

IMOG Project May 2010

General

May has been another incredibly busy month in Maliana. We have kept to our schedule of community work and managed 2 big new undertakings in the Health Library. Building of the kitchen has started again at Cailaco and is going well. Sally and Ben met with the staff from HAI in Dili to share information and discuss ways of supporting each other in the future and Sally also had the opportunity to attend an Essential Newborn Care workshop. Somewhere in there Ben and Sally both had birthdays. Silda's birthday is coming up this Sunday.

1. Supporting SISCa

On top of the regular support of SISCa clinics that we are doing there are three other areas that we are looking at supporting in the final 6 months of this project. These needs have been identified through discussion and planning with Paulina and through our assessments of the situation at the three Community Health Centres and the 9 villages we are doing SISCa clinics. We hope to be able to assist with:

1. Showing a film about Child Spacing in each of our 9 villages and possibly also our three CHC's
2. Assisting with the provision of basic training in birth skills for Health Post Nurses who are required to assist with deliveries
3. Supporting the PSF's (community health workers) with some further training on methods of health promotion (such as house to house and using games and activities)



Meeting with HAI

The Child Spacing film was developed by the NGO HAI who we have already had some contact with. They also have developed a training workshop for midwives on how to use this resource effectively. On the 19th we met with HAI staff in Dili to discuss this training and whether we could involve some midwives from Bobonaro (supported by IMOG). The workshop focuses on general communication and counselling skills as well as the specifics related to the film. They hope to have another workshop in the next two months and will invite Bobonaro midwives to attend.

We were also able to discuss in depth the support of SISCAs which is a key part of their program. Although they are a large (USAid Funded) NGO and work over three districts we share similar philosophies and were able to share ideas and resources with each other. They generously shared with us resources that they had developed for health promotion and working with PSF's. They were also able to help put us in contact with others who are working in MCH in Timor.



Supporting
SISCa in
Maliana



The Mobile Clinic in Moleana this month was the best we have seen yet and it seems the team is starting to get behind the idea of improving the way we do SISCAs and Mobile Clinics so that the community will have better access to health care. This was shown also by the fact that the team were not willing to cancel the SISCa in Saburai simply because it is no longer accessible by car. Together with the Director of the CHC and the immunisation nurse we hiked up the mountain to join the Health Post nurse Raimundo at Saburai for the SISCa. If they had decided not to go, Raimundo would have done the whole clinic himself with the PSFs (community health volunteers) meaning no-one qualified to undertake Antenatal checks. Sally saw 19 pregnant women that day, 2 of which had serious problems needing follow up.

Ben and Silda (Sally sick in bed) went with the health team to the monthly SISCa clinic at Nunetana only to find that the whole village were at a funeral. The SISCa date was changed to the following week but we were unable to help as we were in Cailaco that day. This is an interesting challenge that sometimes arises in such a community centred culture.

The beautiful but challenging hike to Saburai.

Supporting SISCa in Cailaco

After a respite in rain of about one week the people of Raiheu and Atudara got to work immediately on fixing (or at least patching) the roads. This was incredibly fortunate timing as the Health Post nurse Lorenzo had to be rushed to hospital via ambulance with a severe infection the next day. He is now recovering at home and has not yet returned to his post, nearly 3 weeks later.

Unfortunately it was a false start to the dry season and the rain started again making the roads unsafe. We hiked into both sites though Sally very nearly had her own emergency on the way to Raiheu. She thought she was fully recovered from her illness of the previous week only to find halfway that she really wasn't. Silda was able to help with the antenatal care by running a group discussion session with all the pregnant women while Sally attended to their individual consultations. This worked very well and all of the women stayed after their checks to continue participating in the discussion. The women were quite shy this time but showed interest in the idea.

SISCa clinic in Daudu is improving every month. This month we were able to convince Dulce (the very shy midwife from Cailaco CHC) to speak with the women about the new birthing facility and the importance of making a plan for birth. She did very well with the advantage of being able to speak the local language (Kemak). After the SISCa we completed the new government evaluation form together which provided a perfect opportunity to discuss the SISCa and how we can improve it in the future.

Lolotoe

The road between the Lolotoe CHC and Dilai and Silagolo is now not even passable by a motorbike. Lolotoe has been receiving very heavy daily rain which has severely damaged the recently repaired road to Maliana. Next month we have a plan to walk to the clinics at Dilai and Silagolo. This month we went to the SISCa clinic in Amez which is still accessible. We also discussed with the PSF's how we could support them to make SISCa better.

