

Grow Healthy, Grow Strong Newsletter Issue #17 - July 2024



Photo: Nutrition Advocacy Group meeting with Ashwin Lau presenting on health priorities for East New Britain



COMING NEXT MONTH

To follow up on a suggestion from the recent health care worker training, observations at Health Facilities will be implemented by GROW to support facility staff in their work to reduce stunting. A follow up training event in August will be conducted where we will explore the 'Challenges and Opportunities' that will ensure the suggestions from the project have a lasting and tangible impact on patients seen while helping staff streamline knowledge and process.

A Community Nutrition Advocacy Group will be set up in Kokopo district to expand parent group discussions in this area. Additional training requested by community stakeholders in Disability Engagement will also occur next month.

GROW PROJECT UPDATE

It was a busy month in July with our new staff hitting the ground running. We now have two staff members working on each component as the project grows and expands in its activities.

Three parent group discussions were held this month and we are seeing an increase of participation from fathers. During one particular session there were 17 fathers and 18 mothers that attended. In Rieit Ward, we have had a total of 15 parent groups since this activity began less than a year ago. Our team is busy meeting with stakeholders in Kokopo to set up this activity in new locations.

Project advisors Lisa Davidson and Shan Huang visited Kokopo in late July and held a number of key workshops. A Nutrition Advocacy Working Group meeting was held with representation from the community from Pomio and Kokopo to discuss potential plans for an extension to the GROW project should additional funding be secured. The stakeholders were able to make a list of key health priorities that they would like to see addressed in the future to support the alleviation of stunting in East New Britain. These included better understanding of immunization and its benefits as well as reducing the spread of sexually transmitted infections through improved screening and treatment to prevent transmission to babies during pregnancy.

A health worker training and mid-term review workshop were also held. You can find a detailed report about them on the next page.

TRAINING AND WORKSHOP

The Health Worker Training and the project's second Mid-Term Review workshop was held simultaneously on Wednesday, 31st July at Kokopo Beach Bungalows by Shan and Lisa respectively.

The training was well attended with representatives from 3 of the 4 health facilities attending. We reviewed the project from a facility perspective and discussed ways to improve this component of the project. We celebrated the initiatives of health workers who took the training they received from the project and presented what they learnt to their colleagues during Continued Medical Education. For example, Sr Elizabeth Noah presented on the importance of stunting and the local policies around this at Rabaul Provincial Hospital. We also identified a number of ways to enhance the benefit of our routine facility visits with the facility staff going forward including 'shadowing' staff to better appreciate the breath of their work.

At the Mid-Term review, where both the GROW project and the Zero Dose immunization project were evaluated by Burnet staff alongside the Provincial Health Authority, a key outcome was to combine the aims of the two projects in the next iteration of a project extension as these continue to be primary health concerns for the local community. The evaluation reports for both projects will be shared with project staff, stakeholders and communities in early October.



Participants of the Mid-Term Review



Participants of the Health Worker Training



Nutrition Advocacy Working Group meeting

