

End of Project  
Summary Report

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**Mitigating  
the impact of  
COVID-19  
on Reproductive,  
Maternal, Newborn  
and Child Health  
Services**

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Republic of Namibia



World Health  
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## Background

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Reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCH) are amongst the essential health services disrupted in Namibia because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the health system is being challenged by an increasing demand for care of COVID-19 patients, it is critical to maintain preventive and curative services.

Data from the Health Information System (HMIS) of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) indicates that there was a decline in patient attendance at outpatient clinics across health facilities in the country from April to July 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. There was a decline of 13% and 36% in the utilization of family planning services and sick child visits respectively.





Whereas the data captured is for the period until July 2020, observations and reports from health facilities have shown the decline persists to date. There has also been an increase in stillbirths reported, most likely due to a decline in quality of care.



The Expanded Programme on Immunization observed a distressing picture of declining measles rubella immunization coverage in 74% of the districts in the country between January and June 2020. Low immunization coverage creates low herd immunity and increases the susceptible population under 5 years which can lead to vaccine preventable disease outbreaks, specifically measles.

An increase in newborn deaths was also noted from data analysis carried out using HMIS data comparing 2019 and 2020 during the same period. This highlights the importance of increasing capacities both at health facility-level and community-level by strengthening the skills of healthcare workers and availability of essential equipment and supplies.





## Regions

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### Immunization

Namibia recorded high immunization coverage in 2021.



**30** out of **35** health districts achieved **80%** and above for Penta 1 coverage and **31** out of **35** for Penta 3 coverage.

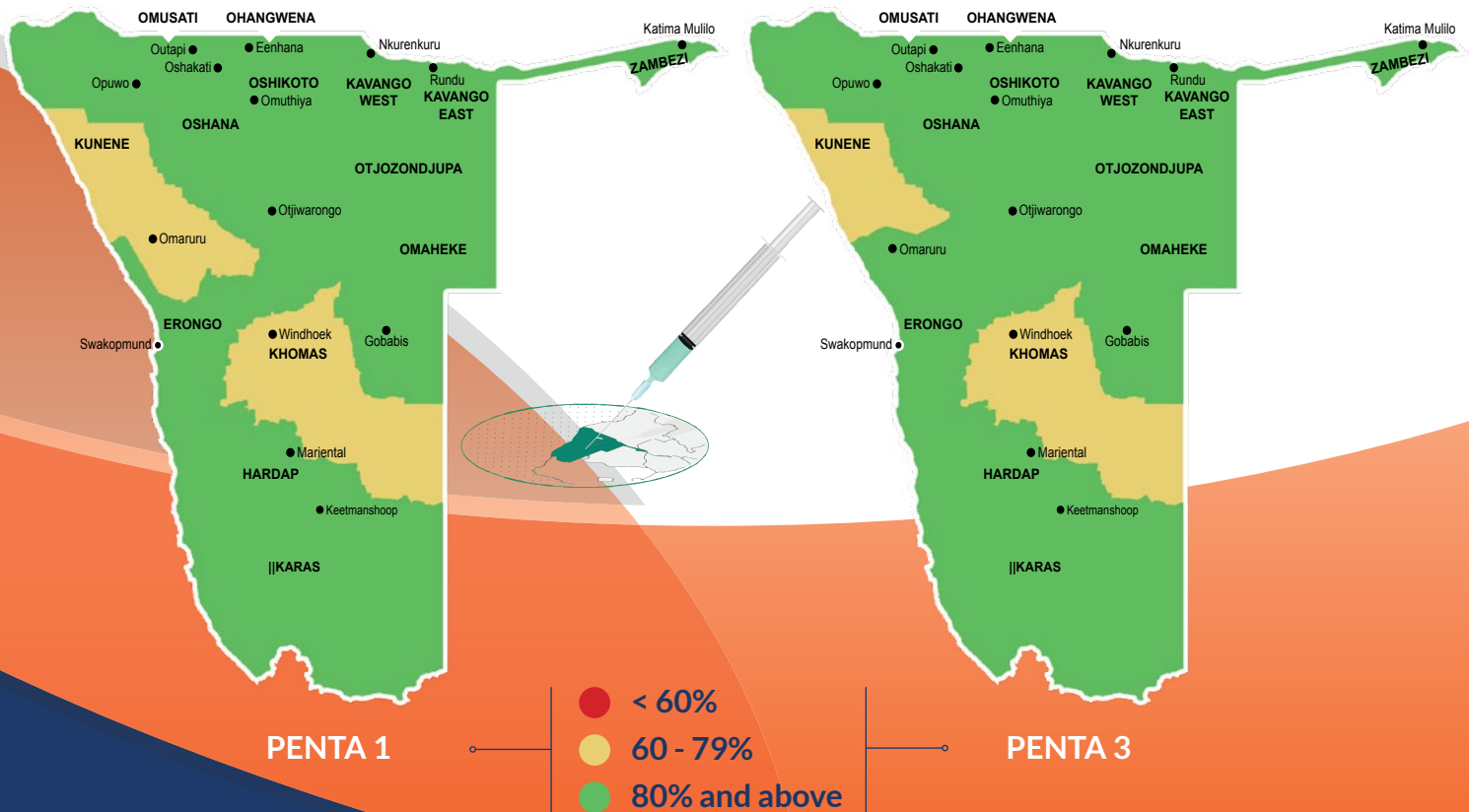
Penta vaccine is a 5-in-1 injection which protects children against:

