



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PORT MORESBY

AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORT FOR TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL INITIATIVES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Updated April 2016

Overview

- Australia is supporting the Government of Papua New Guinea's (GoPNG) long term goal to significantly reduce morbidity and mortality from tuberculosis (TB) including multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) as part of a package to support PNG to assist PNG to strengthen its health systems more broadly.
- Targeting MDR-TB is in line with national PNG TB targets given the high burden and international and local health security risks. Both governments have agreed that the most sustainable approach is to build the capacity to treat TB in PNG in the context of broader PNG health system improvements.
- Accordingly, Australia is providing a multifaceted support package, which includes community engagement programs, workforce strengthening, technical assistance, infrastructure, and laboratory and supply chain assistance.
- Australia has committed over \$60 million for tuberculosis control initiatives in Papua New Guinea (PNG) over 2011 – 2017, which includes the additional \$15 million announced by the Australian Foreign Minister in February 2015
 - \$44.7 million has been committed to Western Province (since 2011), including \$5 million for the response to drug-resistant tuberculosis
 - \$19.2 Million has been spent since 2011
 - \$5.97 million is currently allocated for 2015-16 (*activities in Western Province are marked with an asterisk on pages 2 and 3*)
 - \$15.3 million has been committed to the National Capital District (NCD) and National Response, including \$10 million over 2015- 2017 for the response to drug-resistant tuberculosis
 - \$4 million has been spent since 2011.
- This package of support has been developed in consultation with the National Department of Health and Provincial governments with oversight from the World Health Organization. The package also takes into account findings from the 2014 National Tuberculosis Program review.
- World Health Organization monitoring, including a review by an international committee of experts in May 2015, indicates the package is well targeted and effective.

Community Engagement

- World Vision received 5.1 million to implement the ‘Stop TB in Western Province’ initiative from 2012-16. This program has: *
 - Trained 56 health workers and 123 community treatment supporters to supervise the World Health Organization’s Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) treatment standard across North, Middle and South Fly Districts
 - Reached over 68,000 people in Western Province with TB Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilisation activities
 - Commenced piloting an innovative community-based service model focusing on Daru Island, which has the highest incidence of drug-resistant TB and has historically had high rates of drop-outs from treatment
 - This has resulted in establishing five community-based sites on Daru Island and engaging 24 treatment supporters to provide Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) treatment, nutrition services and health education
 - These sites and supporters have led to a significant improvement in treatment adherence, with the number of TB patients completing their treatment increasing from approximately 40 per cent in early 2015 to more than 97 per cent in early 2016.
- Australia has also funded the procurement and operational costs of a sea ambulance (Medics Queen) and two banana boats to access difficult to reach communities in the Middle and South Fly Districts *
 - These vessels have conducted over 179 outreach visits since 2012.

Workforce

- In Western Province, Australia has funded health workforce positions comprising of three international and 22 locally –engaged positions to strengthen the TB response. Key positions include: *
 - Two international TB medical officers and a team of 9 clinical staff for Daru, South Fly
 - A provincial TB Physician
 - A provincial health adviser
 - A provincial TB coordinator
 - District TB coordinators in North, South and Middle Fly.
- Australia is supporting the Government of PNG to undertake an international recruitment of a Senior Manager for Daru General Hospital to support the CEO. *
- Australia has partnered with the World Health Organization to strengthen the TB response workforce. Under this \$8.8 million partnership, the World Health Organization provides:
 - A TB Medical Officer to provide technical support and advice to the National Department of Health

- An international drug-resistant tuberculosis specialist who commenced in June 2015 to provide training and clinical services over 2015 to 2017
 - Strengthening of laboratory capacity of Port Moresby-based Central Public Health Laboratory and provincial laboratories
 - Co-financing of TB research at the PNG Institute of Medical Research.
- The partnership also co-financed the 2014 external review of PNG's National Tuberculosis Program
 - This review identified the three hotspots for TB transmission NCD, Gulf and Western Province.
 - Australia has funded an international reference laboratory adviser based in Port Moresby, in support of the National Tuberculosis Program.

Technical Support

- Australia provided \$1.59 million to the Burnet Institute in 2014-15 and has committed an additional \$3.25 million in 2016-17 to provide technical expertise for the emergency response to drug-resistant tuberculosis in Western Province announced by the GoPNG in June 2014. *
- Australia's broader technical support includes:
 - A national TB drug-resistance survey in 2013-2014 completed in June 2015.
 - The survey confirmed an MDR-TB prevalence rate of 2.7% for new cases with the highest burden in Daru Western Province.
 - Technical and quality reforms at the Central Public Health Laboratory.

Health Infrastructure

- Australia constructed a \$4.3 million purpose-built 22-bed TB ward at Daru General Hospital. This was opened in 2013 and is being fully utilised. *
- Australia has committed a further \$10 million towards the construction of new staff accommodation and refurbishment of Daru General Hospital over 2014-2017.
 - The scoping phase is completed and agreement has been reached with stakeholders on key design priorities. *
- Australia has also committed \$10 million towards the construction of a new health facility and staff housing at Mabadawan, a Torres Strait Treaty Village in South Fly and refurbishment of the existing health facility was undertaken as an interim measure. *

Medical Supplies, Laboratory and Supply Chain Management

- On the request of the GoPNG, Australia procured \$2.4 million of emergency TB and drug-resistant tuberculosis medicines during 2013-14 to combat drug stock-outs. *
- In 2012, Australia procured \$560,000 of medical equipment for Daru Hospital, including: *

- A digital X-ray unit and associated renovation of X-ray room
 - A GeneXpert diagnostic machine to detect drug resistant tuberculosis within 2 hours
 - A biochemistry and haematology (blood) analyser, defibrillator and ECG machine.
- Australia has committed \$492,000 through the Queensland Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory from 2012-15, and an additional \$317,000 from September 2015 to August 2016 to provide additional drug-resistance testing support.
 - The Burnet Institute manages a weekly shipment of patient samples to the Queensland Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory.
 - A total of 945 samples were tested between 1 July 2013 and 31 December 2015.

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