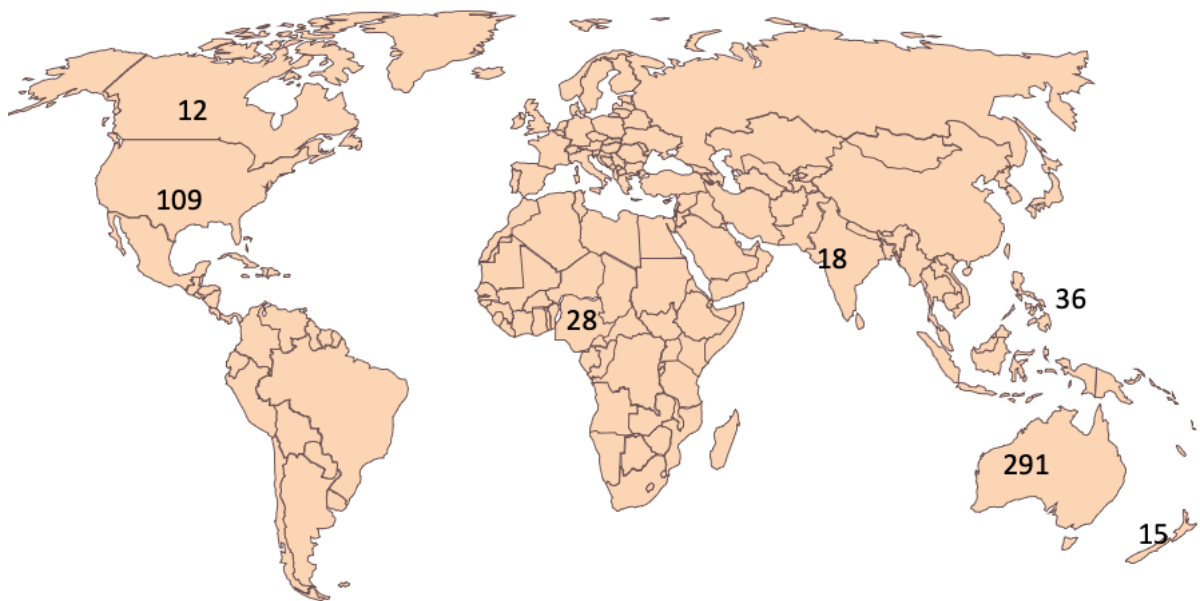




2020-21 Annual Report to Members

The time is always right, to do what is right

Martin Luther King



World map by www.freeworldmaps.net

*Map shows Countries at 30 June 2021 with members in double digits
We have members in 44 other countries as well, and we value you all.*

Activities during the year

This year we again report against our Strategic Plan initiatives under its three main headings:

1 AWARENESS and ADVOCACY

All our activities have a component of Awareness as we publicise them to our members and beyond. We are not aware of any large-scale advocacy work beyond the Everywoman Treaty, which we continued to support.



The launch of our **www.TraumaRecovery.network** website in Australia helped us to broaden our reach beyond the Family of Rotary. This website and its associated Facebook and LinkedIn social media accounts have been promoted to target audiences related to Bushfire mental health recovery, and through support of local Rotarians we obtained free press advertisements in a local newspaper in East Gippsland to direct potential clients to the website.

The greater success was our recruitment of humanitarian-inclined EMDR therapists to inquire and/or join the **Trauma Recovery Network** Australia. During the year - mainly in the first quarter around the launch – 122 enquired and 93 joined the Network, representing the largest component of Members who are not (yet) Rotarians. Establishing the Network has made our links with the peak mental health bodies in Australia even closer, through our shared members and activities with the Australian Psychological Society and the EMDR Association of Australia.

Among numerous appearances on Zoom we would highlight sponsorship by District 6960 during the course of the Zone 33/34 series: **Infinite Possibilities - Women in Rotary** <https://tinyurl.com/2uuc75ky> . We directed the funds donated by participants to the New Orleans Family Justice Center which we support as a model approach to Family Violence issues involving the justice system.

Our Board Members Dr Frank Stechey spoke to several Rotary Clubs each to explain forensic dentistry and how to recognise abuse, and Pam Brown spoke on how Trauma develops and what we can do about it. Member Dorothy Gilmour continued to introduce Rotary Safe Families to Clubs in several countries, even after Covid shut down physical meetings. Chair Norman participated in several Club meetings and presentations to introduce the work of the RAG.

