

ISSUE 13

# Papua New Guinea

## October 2018 Newsletter

For this extended version of our quarterly newsletter, I am proud to reflect on the successes of the recently completed Strengthening HIV/AIDS Services for Key Populations in PNG program. The six-year program made a huge impact on the care and treatment of patients living with HIV in PNG and the most recent outcome is

the release of a report on best practice for integrating gender-based violence (GBV) and HIV/STI services.

We also look ahead to our programs in gender and TB. In West Sepik we held a successful men's discussion forum to promote male advocacy awareness. And in Moresby South a

newly established laboratory has been set up to strengthen TB services and improve diagnosis.

Warm wishes,



**Daniel Tesfaye**  
FHI 360 PNG  
Country Director

### Boost in TB diagnostic services in Moresby South electorate

The people of Moresby South will now have access to a newly established laboratory at the Badili Urban Clinic. The clinic is one of five Basic Management Unit (BMU) sites under FHI 360's, DFAT funded, Community-based TB Treatment project (CBTT). The project aims to strengthen the capacity of five BMUs and the surrounding communities to provide high-quality, patient centred TB services.

The Badili laboratory brings the total number of functional TB microscopy labs in Moresby South to two, the other being Lawes Road laboratory. The opening will improve TB diagnostics. Without microscopy, Health Care Workers (HCW) are inclined to diagnose TB by relying on just signs and symptoms, with patients only occasionally sent for X-ray. On other occasions, sputum samples are collected and sent to other health facilities



with laboratories which can cause delays, which in turn delays patient management. However, this is now a thing of the past as the on-site lab at Badili can process samples and provide results within 24-48 hours.

Within the same quarter, a safety cabinet was successfully installed at Lawes Road laboratory. The cabinet has special features that provides both personal and environmental protection when handling sputum samples for testing. These new developments have boosted the moral of HCWs and improved quality of TB services for patients | [Francil Kaemala](#)



## FHI 360 achieves significant milestone in HIV response

After six years of the successful implementation of the FHI 360 Strengthening HIV/AIDS Services for Key Populations in PNG program, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) acknowledged the efforts of key partners during the close-out event in September.

Since 2012, the program was implemented in the National Capital District (NCD) and Madang province. FHI 360 established collaborations with the Government, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and United Nations agencies, as well as local non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations. It worked with these stakeholders to strengthen demand for services, clinical interventions for people affected by HIV, and post-GBV care services for GBV survivors, through direct service delivery and technical assistance.

The project contributed to increasing demand for HIV/AIDS services among key populations (KPs), their sexual partners and their families; improving the supply of quality HIV/AIDS services for KPs, their sexual partners and their families; increasing the use of facility and community-based gender and GBV interventions; and strengthening health systems for HIV/AIDS service delivery.

As a result, more than 14,000 KPs and 11,000 other high-risk individuals were reached with a minimum prevention package, which included referral for HIV Counselling and Testing and STI services. Through clinic based and mobile HIV testing and counselling services, including 'lay counsellor assisted testing', an innovation introduced by the

project, more than 28,000 individuals were reached with HIV testing services through direct service delivery support. More than 10,300 were also reached with STI management services, 80% of whom were also people most at risk of getting HIV infections and other STIs. With the integration of GBV with HIV and STI services in fiscal year 2015, an increased number of GBV survivors accessed post-GBV clinical care, increasing from 41% of survivors in 2015, to 98% in 2018.

The official close-out event celebrated the successful implementation of the program. It was attended by donor partners, and key stakeholders, including government partners, NGOs and CSO partners. US Ambassador to PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, Catherine Ebert-Gray was a keynote speaker. "I am proud to tell people that we have partnered with many different health agencies of the Government of Papua New Guinea, working together to help curb this terrible HIV epidemic and address GBV, particularly among vulnerable populations who are often driven underground by stigma and discrimination," said Ambassador Ebert-Gray.

Department of Health, Deputy Secretary National Health Policy and Cooperate Services, Ms Elva Lionel, also gave a few remarks, "FHI 360 has built capacity of health workers and HIV services are integrated in existing government health facilities. I am confident that Madang province and NCD will continue providing the HIV care and treatment services", said Ms Lionel.



US Ambassador Ebert-Gray speaking at the event.



Senior Technical Officer, Vanessa Kapus (in orange scarf), explaining program results and achievements during the event exhibition.

## FHI 360 launches best practice report for the integration of GBV and HIV services

FHI 360 PNG's USAID funded Strengthening HIV/AIDS Services for Key Populations in PNG Program has outlined best practices in GBV service integration in HIV and STIs in NCD and Madang provinces in the release of the latest report. The best practice report entitled 'Integrating GBV Services in Health Facilities' was launched during the official close-out event for the program.

To increase the use of facility and community-based GBV interventions, the program directly supported four clinics managed by faith-based organizations and four government run facilities in integrating GBV clinical services into HIV/STI services.

The report includes information on the relationship between GBV and HIV, the rationale behind GBV screening, the steps taken to integrate GBV into HIV/STI clinical services, lessons learned and recommendations, as well as resources and references for integration. The report also comes with a separate annex containing additional materials and tools created by the program.

It is anticipated that the sharing of these best practice approaches will contribute to strengthening existing GBV/HIV integrated services and will guide in the upscaling of other clinics in NCD, and eventually to other provinces.





## Men's forum used as prevention tool in GBV response



With the aim of reducing the level of violence against women and girls and supporting survivors of violence, the FHI 360, DFAT funded, Komuniti Lukautim OI Meri (KLOM) - Community Taking Care of Women and Girls project, works towards mobilizing, educating and empowering men to take actions to stop violence against women and girls as a prevention tool in GBV response. The project focuses on Western Highlands and West Sepik provinces.

To achieve this objective the project conducts quarterly men's discussion forums. It uses existing community networks to ensure greater community support in coordinating interventions that act as a mechanism to promote male advocacy awareness.

This quarter's forum was hosted in Aitape/ Lumi district, West Sepik province and was attended by 26 members of the WOK SAMBAI Psychosocial Support Centre, a local non-governmental organization that provides basic counselling services to survivors of violence.

The majority of the members consisted of male ground counsellors and community mobilizers. From its network of counsellors that are based in the communities in Aitape, Lumi and Nuku, including other KLOM intervention sites within the province, GBV survivors are referred to the Psychosocial Support Centre in Aitape for psychotherapy services after being identified.

Positive outcomes from the forum included identifying opportunities in strengthening partnership with WOK SAMBAI to promote male advocacy and the successful establishment of the Male Advocacy Coordinating Structure under the Support Centre. This new structure will help in coordinating all male advocacy awareness campaigns in the future | [Adolph Tamalako](#)

## Meet the team | Vanessa Kapus – Senior Technical Officer

"My role is to provide technical assistance on HIV care and treatment services, including on-site mentoring, coaching and guidance to clinicians at the clinics supported by FHI 360. This is to ensure components of the program related to HIV care and treatment are implemented at the best possible quality.

It is truly a privilege and an honour working in this multi-cultural and dynamic organization. I love my work and I am passionate about working in hospitals and clinics providing basic healthcare to people. FHI 360 has equipped me with the skills and knowledge in my field to contribute to improving the quality of basic health and HIV care for my people and it brings me great



satisfaction. I have grown both personally and professionally since joining the team more than four years ago, which is an amazing and empowering experience for me."

**MEET THE TEAM**