

Routine surveillance in these sites provides up to date information on changes in demographic- and socio-economic status as well as the burden of key infectious, vector borne, diarrhoeal, sexually transmitted disease.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), Cancers and Lifestyle Conditions

PNG is currently undergoing rapid economic development. While the expected rise in living standards should result in a decrease in common infectious disease such as malaria or pneumonia, changes in diet and activity patterns are likely to result in an increase in non-communicable and life-style diseases such as obesity, diabetes and cancer.

The aim of the NCD, Cancers and Lifestyle Conditions research section is to longitudinally monitor the prevalence of NCDs and their associated risk factors in PNG. In addition, the section aims to employ an inter-disciplinary research approach to inform culturally appropriate public health interventions that may mitigate the anticipated rise in NCD morbidity and mortality.

Health Systems and Health Economics

An efficient, comprehensive and effective health system is an essential pre-requisite to good health in any country. Unfortunately, the health system in PNG is beset with many problems, including such things as deteriorating infrastructure, an aging workforce, unreliable national health information and the difficulties inherent in providing health care to rural and remote populations.

Given these many challenges, the PNG National Health Plan (2011-2020) identifies 'Health Systems Strengthening' as a priority objective. The PHDU has established a Health Systems and Health Economics research section in support of this objective. The aim of this section is to conduct intra-disciplinary research that will directly inform health policy and planning at the national level.

Population Health and Demography Unit



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Population Health and Demography Unit

About us

The Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research (IMR) is a world class research facility looking at ways to improve the health of the people of Papua New Guinea.

Our headquarters is in Goroka in the Eastern Highlands and we have laboratories and research sites across PNG, including in Alotau, Hides, Karkar, Madang, Maprik and Port Moresby.

The Institute was established in 1968 as a statutory body. It is governed by a 14-member council that reports to the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS.

It is headed by the Director, supported by two deputy directors for science and corporate affairs.



Population Health and Demography Unit

Our work covers a range of health issues. We:

- evaluate large-scale health interventions implemented at national or sub-national levels.
- assess changes in health trends related to large-scale development projects.
- maintain Health, Demographic and Surveillance Sites (HDSS) to monitor morbidity, mortality and causes of death.
- conduct population-level studies on a variety of health problems.

Our four teams are:

- Malaria Control
- Partnership in Health
- Non-Communicable Diseases, Cancers and Lifestyle Conditions
- Health Systems and Health Economics.

Malaria Control

The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) has supported the PNG National Malaria Control Program's intervention activities since 2004. The work has included free distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets (LLIN), introduction of rapid diagnostic tests (RDT) and a new anti-malarial medication, artemetherlumefantrine (Mala-1).

The PNGIMR is responsible for the overall evaluation of the outcomes and impact of the national malaria control programme. These monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities are carried out by the Malaria Control section

of PHDU. Through the maintenance of sentinel- and health facility-surveillance sites across the country and via repeated countrywide cross sectional surveys, the Malaria Control research program is able to assess program implementation and monitor changes in malaria incidence and prevalence across the country.

The Malaria Control section also conduct a wide range of operational research activities designed to strengthen the national malaria control program.

Partnership in Health

The Partnership in Health project was developed with the vision that Esso Highlands Limited (EHL) and the PNGIMR will work together to develop a long-term collaborative relationship that facilitates innovation, new knowledge generation, education, training and sustainable capacity building for positively affecting health, social and economic development for PNG.

The PiH program is centred on a Health and Demographic Surveillance System (HDSS) established in two PNG Liquid Natural Gas (PNG LNG) project impact sites (Hides and Hiri) and two non-impacted comparison sites (Karkar and Asaro).

