

## Vision

To improve the healthcare of the people of Papua New Guinea whom we serve regardless of age, religion, gender, or ethnicity.

## Mission

To provide comprehensive, compassionate, and equitable health care, health promotion and disease prevention to the people whom we serve throughout PNG.

## Principles & Values

Our standards apply to everything we do as CCHS. We live and practice by our "I CARE & COMPASSION" motto which exemplifies our mission and vision. In addition, CCHS staff and volunteers practice the values of:

- \* **Integrity:** Honesty and responsibility to oneself and others
- \* **Justice:** Defend and advocacy for the rights of the poor and vulnerable
- \* **Compassion:** Genuine care and heartfelt concern for those we serve
- \* **Excellence:** Professional competence and responsible stewardship

## Strengthening Health Leadership: CCHS Health Managers Workshop



Health Manager and OICs at Emmaus Conference Centre, DBTI, during the Health Managers Planning Workshop.

The Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) held a crucial three-day Health Managers Planning Workshop from February 19–21, 2025, at the Emmaus Conference Center, Don Bosco Technical Institute, Port Moresby. This essential workshop brought together Health Managers and key facility Officers-In-Charge (OICs) to strengthen governance, planning, and reporting, ensuring more effective healthcare service delivery across dioceses.

With healthcare demands increasing, this workshop was vital in equipping participants with the necessary skills to manage health services efficiently. Key discussions covered administrative processes, financial accountability, and compliance with health funding guidelines. Managers also reviewed strategic planning, budgeting, and the importance of timely, accurate reporting to improve decision-making and resource allocation.

A strong focus was placed on staff management, grievance handling, and ensuring health services

operate within the national health framework. The workshop also guided Health Managers in developing annual implementation plans, reviewing diocesan health structures, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.

Additionally, discussions on regional coordination and performance assessments helped align diocesan health services with national health priorities. By sharing experiences and best practices, participants explored ways to enhance accountability, streamline operations, and drive improvements in service delivery.

This workshop was a critical step in reinforcing leadership within CCHS, ensuring that Health Managers are well-equipped to address challenges and improve healthcare for communities across Papua New Guinea. Strengthening governance, teamwork, and planning remains a top priority as CCHS continues its mission.

*Great things in work are never done by a person. They are done by a team of people. - Steve Jobs*

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## CCHS NATIONAL HEALTH SECRETARY'S MESSAGE



***Greetings everyone,***

We began this year with a three-day staff retreat at Sivarai Namona, and I want to emphasize the importance of such retreats for all CCHS dioceses across the country. These moments of reflection are essential for our spiritual and

mental well-being and help us reconnect with the Church's mission in health. They also provide an opportunity to reflect on how we, as individuals, can contribute meaningfully to this mission.

In the first quarter, the National CCHS Office hosted several planning workshops, and I acknowledge the efforts of all dioceses that have done the same, both internally and in collaboration with their respective Provincial Health Authorities. One of the key events was the CCHS Health Managers and Officers-in-Charge Planning Workshop, which was held at Emmaus, Don Bosco Technical Institute. Over three days, Health Managers and their respective facility Officers-in-Charge engaged in discussions on governance, administrative processes, planning, budgeting, and reporting. The workshop reinforced the importance of timely and accurate reporting, effective coordination of activities, and proper management of health funds. A major focus was on planning for the 2025 operational year, reviewing diocesan health structures, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks to improve service delivery. The event also allowed Health Managers to share experiences, discuss challenges, and develop strategies to enhance healthcare services across the CCHS network.

As we prepare for PNG's 50th Golden Jubilee Independence celebrations, we have launched a diocesan competition, which was introduced during the workshop. The competition criteria have been shared with your Health Managers and should be posted on your notice boards for staff participation. This is a regional competition, with one winner(Diocese) per region. The cash prize will go directly to the winning diocese to support your September 16th Independence Day celebrations. I encourage everyone to take part and contribute to making this milestone celebration a success.

Additionally, this year will see the hosting of our Regional Conferences, which will bring together diocesan teams for important discussions and planning. The Southern Region will gather in Alotau from May 12th to 16th, the Momase Region in Wewak from June 16th to 20th, the New Guinea Islands Region in Kavieng from July 21st to 25th, and the Highlands Region in Jiwaka from October 13th to 17th. These gatherings will serve as

crucial platforms for sharing insights, addressing key challenges, and strengthening collaboration within our health services.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all our hardworking staff across the dioceses. Your dedication and commitment continue to drive the mission of CCHS, ensuring that we provide quality healthcare services to the people we serve. Let us all remain focused, work together, and strive for excellence in the year ahead.

