



Supporting Triple Elimination in PNG & Timor-Leste (STEPT)

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Project Background

STEPT project is part of the global effort to achieve triple elimination.

Partners include: **Catholic Church Health Services** in Papua New Guinea and **Maluk Timor** in Timor-Leste, along with Ministries/Departments of Health

Funded by DFAT ANCP and ASHM Members

The program aims to support elimination of MTCT of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B by....

Strengthening sub national and facility systems to test and treat for HIV and syphilis at point of care for pregnant women attending ANC services & ensure delivery of hepatitis B birth dose to all infants with in 24 hours of birth.





Snapshot of program level success 2022-2025



Improved integration of services at facility level of HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis B testing and treatment into routine antenatal care.



Strengthened health workforce capacity where health workers reported significant improvements in confidence and independence in delivering triple elimination services



Positive shifts in attitudes and collaboration and the project created new opportunities for staff to build trust, strengthen teamwork, and break down silos in service delivery.



Enhanced data systems and use of evidence growing awareness of the value of data for learning, decision-making, and service improvement, and movement away from viewing data entry as an administrative burden.

Snapshot of program level challenges 2022 - 2025

Leadership, ownership and coordination gaps in securing consistent leadership support and embedding ownership at all levels of the health system.

Lost to follow-up and weak referral pathways – creates challenges in continuity of care

Persistent stock-outs and procurement inefficiencies - Unreliable supply chains in both countries are undermining progress. Test kit, ART, and prophylaxis stock-outs were reported

Data systems and reporting challenges including lack of registers and reporting forms at facilities, low computer literacy, limited coordination between different parts of the health system and poor transport and internet connectivity

Gaps in health workforce coverage and capacity - reaching midwives or frontline workers not currently involved with the project

GEDSI barriers and stigma - need to deepen gender and disability-sensitive approaches, and to strengthen peer and psychosocial support systems.

