

ISSUE 5

Papua New Guinea

October 2016 Newsletter

Welcome to the July-September round up from FHI 360 PNG. This edition focuses on some of the positive results that have been achieved during this quarter.

FHI 360 has witnessed great success in its project focusing on gender and gender based violence called Komuniti Lukautim Ol Meri (KLOM). Project interventions resulted in significant impact, changing the behaviour of communities in its target sites. Covered in this issue, is a report on recent child

protection training that was run in Western Highlands province and West Sepik province.

In HIV response, the implementation of continuum of prevention to care and treatment (COPCT) and implementation of the UNAIDS ambitious 90-90-90 treatment models have seen expansion into more provinces in PNG. In this issue we take a look at how viral load testing has taken off in Port Moresby. And we will also see how FHI 360 provided technical

support in two highlands provinces and Morobe to strengthen health systems at service delivery level.

We are looking forward to another busy quarter, working successfully with our dedicated partners and excellent implementing organizations.

Warm wishes,



Daniel Tesfaye
FHI 360 PNG Country
Director

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Expansion of viral load services in Port Moresby

FHI 360 PNG has been instrumental in the scaling up of viral load services in two clinics, Begabari and Koki, as well as Heduru clinic, which had initially piloted the model for viral load service delivery in Port Moresby General Hospital. Reports from Heduru clinic, from September 2013–August 2015, show that 800 whole blood samples were collected to monitor whether the amount of HIV virus was high or low in their blood.

The clinic is located within walking distance of the Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL). Blood samples have to reach the laboratory within six hours or the sample has to be discarded, so being located so close is a major benefit.

From the pilot at Heduru, valuable experience and lessons have been learnt. Initially the extra testing was seen as more workload for healthcare workers, but through team work and good coordination this thinking has disappeared. By having the patient for viral load collection at the same time as other blood samples, all samples can both be transported at the same time to the laboratory so it is no longer perceived as an additional burden.



In order for the scale up of the services to happen, a technical sub-working group that focuses on viral load was formed, which FHI 360 has been a part of. As well as piloting the new service, clinicians, adherence counselors and laboratorians have received viral load training. Previously healthcare workers had no experience in collecting viral load samples so the training, mentoring and coaching has been essential for them to be able to deliver a quality service.

Viral load services have also been scaled up at Koki clinic and Begabari clinic. Begabari clinic and Heduru clinic will be collecting whole blood samples and sending them to CPHL on a daily basis. Koki clinic has an on-site, mini laboratory allowing it to send plasma samples to the CPHL on a weekly basis. Since scale up at these sites in mid-August, Begabari clinic has collected and transported 91 viral load whole blood samples to CPHL, while Koki clinic processed 44 samples | Vanessa Kapus

Quality data to improve HIV and disease programmes in PNG

The National Department of Health (NDoH), with the support from developing partners, is continuously improving the availability of quality health data and promoting the use of health information to improve programmatic intervention to address public health issues. FHI 360 in collaboration with CDC and WHO organized five days Research and Surveillance training from September 19th-23rd, 2016 in Port Moresby. The aim of the training was to build the capacity of participants in basic epidemiological research methodology and surveillance.

Nineteen participants from the Highlands, Momase, Islands and Southern regions attended the weeklong training delivered by Dr Gina Doskey Etheredge, from FHI 360 in Washington DC. The training ensured that participants could define and apply epidemiological concepts, including prevalence and incidence, measures of association, and causality; distinguish



between, and discuss types of study designs in research and public health programme evaluation; compute and interpret measures of association; understand different types of surveillance and concepts of case-based reporting; discuss data sources for the evaluation of public health programmes; and discuss ethical issues in research.

Participants developed their own research projects where they will explore further to enhance their learning when they are back at their work places. In addition to the certificates of participation, the participants who successfully passed the internationally recognized Research Ethics Certification exam received certificates that are valid for three years | Mirriam Dogimab and Matilina Gendua

Progress review of Strongim Hauslain project

The Strongim Hauslain Project: Strengthening Communities to Improve and Deliver Prevention, Care and Treatment Services for HIV and other STIs, is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through Health & HIV Implementation Services Provider (HHISP). Between January 2013 and December 2015, FHI 360 implemented the first phase of the project with a focus on strengthening outreach services for key populations in Western Highlands and Enga provinces, and the National Capital District. Following the outcome of the first phase, during which FHI 360 built the capacity of three faith based organizations (Baptist Union PNG, Anglicare PNG and Sirus Niraqi Foundation) to implement peer-driven outreach programs for key populations, DFAT granted FHI 360 a follow-on award. The new award focuses on strengthening the capacity of clinicians to provide quality STI and HIV services to key populations in accordance with the PNG national guidelines and protocols.

