006 he graduated from Kampala University he moved back home to help his people who had been forced to live in internally displaced people's camps (IDPs) for 20 years. In 2011 one year into married life, he and his wife started their own charity, Tamarind, a community-based organization to teach them to be independent. Christopher has a very inspirational story.

Sunday Morning Session – Borrodell Vinyard

Quarterly General Meeting - 9:00 - 11:30pm (approx.) - followed by Management Meeting.

Accommodation

Orange is a busy city every weekend. We advise booking accommodation as soon as possible.

Check: www.orange360.com.au

For Information contact:

Mary Brell OAM (0417 215 986) or Shirley Cornish (0419 404 220)

Also please invite anyone you know who may be interesting in learning more about international community service and finding out more about RAWCS.



Tamarind exists to instil a mindset of independence amongst Northern Ugandan communities, rather than rely on government and NGO handouts

Vanalika's Gift

Vanalika Puri, a year 11 student at Suzanne Cory High School in Sydney, organised **Cupcakes for Congo**.

The \$378 she raised equipped twelve children to resume their education in Goma, DRC.

Click below to see the children's heartwarming personal message of thanks, recorded and edited by Grace Germain, a school-student volunteer in Congo.

Penny Vos



Safe Water, Clean Toilets, Smart Learning

The Rotary Club of Chatswood Roseville, in collaboration with the Rotary E-Club of Greater Sydney, hosted a successful Dinner & Wine Tasting Night on 14 March 2025 to raise funds for two transformative Rotary Foundation Global Grant projects in Sri Lanka. The evening brought together over 60 guests, with a particularly strong presence from the Sri Lankan community, whose enthusiasm and generosity played a key role in the event's success.

Together, the two clubs raised over AUD 130,000 in pledges, with an additional AUD 5,000 raised on the night, demonstrating the power of Rotary partnerships and community engagement in delivering sustainable impact.

Project: Safe Water, Clean Toilets, Smart Learning – Badulla District, Sri Lanka

This project focuses on improving conditions in six disadvantaged schools in one of the poorest districts of Sri Lanka. It aims to:

Provide clean, filtered drinking water to reduce waterborne diseases.

Build hygienic toilet facilities, especially for girls, to promote dignity and school attendance.

Introduce smartboards, solar-powered learning tools, and digital classrooms.

Deliver health and hygiene education to empower students and teachers alike.

This collaborative effort between Chatswood Roseville and the E-Club of Greater Sydney demonstrates how Rotary clubs can unite across districts and cultures to drive meaningful, long-term change. The strong turnout and support from the Sri Lankan diaspora community highlighted the deep connection and shared commitment to giving back to those in need.

This project will directly impact hundreds of students and families, providing access to clean drinking water, restoring dignity through proper sanitation, empowering girls to stay in school, and supporting entire communities with sustainable farming and renewable energy. This is not just aid—it's transformation. Through the power of Rotary and community collaboration, we are turning hope into action and creating a lasting legacy for generations to come.



GG2576338: Vision for Vavuniya – Restoring Sight, Reviving Lives.

This humanitarian project will provide a state-of-the-art operating microscope to the Eye Unit at District General Hospital Vavuniya, a major public hospital in Northern Sri Lanka. The equipment will enable the consultant ophthalmologist and clinical team to perform high-precision cataract surgeries, restoring vision to hundreds of underserved patients each year.



Stay in Touch

Got a Question or Suggestion?

You can find the right person to ask here:

[Eastern Region Coordinator](#)

[Follow us on Facebook](#)

[RARE](#)

[ARAM on Facebook](#)

[RARE on Facebook](#)

Thanks to all contributors!