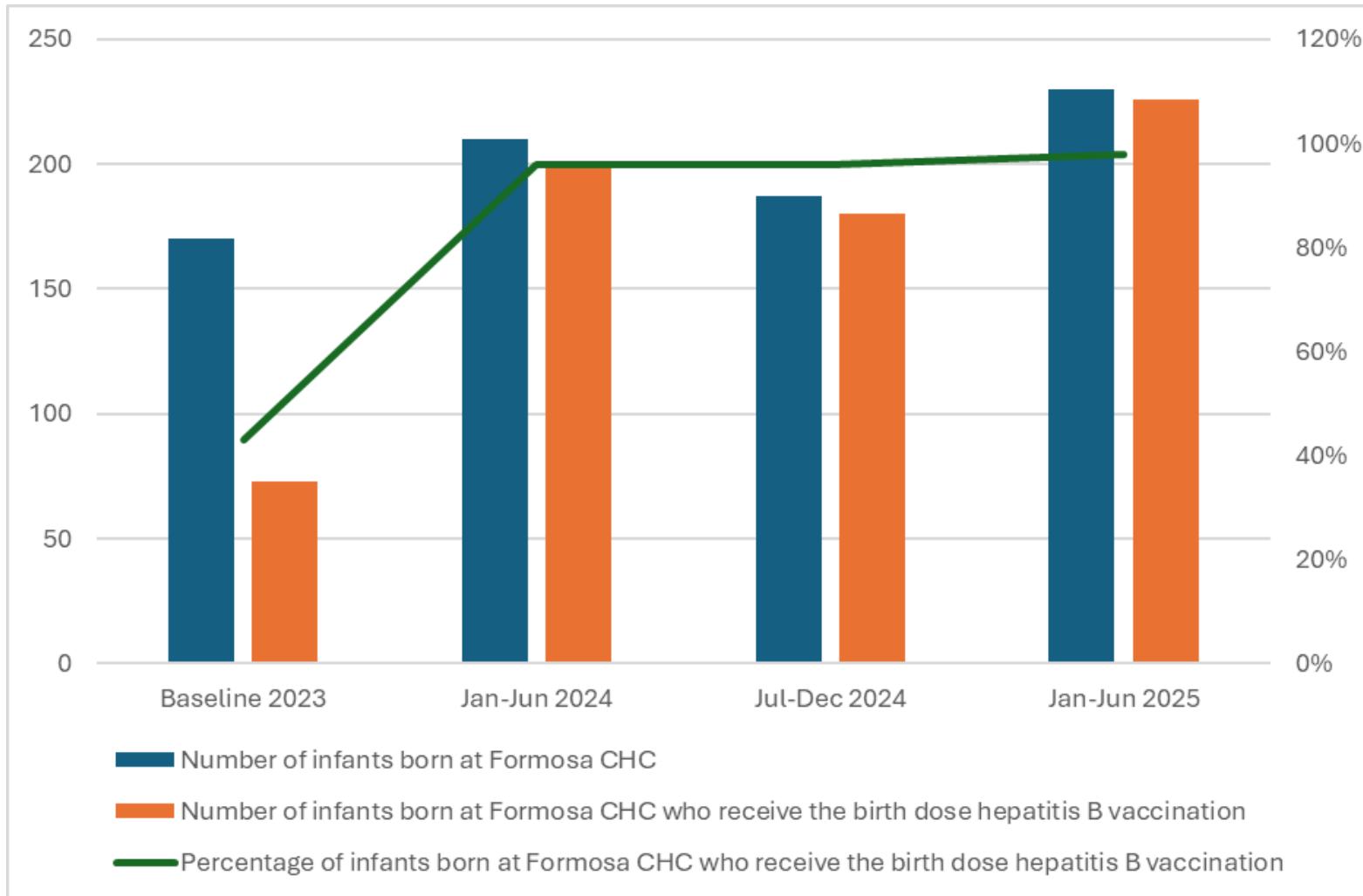


Viral Hepatitis Background for STEPT project sites

Timor-Leste estimated 12% of population living with Hepatitis B
National HBV birth dose Vaccination rate 75% (2022)