In November 2020 we participated for the first time in a global Hush Foundation event, the **Gathering of Kindness**, providing information about Trauma and treatments for those in the hospital system who are suffering from poor working environments in addition to secondary trauma from their work in treating the community.

We joined in the Rotarian-led **Global Inspired By** online journal for its inaugural issue. <https://www.globalinspiredby.com/>



2 EDUCATION

For adults in Rotary Clubs and in the Community generally, we endorse and recommend the **Rotary Safe Families** training. If you and your Club have not yet tried this, please do so. There are opportunities to take the materials provided on the website www.rotarysafefamilies.org.au and customise them for your own community.

Customisation would make an excellent District level project too. Why not spread the word in your District?



One of the Co-Founders speaking on Zoom

The training empowers Rotarians and other adults to become active supporters of those suffering abuse and teaches how to do this safely and without imposing on the sufferers. This year modules for children and men are being developed. There are regular online Meet-Ups for Clubs that are working with Rotary Safe Families.

We are pleased to announce also that we have 'acquired' the advice and active participation of a Cadre from the Education stream in the person of Madhumita Bishnu, of Calcutta. We expect her to be able to provide leadership for those of you interested in developing more education programs focussed on different populations. 'Madu' is also this year's Chair of the Rotary Fellowship of Educators, another resource for our future.



Madhumita Bishnu, of Kolkata

Our focus, as you know, is on respectful relationships education. We know that there are many programmes in schools in different countries, but we do not yet have the ability to source and recommend programmes to cross from one system to another, or if necessary, from one language to another. These are areas where we could develop a Program of Scale if we can first identify the right basis.

Special Needs Education

We would like to highlight an innovative project begun in Sri Lanka, in a partnership between the Rotary Clubs of Colombo Reconnections District 3220 and Brisbane (Australia) District 9620. The project targets the stresses that build up in families where there are children with special needs, often resulting in violence within the family.



Image shows the Launch event, held electronically

The project is training 38 professionals in the leading children’s hospital in Colombo – Lady Ridgway – who will qualify as master trainers and go on to train resource personnel in the Rural and Suburban areas of Sri Lanka, in identifying, assessing and creating interventions for autistic children and children with other developmental disabilities, reaching over the whole country in time.

The training will be delivered in person and over video links and will educate parents in the handling and care of children with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Looking forward to a successful completion of this first program in early 2022, the Rotary Club of Colombo Reconnections is keen to offer it as a model for similar programs in other countries. Please contact us at ragfamsafe@gmail.com if you would like to be kept informed.

3 TRAUMA RECOVERY

During the year our initiative known as Healing the Hurt gained traction with successful applications for three grants.



The first enabled us to build a special website: www.traumarecovery.network to reach out to trauma specialists to join our Humanitarian Assistance network for Australia (one of the few developed countries not to have one). This grant was supported by two clubs and one District. The website helped us recruit over 80 expert members into our Action Group, who make themselves available to treat people from communities that have suffered disasters. Initially we aimed at the then recent Bushfires, and now we will extend to all disasters, focussing however on rural, remote and regional areas, which are short of expert therapists.

Alongside this valuable network, we have proceeded with the second grant to develop training of local mental health workers in those areas so they will have the latest techniques to treat trauma arising from disasters. Importantly, this training creates a sustainable capacity in those communities, rather than the usual reliance on 'fly in-fly-out' experts after a disaster.

Finally, with the help of a third grant, we will be helping emergency workers to overcome their primary or secondary trauma experienced in bushfires, via group EMDR therapy, but where the group work as individuals under instruction.

Research clearly shows that traumatic conditions impinge on family safety by the difficulty many have in processing the memories, which makes them liable to be triggered into violence by unconscious decisions when under stress.

4 Organisation and Finance

The establishment of the Trauma Recovery Network and events leading up to that helped us to progress financially, and to raise our profile. The Financial Accounts show that we raised nearly A\$175,000 during the year for our major Trauma projects.

We continue to rely on Donations to cover our basic expenses, so we would appreciate more of you taking up Paid membership, at the modest cost of A\$5 a year.

5 Board Changes

Gavin Wayland retired, as expected, after kindly staying on to complete the 2021 accounts, and will be succeeded by Rishy Gudhka, a Chartered Accountant. I thank all Board Members for their contributions during the year, in which your Action Group has begun to develop its scale following the years of laying a solid groundwork.

Yours in Rotary
Norman Taralrud-Bay
Chair