Under the follow-on grant, FHI 360 is working in partnership with the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Offices/Authorities of Western Highlands, Jiwaka and Morobe to provide targeted technical assistance to ten clinics located in Mt. Hagen, Markham Valley and Jiwaka, and two prevention partners; Baptist Union PNG in Western Highlands and Jiwaka provinces, and Adventist Development and Relief Agency in Morobe province. Over a 12-month implementation period (January, 2016–December, 2016), the project aims to increase access to quality HIV care and treatment services for key populations, including PLHIV, and

strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems for effective program intervention.

A baseline assessment of the ten benefiting clinics conducted at the start of implementation revealed major knowledge and capacity gaps among clinics and their clinicians. Some clinicians were providing services for which they had no formal training, while others had not had the benefit of any refresher training for as many as five years. Most of the clinicians were not familiar with the current STI and HIV care and treatment guidelines and were therefore unaware of the new eligibility criteria for ART and special provisions for key populations. Most of the clinics had not received supportive supervisory visits for two years or more, and the majority were still observing the ART eligibility criteria of CD4 <350. One clinic in particular was implementing one step testing with referral to another for confirmatory testing.

Following the implementation of a series of capacity building activities by FHI 360 in collaboration with the Regional Medical Officers and Provincial Disease Control Officers, stakeholders met on the August 24th 2016, to review progress of the project. At the review session, stakeholders expressed happiness and satisfaction with the implementation progress and results recorded, and also reaffirm their commitment to the partnership. Some stakeholders used the opportunity to request additional technical assistance. FHI 360 will continue to work closely with its partners to implement other activities planned for the second half of the project | Patty Pepe

Barefoot beach run for survivors of violence

On September 10th 2016, a mammoth global awareness campaign for survivors of rape came to PNG. Claire McFarlane who is a survivor, adventurer and social advocate is embarking on a series of global, barefoot beach run events covering 184 coastal countries, spanning 3000km of beach, across three years. Papua New Guinea was the fifth country to feature in the series of runs that takes on 86% of the world's landmass with the 16km PNG loop starting at Harbour side and finishing on Stanley Esplanade.

Claire's mission is to make a difference to survivors of sexual violence on a global level. Her aim is to use this peaceful action to give a voice to those who have been raped, remove the taboo around this sensitive subject, raise funds for healing programmes and ultimately open up dialogue so that lasting change can be made.



FHI 360 staff participated in this ambitious event joining over 200 other individuals in Port Moresby. Ambassador Ebert-Gray from the USA concluded the run with a speech, along with powerful PNG women's rights activist, Ms Ume Wainetti emphasising the continued high rates of violence against women and girls experienced in PNG and the need for behaviour change.

All funds and donations raised during this event were donated to the Port Moresby Family Support Centre to help survivors of violence. For more information, visit projectbra.org.

Child protection training opens 'doorways' for Western Highlands and West Sepik province

Since 2013 high levels of sexual violence and rape of children under the age of 15 has been reported by the Well Women Clinic, one of FHI 360's key partners in Western Highlands province. To help sensitize key individuals caring for young people, the KLOM project facilitated child protection training in Mount Hagen, Western Highlands province from August 8th-12th, 2016.

The training was framed around the 'Doorways' training curriculum series that focuses on instructing community members to respond to school related gender-based violence (SRGBV) with basic listening skills and response procedures. The training was attended by 14 people (5 females and 9 males) representing active action group members from the KLOM target sites.

The training aimed to create an enabling environment in schools and communities to support women and girls to exercise their choices, access services and participate in the decision making process. It did this through encouraging the participants to support the rights of young people, provide them with emotional support,

refer them to the appropriate medical, psychosocial, legal and safety services if required, conduct follow up and help young survivors plan for the future.