*Thank you, and may God bless you all.*

**Sr. Jadwiga Faliszek, SSps**  
National Health Secretary  
Catholic Church Health Services of PNG





# CCHS Celebrates World Day of The Sick

## Mingende Rural Hospital



Fr. Anton Kuman anointing the sick during the mass at Mingende Rural Hospital.

Mingende Rural Hospital in Simbu Province commemorated World Sick Day on February 11, 2025, with a meaningful celebration centered on the theme: "Hope does not disappoint. Romans 5:5, but strengthens us in times of trials."

The day's events were inspired by St. Paul's letter

to the Romans (5:5): "Hope does not disappoint but strengthens us in times of trial."

With this powerful message, the hospital sought to uplift the spirits of both patients and staff, emphasizing faith and strength in the face of illness.

Sr. Josita Vinita, Health Manageress of Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) of Kundiawa Diocese, reflected on the significance of the day, "We began the celebration early in the morning with health advocacy talks in each of the wards. After speaking to our patients and sharing words of encouragement, we distributed toiletries as a small gesture of care and support." This simple yet meaningful act was aimed at providing both physical and emotional comfort to those in need.

The afternoon program featured a Eucharistic celebration at 2:30 PM, presided over by

hospital chaplain Fr. Anton Kuman. During the Mass, Fr. Anton offered prayers of healing for all present. He then anointed the sick, both children and adults, as a sign of spiritual care and solidarity.

The day concluded with a special dinner for all patients, fostering a sense of community and nourishment for those undergoing difficult times.

Mingende Rural Hospital's observance of World Sick Day was a heartfelt tribute to the strength and resilience of patients, a reminder of the power of hope, and a reflection of Pope Francis's Jubilee Year theme: "Hope does not disappoint. Romans 5:5, but strengthens us in times of trials."



## Goglme HSC

Goglme Health Sub Centre, one of the nine Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) facilities in the Diocese of Kundiawa, commemorated World Sick Day on February 11th with a heartfelt program centered on hope, faith, and compassion. Located in the Upper/Lower Koronigl Rural LLG in Kerowagi District, Simbu Province, the day brought together patients and nursing staff for this special observance.

Sr. Josita Savari, the Health Manageress for CCHS of Kundiawa Diocese, highlighted this year's theme: "Hope Never Dies," inspired by Romans 5:5. She emphasized the profound significance of hope in the lives of the sick, their families, and

healthcare workers, reminding everyone of the resilience and strength that faith provides.

The program featured prayers for the sick, reflections on the importance of love and care, and reminders about the vital role of guardians in supporting patients. Staff and patients actively participated in moments of spiritual encouragement, reinforcing a sense of community and support within the healthcare facility.

This commemoration served as a powerful reminder of the healing power of compassion, both physically and spiritually. It was a day dedicated to uplifting and encouraging those

facing illness, highlighting the mission of Catholic health services—to provide care rooted in faith, love, and hope.



Staff and patients of Goglme Health Sub Centre

## St. Mary's Vunapope Hospital



Fr. Paul Kote blessing staff and patients at the Vunapope Hospital during the mass celebration.

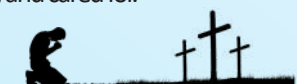
St. Mary's Vunapope Hospital in the Archdiocese of Rabaul, East New Britain Province, observed World Sick Day on February 11th with a meaningful ceremony dedicated to the sick and their caregivers.

The commemoration began with a Thanksgiving Mass led by Fr. Paul Kote, who offered prayers for healing and strength. Following the Mass, Fr. Kote blessed and

anointed the sick, bringing comfort to patients, their guardians, and the nurses present.

The event created a sense of unity and compassion, with hospital staff, nurses, patients, and their guardians coming together in prayer and support. The program concluded with the sharing of small gifts to patients in the wards, a simple yet thoughtful gesture of care and encouragement.

This annual observance highlights the importance of both spiritual and physical support for the sick, ensuring they feel loved, valued, and cared for.



# "Marchella's Journey: A Second Chance Through Proper Testing and Treatment"



An example of how Marchella's face looked like before and after treatment.

**M**archella Andrew, 28, from Karinz in the Mendi Munhiu electorate, was married and living in Western Highlands Province when she fell seriously ill with severe facial rashes. She sought medical attention at various clinics and hospitals in Western Highlands but was only diagnosed with a skin infection and treated symptomatically.

As her condition worsened, she purchased antibacterial creams from pharmacies, hoping for relief, but they had no effect. Feeling hopeless, Marchella decided to return to her home province, Southern Highlands, to seek further medical assistance in Mendi.

