

The Gandep Project

The dream is to change the lives of approximately 25,000 people who live in 170 villages in one area of the Ramu River floodplains in the Madang province of Papua New Guinea (PNG).

We dream of strong, healthy and sustainable communities where the scourge of malaria is managed, with high standard medical clinics, access to safe water, improved sanitation practices and fully functioning schools. Communities will have the ability to trade yams, cocoa and timber.

This dream came after Jim West visited Gandep in 2009. Gandep is located in the middle of this area. Jim was appalled at the poor state of community welfare, people dying prematurely from disease (predominantly malaria), a high proportion of mothers and children dying during childbirth, abandoned or overcrowded schools and a sense of isolation pervaded the villages.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Country Health Information Profile has described this area as difficult to access with inadequate health facilities and slow economic growth that directly impacts people's lives.

Key to the lives of these forgotten people in this area are two rivers – the Keram and the Ramu. Both are major transport and trade routes. The closest link between these rivers is near Gandep. From the Keram River, people travel overland to the Ramu River and then down river (canoe) to Bunapas and by road onto Madang.

There is a former mining exploration access track – that was poorly constructed and is now overgrown. This is the main track linking the two rivers and goods are carried from one river to the other as part of trade activities.

After extensive consultation with the local people, Jim and his friends committed to help the Gandep

people by working with them to improve the track and so open the possibility of self-sustainable health, education and trade activity in this remote region.

It is planned to reconstruct this track to an improved all-weather standard and to extend and re-build the grass airstrip at Tsumba the village at the Ramu River end of the track. Dombisa Moyo has outlined in the best-selling book “Dead Aid” the challenge that has shaped the planning for the Gandep Project. That is, the focus on ‘People to People’ sustainable support and assistance that will ensure funds raised go directly to project outcomes.

It is a wonderful challenge – to help others in a sustainable way that allows self-determination by the local people.

Around 140 volunteers from Toowoomba surrounds have worked over the past 10 years to the complete Stages 1 and 2 of the project and have raised \$2.5 million to complete these stages.



A further \$4 million is required over 3 years to complete Stages 3 to 6 of the project in PNG.

What are the Stages?

STAGE 1 – Assemble Machinery and Equipment

Assemble and purchase plant and equipment and build facilities for the future workcamp.

- The containerized components are almost completed. Containers are fitted out to survive transit and support remote living.
- The plant and equipment is substantially purchased and approximately \$A2.5 million (2020) has been raised over a 10 year period. The values of these items is greater than the purchased value due to generous donations of plant and equipment and discounts provide by some suppliers.



STAGE 2 – Build River Barge

Build a specifically designed and motorised shallow draft barge to transport fuel, goods, and supplies up the Ramu River. Valued at \$A1.6 million the Barge is completed.



STAGE 3 – Madang Base

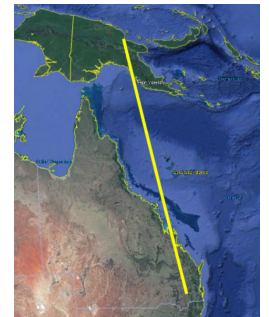
This challenging stage includes constructing a secure base at Madang and transporting the plant and equipment there.

We have a site agreed and will transport the “base” structures, materials, plant and equipment to this site in Madang. A volunteer work party is being recruited to build this base.



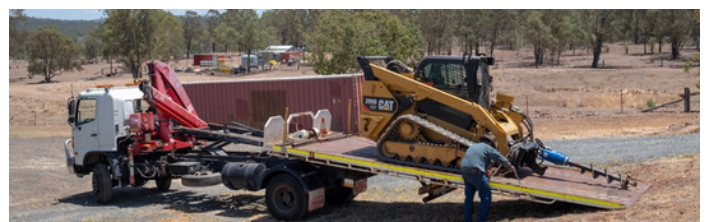
STAGE 4 – Transport, Australia to PNG

Transport by road and ship the plant, equipment and facilities from Toowoomba to Brisbane and onto Madang, ready for movement to the work site between Tumba and Gandep. The funds needed for this stage is in the order of \$A1.0 – 1.5 million.



STAGE 5 – Bunapas Base

Establish a small base camp on the lower Ramu at Bunapas – several hours downstream from Tumba and truck the necessary plant, equipment and materials from Madang to Bunapas.



STAGE 6 – Construction

Upgrade airstrip at Tumba and then reconstruct the access track from Tumba to Gandep. The Airstrip make access and emergency medical evacuation possible for the volunteer team and the PNG Nationals.

All of the volunteer workforce will pay for their own flights and food etc to undertake the works.

Around \$A1.3 - \$A1.5 million of fuel will be required to complete this work, over 3 years.



STAGE 7 – Sustainable Health, Education and Trade

Once access is complete, Community Welfare Programs can be devised to build strong, healthy and sustainable communities begin by:

- Minimizing the scourge of malaria.
- Establishing medical clinics
- Establishing access to safe water
- Improved hygiene practices
- Developing schools
- Developing trade yams, cocoa and timber



STAGE 8 – Training Locals

Sustainable maintenance and training through a mentoring program, volunteers will work with local community people to engender self-determination principles as part of exploring how the plant and equipment that will remain at Gandep are best used.



STAGE 9 – Expansion

Extension programs into surrounding villages so that the benefit of the plant and equipment is available to all.



Donate to The Gandep Project

Your tax deductible donation will help provide access to trade, education and health resources in Papua New Guinea

How to make a Direct Bank Transfer for Tax Deductible Purposes:

Bank: Westpac
BSB: 034 221 Account No: 830417
Customer reference line: Gandep / [Your Ref]

So we can issue a tax deductible receipt, please email admin@transformthenations.org with your Name, Amount, Date, Address, and Company details and contact details.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

September 2023