In West Sepik province, FHI 360 KLOM team conducted the same training for 25 Vaniimo primary school teachers from July 4th-8th, 2016. Vaniimo primary school has made considerable efforts to create a safe environment for all of its students. The training will enhance the technical capacity of teachers to provide care to child survivors of violence.

At the end of the training the participants made individual pledges on how they will support and protect children from violence. The training also provided an excellent opportunity for people in the community to connect with key service providers for children. After this training FHI 360 will provide onsite support and work towards forming a coordination mechanism for child protection services at community level and through core services within the province. The team will revisit the primary school at a later date to see how the training has been implemented in the classroom | Mirriam Dogimab



Local organizations learn how to secure essential donor funding

A selection of representatives from faith-based and community based organizations came together in August for follow up training on how to secure US government funding. This valuable training was led by Maria Presley, Technical Officer SED Civil Society and Peace Building from FHI 360 headquarters in USA and Srunya Nopsuwanwong, Associate Director of Business Planning & Proposal Operations, from Bangkok Thailand. The aim of the training was to build the capacity of participating organizations in resource mobilization and US government resources.

Thirteen participants from 10 organizations attended the training that included how to write a winning



proposal, how to develop budgets and how to develop a strong business case for submission to potential donors. The training also introduced participants with techniques of identifying US government funding opportunities and web based submission of bids.

By the end of the training, participants had a strong understanding of the proposal development process and have attained knowledge on developing key components of a proposal for submission. Following the training some of the participating organizations used the skills to submit proposals to the US government | Matilina Gendua

VISITORS

Mr Clay Epperson the Deputy Mission Director for USAID Philippines and the Pacific Islands visited the USAID Key Population project | Ms Polly E Ross, Clinical Adviser at the Office of Training and Capacity Development HIV/AIDS Bureau, along with Mr John K Williams from Centre for Disease Control (CDC) visited to discuss the FHI 360 and USAID Gender programme | Ms Sarah Wiles visited Mt. Hagen and Vanimo to compile stories and photographs to document the impact of the Komuniti Lukautim Ol Meri Project | Dr Gina Doskey Etheredge, Technical Advisor at FHI 360 in Washington DC conducted research and surveillance training for PNG | Dr Janet Robinson, Director of Research in the Asia Pacific Region and Global Director of Lab Science | Mr John Macom, Technical Advisor from the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) in Bangkok visited to provide technical support to the Prevention and Monitoring & Evaluation component under the USAID Key Population project | Dr Kwasi Torpey, Director of the Technical Support Division from the Asia Pacific Regional | Dr Anh Innes, Acting Director for Health, Population, and Nutrition in Asia Pacific | Mr Chad Martin, CDC, Ms Maria Presley, Technical Officer, Social Economic Development (SED), Civil Society and Peace Building from FHI 360 Washington DC office and Srunya (Nui) Nopsuwanwong, Associate Director, Business Planning & Proposals at FHI 360 Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) in Bangkok conducted a four days of training to local organisations on proposal development writing to gain USAID funding.



**Jacob Tinoi (left) and Shayne Poya |
Admin Assistants/Drivers**

Jacob Israel Tinoi, Hula, Central province | “I joined FHI 360 in early 2016. It is a good organization to work for, has a nice working environment and welcoming, friendly staff. My job enables me to meet and interact with people from different walks of life. I enjoy helping and assisting the program team in carrying out administrative tasks as well as my normal duties. I am happy at FHI 360 as it is helping me to achieve my dream to take on further studies. One of the advantages of working here is the hands on experience that I get with modern technology. I have learnt how to use laptops, printers and scanners. I find FHI 360 a good platform to learn and grow.”

Shane Poya, Tambul, Western Highlands province | “I joined the FHI 360 team in August 2011, this is my fifth year with the organization. Working for FHI is a learning experience for me. I’ve learnt many things in a new environment and it is totally different to what I was taught at school. I see FHI 360 as a good place to learn and it has broadened my knowledge, motivating me to seriously take into consideration going for further studies. I have learnt to work well under pressure, with time management being the main principle. I also enjoy the opportunity to interact and meet other people from different organizations.”



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