On a Monday morning, she walked into Epeanda Urban Clinic for a consultation. Clinical staff Nicholas Philip attended to her but struggled to make out her real face due to the severity of the red rashes and patches covering it. Acting promptly, he took her medical history and conducted an HIV Determine test without delay. Within 15 minutes, the result was reactive for HIV.

Understanding the urgency of the case, Marchella was referred to the VCT clinic, where confirmatory tests using ABON and Genie Fast also returned positive results. She received

immediate counseling, followed by initiation on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART). Additionally, she was prescribed medication for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), fluconazole, and albendazole to manage opportunistic infections.

Marchella expressed her gratitude, saying, "I visited so many clinics and hospitals in Western Highlands, but they only treated the symptoms. It was only at Epeanda that I finally found the root cause of my illness. Thanks to proper testing and treatment, I now have a second chance at life."

Two months later, during her follow-up review, Marchella had made a remarkable recovery. Her face had cleared, and she had regained her health. She is now a registered patient at the Epeanda VCT site, continuing her treatment and gradually improving every day.

## Epeanda Urban Clinic Gives Glenda a Second Chance

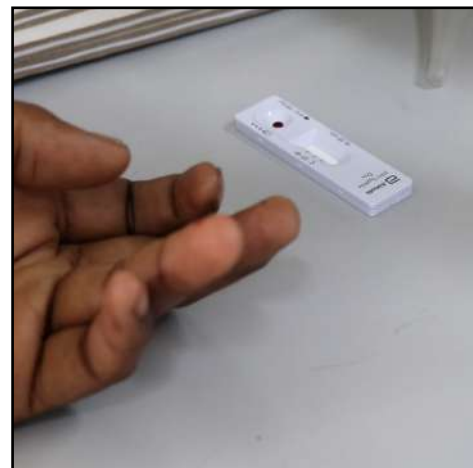
**G**lenda Paul, a 26-year-old woman from Poroma in Southern Highlands Province, came to Epeanda Urban Clinic seeking medical attention. She is married and has an 8-year-old child. After the birth of her first child, Glenda wanted to have another, but unfortunately, she struggled to conceive due to a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI). Following her first divorce, she decided to remarry for personal reasons.

After several years of marriage and many attempts to conceive, Glenda still could not bear a child. In early January 2024, she came to Epeanda Urban Model Clinic with a range of gynecological problems, including lower abdominal pain, moderate back pain, frequent urination, painful urination (dysuria), and

per vaginal (PV) discharge. She had sought treatment elsewhere, but there was no improvement, and her symptoms persisted. These medical issues had prevented her from having another child after her first.

With the assistance of Sr. Betty Alu, Glenda was scheduled for a speculum examination. The specimens were analyzed under a microscope and sent for testing. Once the test results were received, the couple was treated according to the New STI Syndromic Management Guidelines (2019).

Nine months after completing her STI treatment, Glenda returned to the clinic, this time with a big smile on her face. She was happily pregnant after years of trying.



HIV/ Syphilis tests are also done at the outpatient to anyone that comes to the clinic.



Sr Betty Alu a nursing officer at the antenatal clinic explaining the HIV/Syphilis test results to a first time mother at Epeanda Urban Clinic.

"When I saw her smiling, I wondered why," said the clinic staff. "She later explained, 'You were the one who treated me in January 2024, and the treatment worked. Now I'm pregnant and here for my Antenatal Care (ANC) visit.'" At the time of her visit, Glenda was 4 months pregnant and was enrolled for her first ANC visit. Sr. Betty advised her to attend all the routine ANC visits at the clinic.

"I am extremely grateful to the clinical staff at Epeanda Urban Clinic for the thorough examination and for providing the correct treatment based on my illness," said Glenda. She added, "I will always be grateful and will continue to come to Epeanda for treatment and other medical issues."



## New Building Honors Bishop Orowe



*The newly constructed Bishop Arnold Orowe building in Wabag Diocese, Enga Province.*

A new building in the Wabag Diocese has been named in honour of the late Bishop Arnold Orowe, a respected leader in the Catholic Church and the first local bishop of the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea. This building is a tribute to his lifelong dedication to faith, leadership, and service to the church and its people.

Bishop Arnold Orowe was ordained as a priest in 1983 at the age of 28. He became the Auxiliary Bishop of Wabag Diocese in 1999 and later succeeded Bishop Hermann Raich SVD as the Bishop of Wabag in 2008. He served as a

priest for 41 years and as a bishop for nearly 25 years before his passing on December 27, 2024.