1. Supporting Refurbishment of Maternal Child Health Facilities

Cailaco

Ben and a team of three workers recommenced work in Cailaco on the 13th of May. Work is going well and so far we have:

- Laid the concrete slab
- Poured columns and finished blockwork
- Started on building the roof
- Started on sink / table

Progress Pictures of the kitchen in Cailaco



Atabai –“Uma hein tuur ahi” (Maternity Waiting House)

We visited Atabai on the morning of the 19th however Virginia was busy with a family matter. We delivered some further equipment and noted with pleasure that the facility is looking great. They have a new suction machine and mechanical birthing bed from the MoH. This is a great step as it shows that the Ministry is keen to meet us half way with these things.

In the recent container we also received a kind donation of sewing materials. After much discussion we decided that a women’s sewing group run through a community centre in Atabai would be a perfect recipient for these materials. They were very pleased to receive them as material can be very expensive to buy here



2. Ambulance and Motorbikes

Ambulances

The ambulance is running well but the jack is broken and needs replacing. We are trying to get a price for one in Dili.

Motorbikes

We received a report from Joao Cordoso on the condition and whereabouts of the 6 motorbikes. This does not provide a great deal of information but is a good step to improving communication. We are continuing to gather information on the bikes.

3. Rotary / IMOG Health Library

This month in the Library we have:

- Received a donation of new books about Human Rights in Tetun language.
- Analysed the information from the surveys and developed plans for appropriate responses to the comments and requests
- Increased the opening hours of the library due to overwhelming public demand. Everyone is happy with the change particularly the Medical Students and Public Health Students.
- Developed and distributed a newsletter about the library which seems to have been well received and certainly increases peoples awareness of what we offer.
- Invited all health staff to a film evening on the 29th in while we showed "Dalan ba Dame" ("Road to Peace") a documentary about Timorese history. It was an emotional film for a lot of people but a nice occasion. About 45 people came which was pretty much a full house.



We are still taking every opportunity to discuss the future of the library. This is a gradual process and at the moment we are focusing on building up evidence that the library is well utilised and a great resource for health staff. Hospital management are reluctant to commit to anything as they are worried about funding. ***Giovani using the internet to research infection control.***

4. Supporting the Midwives in Maliana Hospital

During this month Sally had the opportunity to attend and assist with a 6 day long Essential Newborn Care workshop run by the MoH and UNICEF. This involved a midwife from each subdistrict in Bobonaro as well as 3 senior midwives from the Maliana Hospital and some midwives from a neighbouring district. The training was based on the World Health Organisation guidelines and included normal birth and post birth care, resuscitation of the newborn, examination of the sick newborn, immunisations, routine examination of babies and breastfeeding. It was very intensive but an excellent opportunity for Sally to be able to work with these midwives while they are learning these important skills so that she can more effectively reinforce this training.



Midwives received an Ambu-bag each at the Newborn Care workshop

The resuscitation equipment which was sent up in the container was able to be used in the workshop and then be distributed between the midwives to take back to their workplaces. Baby sized Ambu-bags such as the 13 we received are in incredibly short supply in Timor and it was fantastic to be able to ensure that these resources all went to areas of great need. Thank you to those who helped organise these. If there is any possibility of getting more it would make a huge contribution to the survival of babies in Timor.

The English classes will start again on the 4th of June. They were postponed again due to the Essential Newborn Care training. We have agreed to begin giving one-and-a-half hour, weekly lessons. The midwives have also been provided information about PALMS Australia as they had expressed interest in having a volunteer work with them in the future.

5. Weekly Health Promotion Program on Community Radio

In May Silda focused on the program about Family Planning which was carefully prepared so as to be culturally appropriate and sensitive while still getting the important messages across. She has also been working on a 2 part program which reviews and extends upon the topics we have already covered in SMI.

She also took some time out to review her progress so far and put together a plan for the next 7 months. Through this process we have decided to reduce the number of programs to two per month and focus on trying to present material in an interesting way. We are also supporting Silda to look into getting some funding to continue the program next year.



Sally doing a baby bathing demonstration with Nel and baby Gracie

Administration

1. After further punctures and another tyre that can not be repaired we have decided to buy 3 new tyres for the vehicle. The current tyres have been problematic since first being used earlier this year. We feel that the expense of 3 new tyres is worth it for our team to feel safe when we are out in the field.
2. Sally had a long meeting with Dr Vitorino this month about the possibility of getting another PALMS volunteer next year. He is requesting someone to help organise and improve the emergency department and work with the ambulances. We also discussed how the new donations to the hospital are going. As we have one further unused hot water system in the container we have started talking to Dr Vitorino about whether the hospital has a need for this unit. We also discussed the current Ultrasound machines at the hospital and their condition. They currently have one (two are in Dili for repairs) which is in quite poor condition but still working.
3. Sally and Daryl are working on plans to get a mobile Ultrasound Machine donated to the Hospital.

Antonio (Ambulance), Saturnino, Giovani, Herculano (med students) our friend Acai and her younger brother and Kika and Aka with Ben on his birthday.