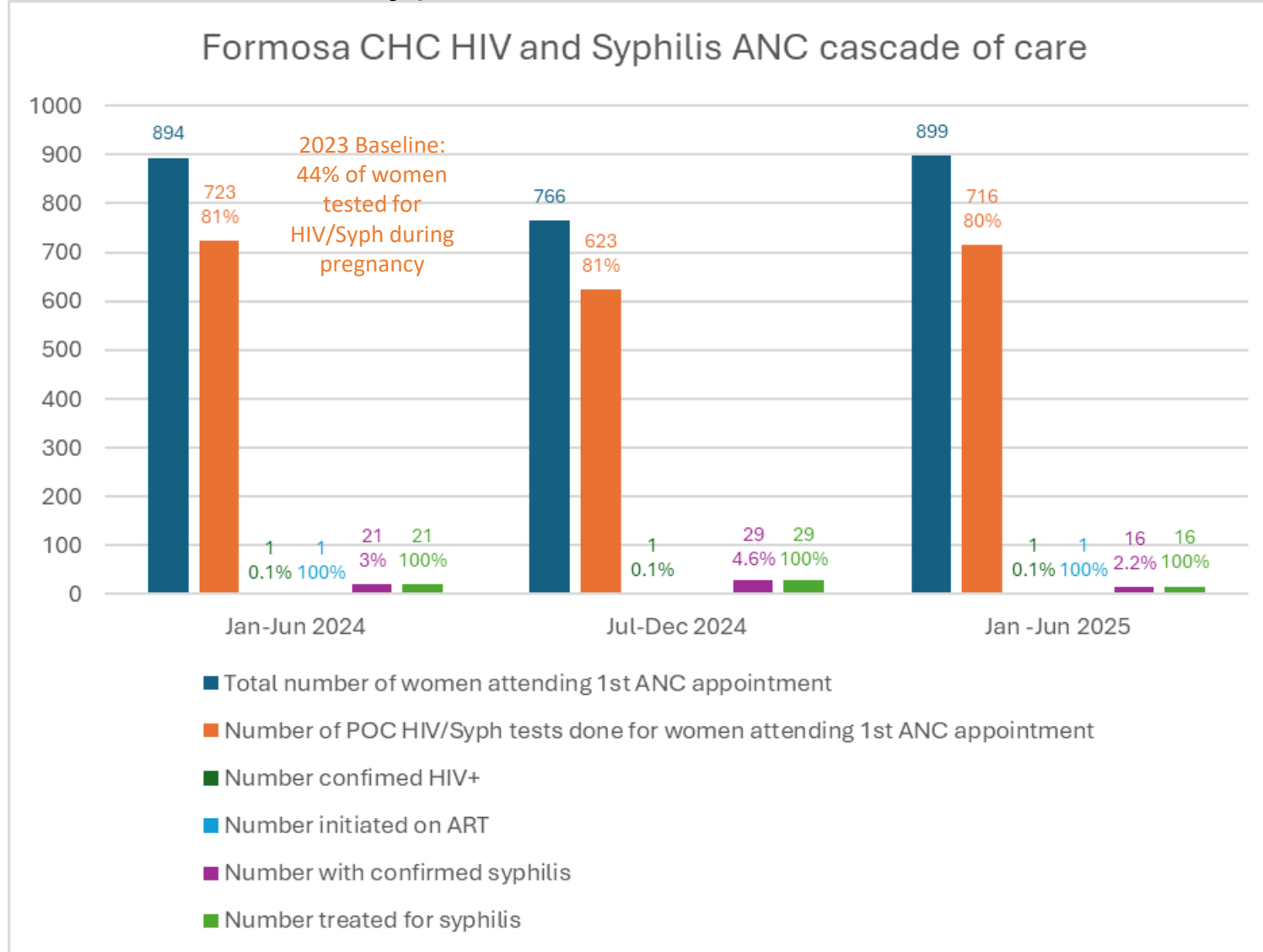
Papua New Guinea estimated 6% -12 % of people living with Hepatitis B
National HBV birth dose Vaccination rate 24% (2022)