Throughout his ministry, Bishop Orowe worked tirelessly to spread the Gospel and improve the lives of the people in his diocese. He was known for his deep faith, strong leadership, and unwavering commitment to his pastoral duties. His influence is still felt today, as many remember him for his kindness and dedication.

At the building's dedication ceremony, Auxiliary Bishop of Wabag, Bishop Justine Soongie, expressed his gratitude for the late bishop's

contributions. He said that naming the building after Bishop Orowe is a way of honouring his lasting impact on the church and the community.

The new building features nine well-equipped rooms, a spacious kitchenette, and a large conference room that can accommodate more than a dozen people. It will be used for meetings, retreats, and community gatherings, activities that help strengthen faith and unity among the people.

This building will serve as a center for spiritual growth and learning, continuing the work that Bishop Orowe started. His legacy of faith and leadership will live on through the generations, inspiring others to serve with the same dedication and love.

Bishop Soongie encouraged the people of Wabag Diocese to follow Bishop Orowe's example by continuing to serve their communities with faith and compassion. He reminded everyone that this building is not just a structure but a living memory of Bishop Orowe's mission to bring hope and faith to the people of Enga and beyond.

## Yampu HC, a Sanctuary for SARV Victims

In the remote Ambum Kompam District of Enga Province, Yampu Health Centre has become a place of safety and healing for victims of Sorcery Accusation-Related Violence (SARV). Many victims, mostly women, are accused of practicing sorcery and called "sangumas." They suffer terrible attacks, are burned with hot iron rods, cut with bush knives, and tortured in unimaginable ways. Some do not survive, while others are rescued and brought to Yampu Health Centre, often with life-threatening wounds and severe burns.

For these victims, Yampu Health Centre offers a second chance at life. Sr. Milliana Wangusawo, a member of the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters and a dedicated nurse, has cared for many

survivors, offering not just medical treatment but also kindness, hope, and comfort.

"We are always ready to help," Sr. Milliana says. "No matter how serious the injury, we never give up. We fight for every life that comes to us." At Yampu, doctors, nurses, and volunteers work tirelessly to treat deep wounds, severe burns, and infections. Some patients arrive barely alive, their bodies covered in cuts and burns. Yet, despite the pain and suffering, Sr. Milliana and her team never stop trying to save these precious lives.

However, their work doesn't end inside the clinic. As part of the Catholic Church's Health Services, Sr. Milliana and her team also work to stop the violence. Through community awareness, education, and discussions with local leaders, they try to change beliefs about sorcery and end these brutal attacks.

"We must change the way people think," Sr. Milliana explains. "It's not enough to heal the body. We must heal the community, too." Yampu Health Centre is not just a place of medical care—it is a beacon of hope for the entire community. The Catholic Church plays a big role by offering counseling, prayer, and support for survivors and their families. Over time, many victims heal—not just physically,



*Pictures of some woman who have suffered and tortured from SARV and are seeking refuge at Yampu Health Center.*

but emotionally. Some even return to their villages as advocates, fighting to end SARV. For Sr. Milliana, every life saved is a victory against this violence.

"We may be small, but our faith is strong," she says. "As long as there is life, we will continue to fight for it."

In a province where violence has taken so many lives, Yampu Health Centre remains a symbol of strength, love, and hope—helping victims find their way back to life and working to end SARV once and for all.



*Sr. Milliana Wangusawo a nurse at Yampu Health Centre.*

# Collaboration Strengthens Health Worker Training in Madang



Two groups of Village Health Assistants for the Child Nutrition and Social Protection (CNSP) Project taking a group picture with their facilitators after their weeklong training in Madang.

A vital training initiative aimed at strengthening the capacity of healthcare workers (HCWs) and village health assistants (VHAs) has been successfully completed in Madang. Held from January 20th to February 1st, 2025, this training is part of the Catholic Church Health Services' (CCHS) ongoing efforts to combat stunting during the first 1,000 days of life. The Child Nutrition and Social Protection (CNSP) training program, conducted in two phases, brought together a diverse team of experts and practitioners, marking a significant step in the fight against malnutrition in Papua New Guinea.

A collaborative effort between the National Department of Health (NDOH), Provincial Health Authorities, UNICEF, and CCHS, the training was designed to be comprehensive and practical. This partnership ensured that HCWs and VHAs received high-quality instruction and hands-on experience to enhance their ability to prevent and manage malnutrition in Madang. The first phase, from January 20th to 24th, focused on training healthcare workers, while the second phase, from January 27th to February 1st, provided intensive training for 83 VHAs and 20 HCWs from three Local Level Government (LLG) areas in Madang. With nine trainers working across three venues, the program was structured to ensure personalized,

practical learning for all participants.

