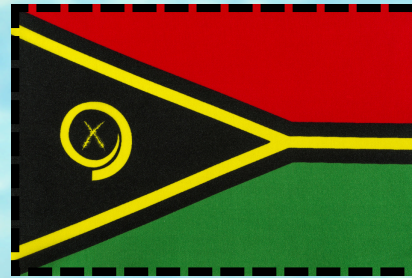


Profile

Meet Susan Tavimele Wokeke Vanuatu Country Coordinator



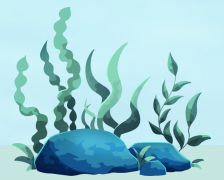
As a registered nurse midwife with 16 years of experience in a remote health facility, I have witnessed numerous challenges faced by women, children, and young people. Issues such as unintended pregnancies, complications from underweight deliveries, and preventable maternal deaths due to home births have highlighted the need for improved reproductive health. Rising teenage pregnancy, primarily linked to arranged marriages, and increased cases of STIs and cervical cancer have also emerged as significant concerns. To address these challenges, I implemented community education programs focusing on sexual and reproductive health, presenting health data to leaders to overcome traditional taboos. This approach has led to a reduction in teenage pregnancies, increased family planning use, and improved women's health. I have served as the provincial Reproductive Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) supervisor in Sanma Province since 2019, where I recognized the broader reproductive health challenges that have motivated me to pursue a Master's in Health Service Management, aiming to enhance RMNCAH programs at both provincial and national levels.



I have experience in remote health nurse-midwifery for 16 years, and have observed significant reproductive health challenges (unintended pregnancies, underweight deliveries, preventable maternal deaths, rising teenage pregnancy due to arranged marriages, increased STIs/cervical cancer). I started community education and presented data to leaders, resulting in reduced teenage pregnancies, increased family planning, and improved women's health. As provincial RMNCAH supervisor (since 2019), these broader challenges motivated the pursuit of a Master's in Health Service Management to enhance RMNCAH programs provincially and nationally.



Profile Continued:

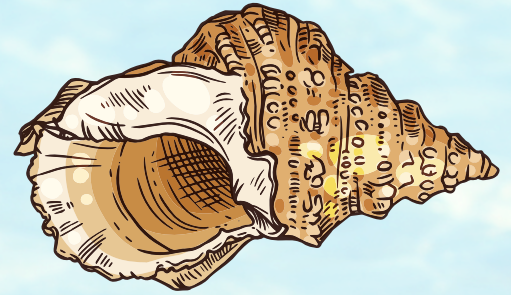


Vanuatu faces critical reproductive health challenges: limited access to healthcare (especially remotely), high unintended pregnancies, pervasive gender-based violence hindering care-seeking, and limited sexual and reproductive health education contributing to high teenage pregnancy rates. The Pacific Sexual and Reproductive Health (PSRH) initiative could help by enhancing healthcare access, developing educational resources, and promoting community awareness of family planning and maternal care, ultimately improving reproductive health outcomes.



Two of the initiatives I have been involved with include:

1. The Vanuatu Family Health Association's "Planem gud family blong yu" Project, my first in a remote health facility, focused on family planning education and improving access to contraceptives in remote communities. This initiative successfully decreased unplanned and teenage pregnancies within the target population through community workshops and outreach, empowering individuals to make informed reproductive health decisions.
2. As Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Chairlady following Cyclone Harold, I led efforts to maintain reproductive health service access. Our team conducted mobile outreach and education, providing antenatal care, family planning, and education on the impact of gender-based violence (GBV) on mothers and children, while also emphasizing mental health and early childhood development. This aimed to lessen the long-term effects of the disaster on vulnerable populations by ensuring essential care and support for mothers and their children.



As the new PSRH Country Coordinator, I'm eager to collaborate with you. Having worked on reproductive health challenges in Vanuatu, I believe regional partnership is key to impactful change.

My focus includes improving healthcare access, promoting comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education, and addressing unintended pregnancies and gender-based violence. To achieve this, I invite all PSRH members to join me. Your expertise and resources can significantly boost our initiatives. Whether by sharing best practices, partnering on outreach, or supporting research and advocacy, every contribution counts.

Together, we can build a healthier future for women, children, and young people in the Pacific. Let's connect, share ideas, and strengthen our collective efforts for lasting community impact.

I look forward to our collaboration!

Contact me at:
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