Hep B birth dose 2023 – 2025 within the STEPT project site



National HBV birth dose Vaccination rate 75% (2022)

Formosa CHC HIV & Syphilis Cascade of Care 2024-2025



National data:
67% of pregnant people tested at least once for syphilis (2022)



Supporting Triple Elimination in Papua New Guinea (STEPT) Project - Milne Bay

Milne Bay Provincial Hospital	2024	2025 (Jan – Jul)
Total live births	1416	930
HBV birth dose vaccination with 24 hours	92% (1304)	99% (918)
HBV birth dose vaccination after 24 hours	8% (112)	1% (12)
Total infants vaccinated	100%	100%



Supporting Triple Elimination in Papua New Guinea (STEPT) Project - Milne Bay

	Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea*			
	2022		2024	
Number (or %) of pregnant women tested at least once for HIV during pregnancy	4.6%	322	10%	746
Number (or %) of pregnant women living with HIV initiated treatment**	51%		-	-
Number (or %) of pregnant women with reactive syphilis results receiving appropriate treatment	-	-	86%	25

Data sources: SURV forms from Milne Bay, 2022 PPTCT presentation

*Data reporting in PNG is very problematic and a key focus of the STEPT program.

** National percentage in 2022



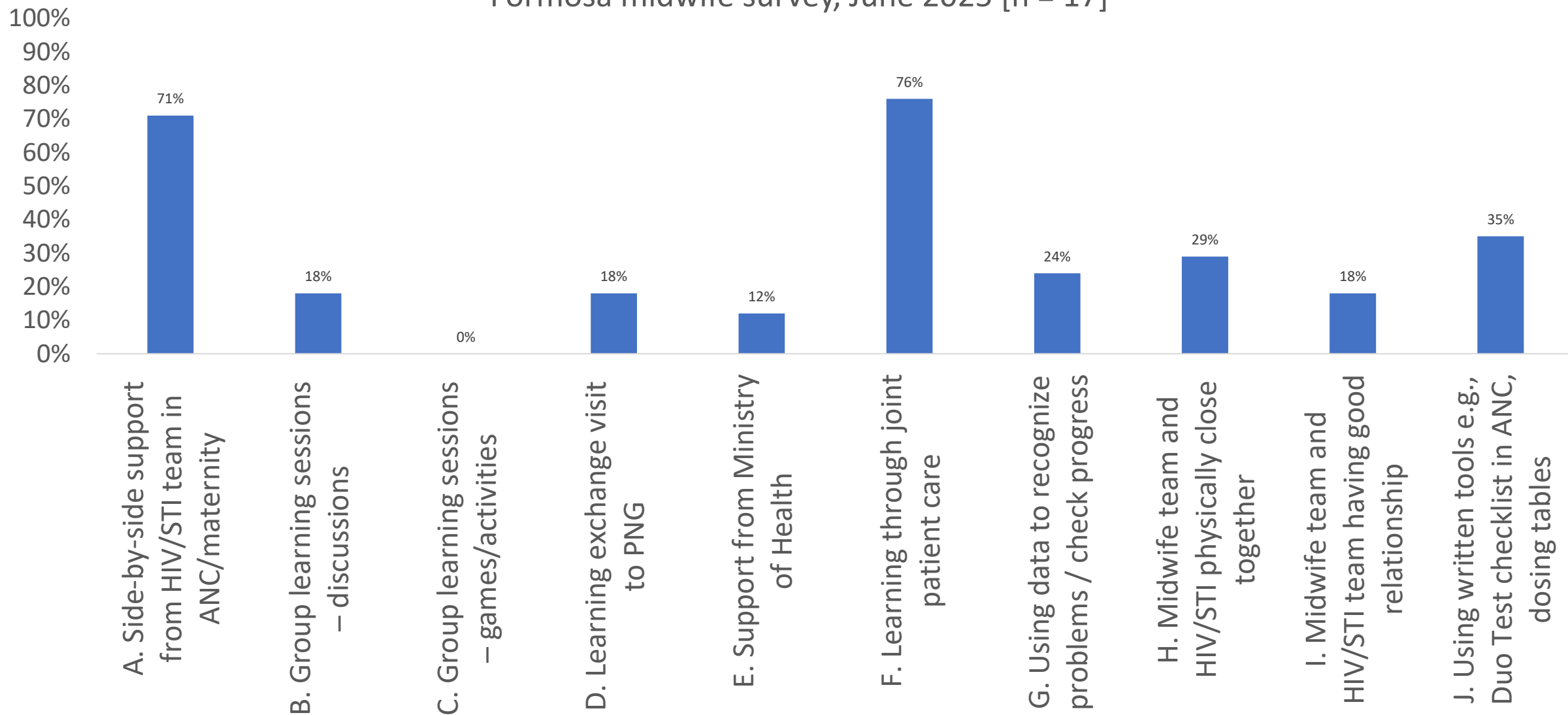
STEPT in Timor–Leste 2024-2025

Key Achievements

- shift from lab-based testing to PoC testing for HIV and Syphilis
- Engagement of two PLHIV peer support workers from Estrela+ to support pregnant women diagnosed with HIV
- Strengthened M&E systems and training for staff to capture data, clean data and maintain databases
- Continued regular engagement with key stakeholders with MoH, INSPTL and community organisations

Midwives' selection of top three factors contributing to Triple Elimination project success

Formosa midwife survey, June 2025 [n = 17]



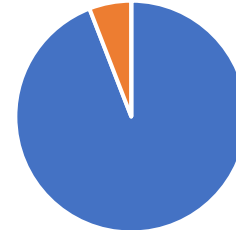
Formosa midwife survey, June 2025

What do you think about the effect of the Triple Elimination project on quality of service for pregnant women at Formosa?



■ positive effect ■ no impact ■ negative effect

What do you think about the effect of Point of Care HIV/Syphilis testing on outcomes for pregnant women?



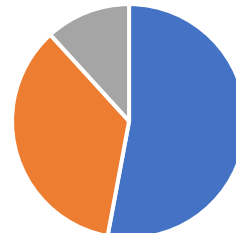
■ positive effect ■ no impact ■ negative effect

Do you think the Triple Elimination project should be implemented in other health centres in Timor-Leste?



■ Yes ■ No

What has been the impact of implementing HIV/Syphilis Point of Care testing on your day-to-day work?