Throughout the training, participants were equipped with tools and techniques for community-based nutrition interventions, particularly targeting pregnant women and children aged 0-2 years. A key focus was the prevention and management of malnutrition and stunting, one of Papua New Guinea's most pressing public health concerns. The training utilized materials collaboratively developed by the World Bank, UNICEF, and NDOH, including a Facilitator Guide, handouts for VHAs, and community counseling cards—ensuring a structured and consistent learning approach.

According to Cathy Copeland, CCHS Coordinator for Nutrition Projects, the training aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills of HCWs and VHAs in delivering essential nutrition services at the community level.

"The aim was to effectively implement community-based nutrition interventions addressing stunting during the first 1,000 days of life," Copeland said. "We want to ensure that HCWs and VHAs are fully equipped to promote the utilization of nutrition services and manage malnutrition, particularly among households with pregnant women and mothers of children

under two."

The Child Nutrition and Social Protection project, under which this training falls, is a government-led initiative supported by UNICEF and CCHS. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to improving the nutritional status of vulnerable populations in Madang and beyond, ultimately contributing to healthier outcomes for future generations.

This training marks a significant milestone in the broader strategy to combat stunting in Papua New Guinea, aligning with national efforts to reduce malnutrition's impact, particularly during the critical early years of a child's life.

As the newly trained HCWs and VHAs return to their communities, they are now better equipped to make a lasting impact. With an enhanced understanding of nutrition and social protection, they are poised to help prevent malnutrition and improve the health and well-being of mothers and children in Madang District.

This comprehensive and collaborative approach between local, national, and international partners demonstrates the power of working together to tackle one of Papua New Guinea's most pressing public health challenges.



VHA's doing presentation of their group work during the training.



VHA's activity utilizing counselling chart



VHA practical session measuring the height of an infant.



# Reviving Health care Access in Keman Village



*Dr. Raymond Kapikupa and the team from Yampu Health Center attending to a long queue of locals seeking medical attention.*

One of the catchment areas for Yampu Health Centre, Keman village, located in the remote and isolated Wali-Talo LLG of Ambum Kompam District in Enga Province, had long been cut off from essential healthcare services. Without a road link to the rest of the region, the villagers had no choice but to travel on foot for any medical needs, a situation that deprived them of timely and vital healthcare.

Keman village and its neighbouring communities had previously been served by regular patrol visits from Yampu medical staff. For more than 20 years, medical teams had made scheduled trips to the community, providing much-needed health services. However, the chaos of tribal fights in 2019 halted these patrols, leaving the community without access to essential healthcare for several years.

In late September of 2020, hope was restored when Dr. Raymond Kapikupa, the medical officer of Yampu Health Centre, along with a team of staff nurses, community health workers, and their carriers, set out for Keman on a five-day patrol. Their goal to reestablish healthcare access for the underserved



*A team of Healthcare workers from Yampu Health Center and their carriers trekking through the jungle to Keman village.*

community and improve health outcomes for the people of Keman.

The journey was not an easy one. With no direct road access, the team had to make the gruelling trek from the point where their vehicle could no longer go. "From where the vehicle dropped us off, it was a three-hour climb ascending to Keman village," said Dr. Kapikupa. "We brought with us limited medical supplies and other necessary items for the patrol."

Despite the challenges, the team remained committed to their mission, knowing that the health and well-being of the people in Keman depended on their efforts.

The patrol included a comprehensive range of health services. The team provided maternal and child health services, held general medical clinics, conducted tuberculosis (TB) screenings, and organized awareness campaigns on nutrition and health practices. Vaccination programs were also carried out to protect the community from preventable diseases. During the five-day patrol, more than 400 patients including women, children, and the elderly, were attended to, addressing immediate health concerns and providing the community with essential health education.

"When women are in labor, they are carried for two to three days before reaching the nearest health facility," said Dr. Kapikupa. "Apart from this, curable diseases such as childhood pneumonia, malaria, and TB, have claimed the lives of women and children due to the lack of road access."

The Aidpost in Keman that was run by the Enga Provincial Health Authority has far long been out of service and the building has been dormant for the past couple of years. The community leaders urged the Catholic Church Health Services to take over the run-down clinic



*The former run-down aidpost that was run by Enga Provincial Health Authority. The building is now not operational and is occupied by rats and roaches.*

from EPHA and create a permanent position for the Aidpost so that there would be accessible health care services in Keman.

