



Australia Awards

Australia Awards in Indonesia - Short Term Awards

Malaria Prevention and Treatment for Infants, Children
and Pregnant Women in Eastern Indonesia 2016-2018



Australian Alumni and Awardees at Malaria Prevention and Treatment for Infants, Children and Pregnant Women in Eastern Indonesia Symposium (Bali, 2017)

Highlights

- A total of 120 participants have completed the short course between 2016-2018, giving rise to 29 projects that have been implemented locally across East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, North Maluku, Papua and West Papua.
- Site visits to Menzies School of Health Research (Darwin 2016-2017) and laboratory visits to the Burnet Institute, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute and the Victorian Infectious Disease Reference Laboratory (Melbourne).
- In 2016, two 3-day pre-course workshops in Labuan Bajo and Jayapura, two 3-week intensive courses in Melbourne and a symposium/post-course workshop in Bali.
- In 2017, two 3-day pre-course workshops in Labuan Bajo and Jayapura, two 3-week intensive courses in Melbourne, and a symposium/post-course workshop in Bali.
- In 2018, a 3-day pre-course workshop in Makassar, a two-week intensive course in Melbourne and a post-course workshop in Makassar.
- Networking event in 2018 (Melbourne) attended by global health experts, Australia Awards in Indonesia Short-Term Award TB group and AAI alumni.

Overview

The Australia Awards in Indonesia program, Malaria Prevention and Treatment for Infants, Children and Pregnant Women in Eastern Indonesia, focuses on the region of Indonesia with the highest prevalence of malaria, and on women, infants and young children, who suffer the greatest disease burden from malaria. The program is integral to Indonesia's aim to eliminate malaria by 2030.

The course was delivered in partnership between the Nossal Institute for Global Health and the Burnet Institute (Melbourne, Australia), with collaboration from the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University in 2016-2017 (Bangkok, Thailand), and the Menzies School of Health Research in 2016-2018 (Darwin, Australia).

The objectives of the program were: (1) To increase participants' skills and knowledge in key malaria-related areas; (2) for participants to use the knowledge, attitudes and skills gained to influence their organisations and institutions to strengthen programs addressing malaria prevention and control; and (3) to create professional linkages between the alumni, Australian organisations and Australian experts.



Pre-course workshop in Makassar 2018

In 2016, 46 participants completed the course, followed by 49 participants in 2017, and 25 participants in 2018. Participants were selected from multiple sectors and included medical doctors, laboratory technicians, program managers, researchers, nurses, government, non-government, media and civil-society organisations. Their diverse and complementary experience across malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment fostered effective collaboration and capacity to enact change at provincial and local levels.



Pre-course workshop in Makassar 2018

Short Term Award (STA) Program

In 2016 and 2017, two cohorts from the provinces of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Papua and West Papua completed the program each year. In 2018, one amalgamated cohort completed the program. Each iteration of the short course began with a three-day pre-course workshop in Indonesia, facilitated by Nossal and Burnet experts. This event provided an opportunity for facilitators to assess participants' learning needs, which informed the development of the training curriculum in Australia. Secondly, it provided an opportunity to work with participants to conduct situational analyses identifying strengths, weaknesses and gaps in current malaria programming. From here, participants established multi-disciplinary project teams and began designing program responses to support the elimination of malaria in NTT and Papua/West Papua.

The intensive courses in Australia ran for three weeks in 2016 and 2017, and two weeks in 2018. Course content was delivered by experts from Mahidol University (2016-2017), Menzies School of Health Research and the Nossal Institute. The course covered topics related to malaria prevention and control, emerging issues in regard to malaria transmission, experiences from countries in the region in malaria prevention and control, and the linkages between malaria control programs and broader health systems. It also guided the participants through a structured process to develop local projects to address key health system or community challenges related to malaria control in their region. Each project team developed a plan identifying their project objectives, strategies to achieve the objectives, and a structured plan of action to implement and monitor their projects.



Site visit to Burnet Laboratory 2018

Other Australian entities were engaged so that participants were introduced to the breadth of Australia's expertise in malaria and the nature of Australian collaboration. Distinguished researchers from the Menzies School of Health Research presented sessions on Indo-Pacific regional perspectives and research on diagnosis and treatment of different types of malaria in Eastern Indonesia. The Burnet Institute's biomedical researchers provided a tour of laboratories addressing drug resistant malaria and improved understanding of parasites. The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute's biomedical researchers provided tours of laboratories developing better methods of malaria diagnosis. The Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory introduced participants to the methods used to assess the accuracy of rapid diagnostic tests in different locations, and the methods used for national surveillance and epidemic control.



Participants at University House (University of Melbourne, 2018)

Post Award

The post-course workshops in Indonesia focused on reflecting on what the participants learned during the program, presenting Award Projects and discussing next steps. At the post-course workshop, participants were also invited to share the obstacles and successes they experienced, and the skills and behaviours required to achieve successful implementation of their Award Projects.

Achievements

The mix of participants from different backgrounds and sectors, including both within government and outside government, civil society, the health sector and non-health sectors, resulted in projects that extended beyond the usual government health sector scope, and took innovative approaches to local problems. The projects particularly focused on how to engage other sectors and the community in efforts to prevent or control malaria.

Over the past three years, the cumulative success of the projects has developed. Projects designed in 2016 are still being implemented and projects designed in 2018 have been able to build on this success and introduce new design into earlier projects. Some of the health system impacts reported by provincial health office representatives in 2018 include:

- Papua province. The program changed the mindset of local government to look beyond the health sector when addressing malaria control.



Site visit to Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory (Peter Doherty Institute), 2018

Projects involved engaging schools and using children as agents of change; and introducing malaria control into the teaching and practical field work of medical and public health students. The provincial government has now moved to support the integration of AIDS, TB and Malaria (ATM) programs, and to require inclusion of ATM in the curriculum of all courses for public health students in the province.

- In West Papua province, the Australia Awards in Indonesia malaria project was able to access funding and resources from other DFAT-funded social sector programs and developed a series of linked programs focused on engaging families, villages and industry in malaria control and prevention.
- Projects in other provinces included a surveillance program for visitors arriving by boat from malaria endemic areas; and a project to collaborate with industries to provide services for their workforces to detect and treat malaria, and to prevent further infections.

Overall, the Malaria Prevention and Treatment for Infants, Children and Pregnant Women in Eastern Indonesia course has been a successful platform for establishing networks, ongoing collaborations and life-long friendships between Australian and Indonesian organisations. Crucially, the program has established sustainable relationships and momentum behind efforts to eliminate malaria in Indonesia.



Participants at University House (University of Melbourne, 2018)

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