■ made easier ■ no impact ■ made more difficult

Midwives – Triple Elimination Learning Sessions TL



Key Achievements :

- Development of HIV/TE team clinical knowledge & skills for PMTCT through group learning
- Development of HIV/TE team's capacity as effective trainers/mentors
- Continued capacity development of midwives to deliver stigma free PMTCT services and follow correct testing and treatment protocols through side by side in service learning and group sessions with HIV & TE teams



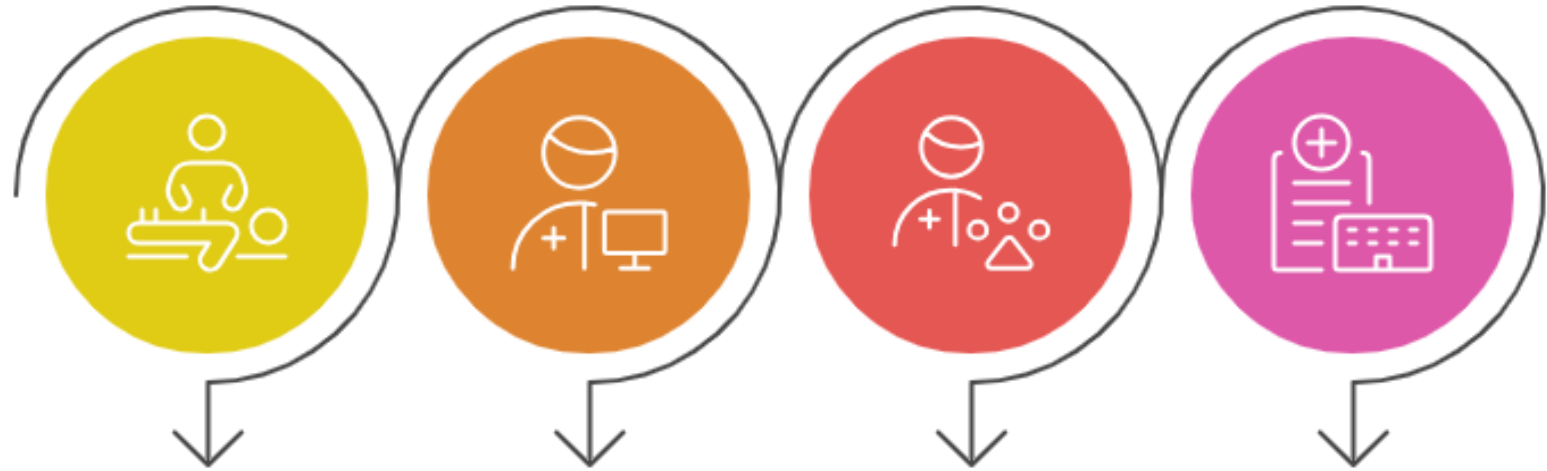
Disability inclusion training – supporting women with a disability in ANC and birth



PNG – Key achievements



Health system strengthening activities



EMTCT training

72 health workers participated in EMTCT training.

In-service training

78 health workers participated in in-service training.

Clinical mentoring

110 health workers received clinical mentoring.

Facility reviews

15 facility capacity reviews.

STEPT in PNG 2024-2025

- Transition of STEPT activities to Milne Bay to support whole of province and all the health service delivery providers
- Facilitated visit by NDoH Surveillance Manager to Province to support data collection
- Localised approach to training and development with the Provincial communicable diseases coordinator providing 20 x Healthcare workers on the job coaching to improve systems for reporting BBVs and STI data.
- PHA is establishing process to have ART available at all facilities with the province
- A recent mentor visit to Milne Bay ensured PMTCT systems are embedded and functioning across facility, district, provincial and national levels.



UNICEF Immunisation Fridge at rural health facility, Milne Bay. Ensures that Hepatitis B Birth Dose can be given to all babies who are born at the facility where electricity is not consistently available.



STEPT 2025-2026

- Integration of Triple Elimination Training packaged into Timor-Leste Ministry of Health Training
- Procurement of vaccine fridge for Formosa clinic to store hepatitis B birth dose
- Midwives' complete full rotation of in-service training in PMTCT at Formosa CHC
- Strengthened reporting systems to aid procurement processes for Hep B Birth Dose
- Community education campaign for pregnant women and their partners
- HIV Prescriber workshop that includes BMU TB reporting and SURV reporting for infant diagnosis
- Training on couples counselling for testing partners and how to disclose HIV status
- Strengthen procurement and surveillance processes for Milne Bay
- Cross-country knowledge exchange program through EMTCT Workshop 2025
- Scoping of project sites in PNG and TL for scale up in 2026-2027



ASHM Membership