This patrol marks the beginning of a renewed commitment to healthcare delivery in Keman. Despite the difficulties and challenges of working in isolated regions, Dr. Kapikupa and his team are determined to continue their efforts to bridge the healthcare gap, ensuring that even the most remote villages in Enga Province receive the care they deserve. "We will commence on a quarterly visit to Keman village annually to provide the basic medical services", said Dr. Kapikupa.

The initiative not only improved healthcare access but also brought the community closer together, fostering a sense of ownership and awareness about their health. The patrol team worked hand-in-hand with local community leaders and villagers, ensuring that the community understood the importance of preventative care and ongoing health practices. The Keman village patrol is a reminder that, with dedication and collaboration, healthcare



*Vaccination and vitamin A treatment given to an infant. Pictures are Nursing officers Jeff Joe and Fred Kapilyo seeing cases at Elepis village.*



# Catholic Diocese of Wabag Leads Fight to End SARV in Enga



Auxiliary Bishop Justine Ain Soongie and Caritas PNG volunteers addressing the Laprapus community and neighboring villages during an integration ceremony of a victim back into the community in Enga.

In Enga Province, the Catholic Church Health Services, under the leadership of Auxiliary Bishop Justine Soongie of the Wabag Diocese, has been at the forefront of efforts to end Sorcery Accused Related Violence (SARV). For years, SARV has caused immense harm to women accused of sorcery, often leading to violence, displacement, and even death. Despite the lack of significant intervention from relevant authorities, the Catholic Church has worked tirelessly in collaboration with community leaders, local law enforcement, other denominations, and Caritas PNG to put a complete stop to this harmful practice.

Bishop Justine has long been a vocal critic of SARV, emphasizing that it is not a part of Engan culture. "This practice was introduced to our people in the last decade," he said. "It does not belong to us, and it has no place here." The aim of the Catholic church is to eliminate SARV and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) from Enga Province and to restore dignity and safety to those affected.

One powerful example of this commitment was seen in early February 2025, when Bishop Justine organized an integration ceremony for a SARV victim back into her community in



A community leader urging his people to take ownership and stop SARV and Tribal Fight.

Laprapus village. This emotional and challenging event marked a significant milestone in the ongoing effort to end the practice of accusing innocent women of being witches, or "sanguma."

Prior to the ceremony, Bishop Justine had coordinated closely with key partners. The event was attended by Caritas PNG Coordinator team leads, eight community advocate representatives, the Rural Commanding Officer for the Highlands Region, a Court Official for Operation Makim Save (OMS), and the Director of Courts in Wabag, witnessed by locals from the Laprapus community and representatives from the National CCHS Office. Advocating the Caritas PNG theme: laikim, serim, helpim. This collaboration underscored the collective effort to address SARV and promote peace within the community.

Bishop Justine highlighted the importance of life to the people. "Since 2021 we have been advocating", said Bishop Justine. "We must consider the dignity of human life. When we come to value our life, then we will also value other people's life." Bishop Justine also highlighted the consequences of tribal fights within the communities. He further addressed that most of the perpetrators of SARV, GBV, and tribal fights were the ones under the influence of drugs. "The ones who torture victims of SARV and lead tribal fights are drug addicts and alcoholics."

The integration ceremony was a heartwarming moment as the SARV victim, a mother, was escorted back to her village from the Sari Safe House, where she had sought refuge. The ceremony symbolized a critical step toward healing, both for the victim and the wider community. The Bishop emphasized the importance of welcoming the mother back and actively working to end the harmful practice of accusing women of witchcraft.

A key moment in the ceremony was the delivery of a court order, which was handed over to the village councillor. The order outlined the legal consequences for anyone found guilty of falsely accusing a woman of "sanguma" witchcraft. The village accepted the order, sending a clear message that they were committed to ending SARV. The community supported the enactment of the local law that imposes a K50,000 fine and a requirement of 100 live pigs for anyone who accuses a woman of sanguma within the village.

The integration ceremony represented a significant shift in the community's attitude towards SARV. It was a powerful symbol of reconciliation, collective responsibility, and commitment to change.

The village's acceptance of the court order and the enactment of a local law were key steps in healing a community that had long been divided by these harmful practices.

The collaboration between the Catholic Church, law enforcement, Caritas PNG, and other stakeholders has been vital in driving the fight against SARV. Richard Koki, the Rural Police Commander of Enga, praised the Church's leadership in addressing SARV and emphasized the importance of continued partnership. "They cannot do it alone, so we have to partner with them," he said. "Our focus is to drive more advocacy to change the mindset of the communities." Koki also highlighted the strength of the collaboration, noting, "Our teamwork and network with the Catholic Church and other collaborative groups has been promising so far."

The SARV awareness campaign, led by the Catholic Church, has been instrumental in shifting perceptions and encouraging communities to question harmful traditions.