- Diphtheria,
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough),
- Tetanus,
- Hepatitis B, and
- Haemophilus influenza.





# Immunization coverage per region in 2021



## Project

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The project received funding of **USD 270,000.00**

### **OVERALL OBJECTIVE:**

to strengthen and increase the uptake of RMNCH services to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Specific Objectives:**

- 1** To strengthen the capacity of health workers to provide quality reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health services in the context of COVID-19.
- 2** To equip primary health care facilities to improve the maternal services provided.
- 3** To increase demand for RMNCH services through health promotion and education interventions.
- 4** To increase the uptake of integrated interventions such as immunization, micronutrient supplementation for pregnant women and children, deworming for children and maternity care services.



Output

1

**Strengthened capacity of  
health workers  
to provide quality  
reproductive, maternal,  
newborn and child health  
services.**



New Antenatal Care (ANC) guidelines were officially launched and implemented country wide in October 2021. ANC training package was adapted and validated.

Intrapartum care guidelines were updated to meet the WHO intrapartum care recommendation for a positive childbirth experience.



Output

1

128

health workers (doctors, nurses and midwives) from 14 regions/ 35 districts have been trained to implement the new ANC guidelines.

44

health workers have been trained on ANC as trainers.





# 10

health facilities  
in 2 regions and 5 districts  
received mentoring  
and on the job training.

Output

2

Primary health care facilities equipped to provide quality maternal services.

16

portable ultrasound machines were procured and distributed to 16 high volume and hard to reach health facilities across all 14 regions.







Output

3

Increased uptake of integrated interventions: immunization, micronutrient supplementation for pregnant women and children, deworming for children and maternity care services.

4

regions reached with Maternal and Child Health days (MCHDs) between November and December 2021.





**This strategy aims to reach un- and under immunized children and includes:**

- Vitamin A supplementation,
- screening of children from 6 to 59 months of age for malnutrition using MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference),
- distribution of Ready-To-Use-Food (RTUF) for moderate and severely malnourished children,
- distribution of Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS),
- de-worming for children aged 12 to 59 months with albendazole, and
- administering Tetanus Toxoid (TT) to pregnant women and Women of Child Bearing Age (WCBA).

Output

3

25,000

children reached with the  
different interventions:

7900

children below 5 years  
were vaccinated against  
measles/rubella.

7000

children immunized with  
Oral Polio vaccine.





**6500**

children received  
pentavalent vaccine.

**23,800**

women of childbearing age were  
vaccinated with Tetanus and Adult  
Diphtheria (TTD) vaccine.

Output

4

Increased demand  
for reproductive, maternal,  
newborn and child health  
(RMNCH) services  
through awareness creation.

20

episodes of 'Vaccination for Good Health' radio programme reviewed and broadcast in 7 languages on NBC radio stations over a period of 3 months in Afrikaans, English, Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, Rukwangali, Silozi, and Nama/Damara.





**25,000**

copies of 'Parent's Guide to Childhood Immunization' reviewed and printed in 5 languages: English, Afrikaans, Otjiherero, Silozi and Oshiwambo.

**8600**

posters for ANC guidelines developed, printed and distributed to all 35 districts.



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