Bishop Justine's leadership in advocating for change has created momentum, helping to challenge long-held beliefs and fostering an environment where violence against women is no longer tolerated.

The integration ceremony for the SARV victim was a powerful demonstration of the success of community-based reconciliation efforts. It illustrated the potential for healing and change when communities come together to address deeply rooted social issues. By taking significant steps to end the practice of SARV, the people

of Enga Province are working toward a future where women are no longer stigmatized or harmed due to unfounded accusations of witchcraft.

As the fight against SARV continues, the Catholic Church Health Services will remain a central force in the effort to promote peace, healing, and justice in Enga. With continued support and collaboration, the vision of a community free from the violence of SARV is becoming a reality.



Laprapus Community leaders and churches representatives accepting the court order the Rural Polic Commander Mr Richard Koki.



A picture of a woman and a child showing a child's reliance on an adult to survive.

In a remote village of Lower Mendi, Southern Highlands Province, a young girl's story of survival is a testament to resilience and care. Orphaned at just one year old, she was left in the care of her aunt after the passing of her parents. Uncertain about the cause of their deaths but suspecting HIV, her aunt brought her to Epeanda Care Center for a medical check-up.

"I had a strong feeling that the girl's parents may have died from HIV," her aunt explained. "I am kindly requesting an HIV test to determine if she has the virus."

The little girl appeared extremely ill—severely malnourished, weak, and fragile. The healthcare team at Epeanda Care Center immediately provided malnutrition treatment and started her on a 21-day course of co-trimoxazole suspension to manage potential infections.

After the initial treatment, her weight improved slightly, but she remained weak. As a precautionary measure, the team initiated her on presumptive ART treatment. Months passed, and while she gained more weight, she still showed signs of anemia and possible tuberculosis. Suspecting both conditions, the team referred her to Mendi Provincial Hospital for further assessment and treatment.

At the hospital, she was diagnosed with anemia, tuberculosis, and severe malnutrition. She was admitted for two weeks, during which she received comprehensive care, including nutritional therapy and continued ART treatment. Once stabilized, the doctors

discharged her, advising her aunt to continue administering her medications at home.

Today, this brave little girl is unrecognizable from the frail child who first arrived at the care center. She is healthy, active, and thriving after successfully completing treatment for anemia, malnutrition, and tuberculosis. She remains on HIV presumptive treatment while awaiting her Dried Blood Spot (DBS) test results. If the results are negative, she will discontinue ART. However, if they confirm an HIV diagnosis, she will continue treatment for life.

Throughout her journey, her aunt played an instrumental role in her recovery—providing unwavering care and support. Against all odds, this young girl fought four life-threatening illnesses and survived. Now, she looks toward a brighter future, a symbol of perseverance and hope.



## New Health Post Brings Hope to Woodlark Island



The new Kalumwadau Health Post.

The people of Kulumwadau Ward in Milne Bay Province are celebrating a historic milestone with the opening of a new health post at Bawon, a development that ends decades of struggle for accessible healthcare.

On January 9, 2025, a delegation led by His Excellency, Bishop Rolando Santos of the Diocese of Alotau -Sideia, staff of the Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) and senior officials from the Milne Bay Provincial Health

Authority (MBPHA) gathered for the official opening. The health post, built by Woodlark Mining Limited, is a much-needed service for the community, which has endured 40 years of traveling long distances to access basic health care.

During the event, Bp. Santos celebrated the Holy Eucharist at Bawon High School, emphasizing the Church's mission to bring health and education services to remote communities. Dr. Perista Mamadi, CEO of MBPHA, praised the collaboration between the Catholic Church, Woodlark Mining, and local leaders, noting that the facility will be government-owned but managed by CCHS to ensure consistent service delivery.

MBPHA Director for Public Health Services, Dr. Jacob Morewaya, highlighted the urgent need for clean water supply, advising residents to

prioritize hygiene to prevent overburdening the new health post. He and CCHS Manageress Sr. Nomita Rozario had the honor of cutting the ribbon to officially open the facility.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between CCHS, the Kulumwadau community, Samarai Murua District Health Services, and MBPHA, reinforcing a long-term commitment to healthcare in the area.

Following the ceremony, officials visited the deteriorated old health center, confirming its impending demolition due to mining operations. Plans are now in motion to elevate the new health post to a Level 2 facility to serve the island's growing needs better.

This is a significant step in strengthening healthcare access in one of Milne Bay's most remote communities.



## Yarum VCT Students Renovate CCHS Staff House



*Students from Yarum VTC maintaining the foundation of a staff house at the Kungim health subcentre.*

Students from Yarum Vocational Training Centre in Western Province assisted the Catholic Church Health Services' in Papua Parish to renovate staff houses. The team, consisting of ten students, successfully renovated two houses for the nurses of Kungim Health SubCentre.

Sr. Philomene Sanduku, the CCHS Health Manageress of Daru-Kiunga Diocese, and the administration staff identified the Major Maintenance Project of the Staff houses at Kungim Health Centre. The houses have deteriorated over the years and needed immediate maintenance. "The houses were not conducive for the well-being of the staff", said Sr. Philomene. The maintenance of staff houses was of paramount importance as new staff needed to move in.

Sr. Philomene then made an oral contractual agreement with Mr. Anton Cosmas the Centre Manager for the Carpentry Students to do the maintenance of the health staff houses, as part of their practical projects.

"I have students that are about to do their practical", said Anthon Cosmas. The carpentry students of Yarum Vocational Training Centre have completed the theory phase of their classes and were about to commence their practical sessions. "It was a good opportunity so we came up with an amicable understanding and proceeded with the Project", Sr. Philomene added.

Anton was appointed the site supervisor to oversee the project and monitor the students on the job. "This project gave my students the chance to have hands-on skills training apart from the theory sessions in class", says Anton. The project lasted for a month.

The maintenance project included foundation and floor maintenance, inside wall lining and door replacement, window painting and screen maintenance, installation of the sink and shower, and barge board with gutters maintenance, and paintings

The collaboration between Yarum Vocational Training Centre and the Daru-Kiunga Diocese under the care of Sr. Philomene has proved successful. In one way or another, the community supports the diocese in terms of taking care of the welfare of the health staff who provide services to their communities. Sr. Philomene said this is just a start to many more collaboration with Yarum and the diocese in terms of maintenance projects.



*Students of Yarum working on the varena of the staff house*



## PNG 50th Independence Golden Jubilee Competition



**Theme:** "50 Years of Independence, 10 Years of CCHS, and a Future of Hope"

In 2025, Papua New Guinea will celebrate 50 years of independence while the Catholic Church marks the Jubilee Year of Hope, declared by His Holiness Pope Francis. As part of this historic milestone, Catholic Church Health Services (CCHS) is launching a nationwide competition for all 21 dioceses to honor the legacy of Catholic healthcare in PNG.

Each diocese is invited to submit an inspiring/ impactful photograph and a 300-500 word abstract showcasing the journey of Catholic healthcare—from its missionary roots to today. Submissions should capture moments of care, resilience, and dedication in serving communities.

Winning dioceses from each region will receive K5000 to support their 2025 Independence

Day celebrations. The best entries will also be featured in the CCHS Golden Jubilee Video in 2026.

- Submission Deadline: 30th July 2025
- Email: [comsadvocacy@catholichealthpng.org](mailto:comsadvocacy@catholichealthpng.org)
- Contact: Jelilah Kum, Communications & Advocacy Officer

*Join us in celebrating care and compassion—our mission of hope for the future!*



# Chill out Corner





## 2025 Quater 2 Important Dates

April	May	June
2nd April World Autism Day	6th May World Asthma Day	5-6th World Environment Day
7th April World Health Day	12th May International Nurses Day	15th Father's Day
25th April World Malaria Day	15th May International Day of Families	26th International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
		10th Human Rights Day

# LENT

A time to remember God

*Heavenly Father,*

*As we walk this Lenten journey, we lift up the health workers, partners, and stakeholders of Catholic Church Health Services in Papua New Guinea. Strengthen their hands to heal, their hearts to serve, and their spirits to endure. May they be guided by Your wisdom, filled with Your compassion, and renewed in faith.*

*Bless their efforts to bring hope and healing to the sick and vulnerable. May their work reflect Your love and mercy. Keep them safe and steadfast in their mission.*

*Through Christ our Lord, Amen.*

### IMPORTANT NUMBERS

In the case of emergencies, do not hesitate to contact these emergency numbers.

COVID-19 Hotline: 1 800 200

Domestic Violence: 715 8000

Reporting on Rape: 321 1714 / 320 3728

Family and Sexual Violence Unit:

3211397 or 3211714

Human Trafficking: 7100 7777

1 Tok Kaunseling : 7158000

The CCHS PULSE, a quarterly newsletter by Catholic Church Health Services of Papua New Guinea, offers insights into our activities, challenges, and impact, showcasing our dedication to serving communities nationwide. We encourage our dedicated health workers to share your stories with us at:

[comsadvocacy@catholichealthpng.org](mailto:comsadvocacy@catholichealthpng.org)

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