



Barriers and Facilitators to access antenatal care by women in Savai'i.

*Ta'ala Logomai Feterika Lualua.
Midwife, Assistant CNMO - Samoa*



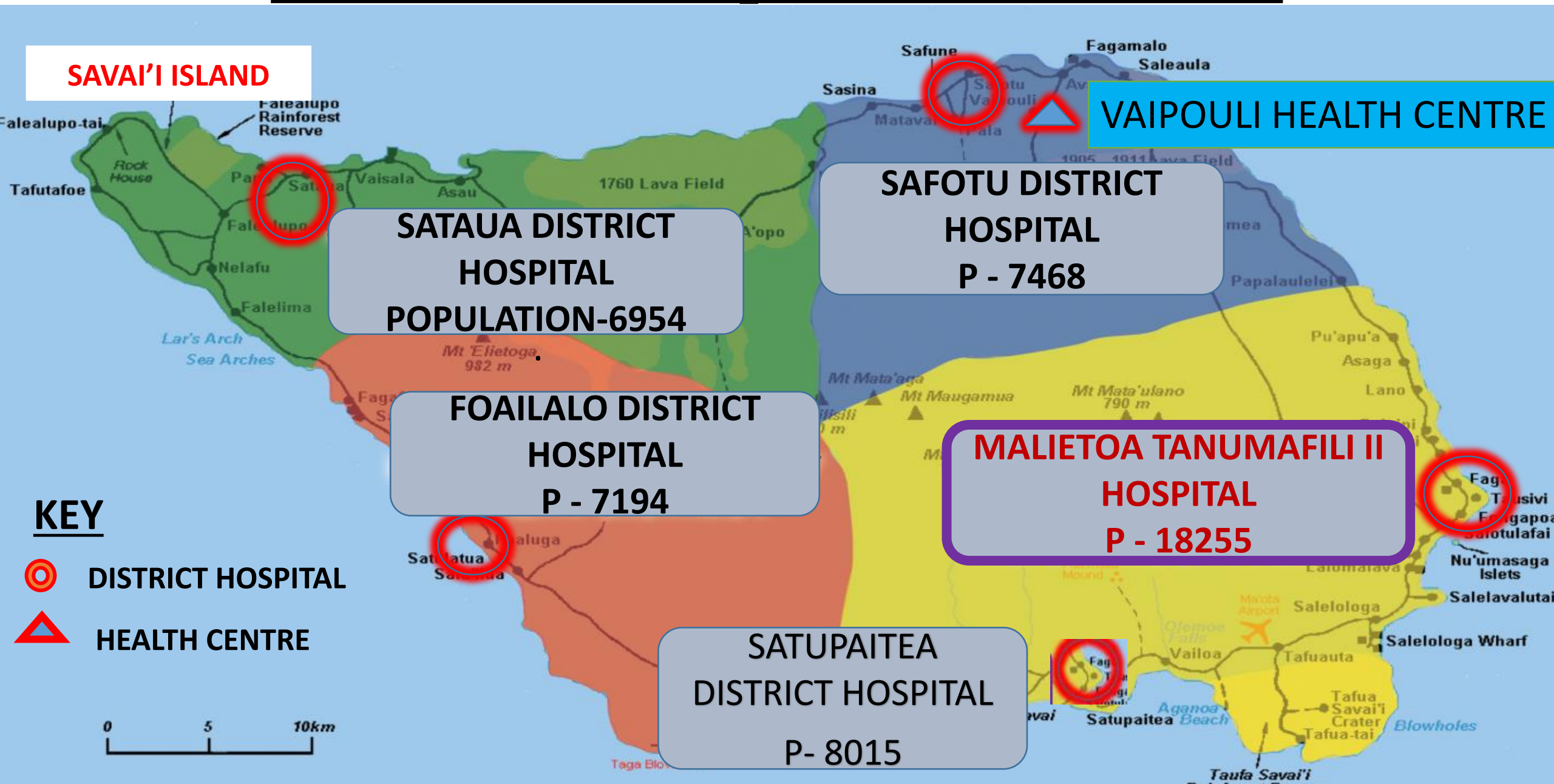


OUTLINE.

- Background
- Purpose
- Methodology
- Findings
- Way forward
- Challenges
- Acknowledgement



SETTING – Population of 47886.





INTRODUCTION

- Antenatal Care (ANC) is the care provided to women during pregnancy to:
 - ensure the best health conditions for both mother and baby
 - helps to prevent, detect and treat any complications earlier.
 - Complications lead to **maternal and infant morbidity and mortality** (*WHO guideline 2016*).
- *WHO recommended to book at ANC prior 12weeks gestation.*



BACKGROUND

- SDHS 2014 – 12% booked ANC < 12 weeks
- SDHS 2019/2020 – 14.9% booked ANC < 12 weeks,
 - 71.5% booked between 4th – 7th months.

ANC booking (<20 weeks) rate in Savai'i - < 30% (MOH, Savai'i monthly reports Sept 2018 - Jan 2019).

**TOTAL MOTHERS BOOKED AT ANC VS MOTHERS BOOKED BEFORE 20 WEEKS ACROSS
FOUR DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN SAVAI'I (SEP 2018 – JAN 2019).**

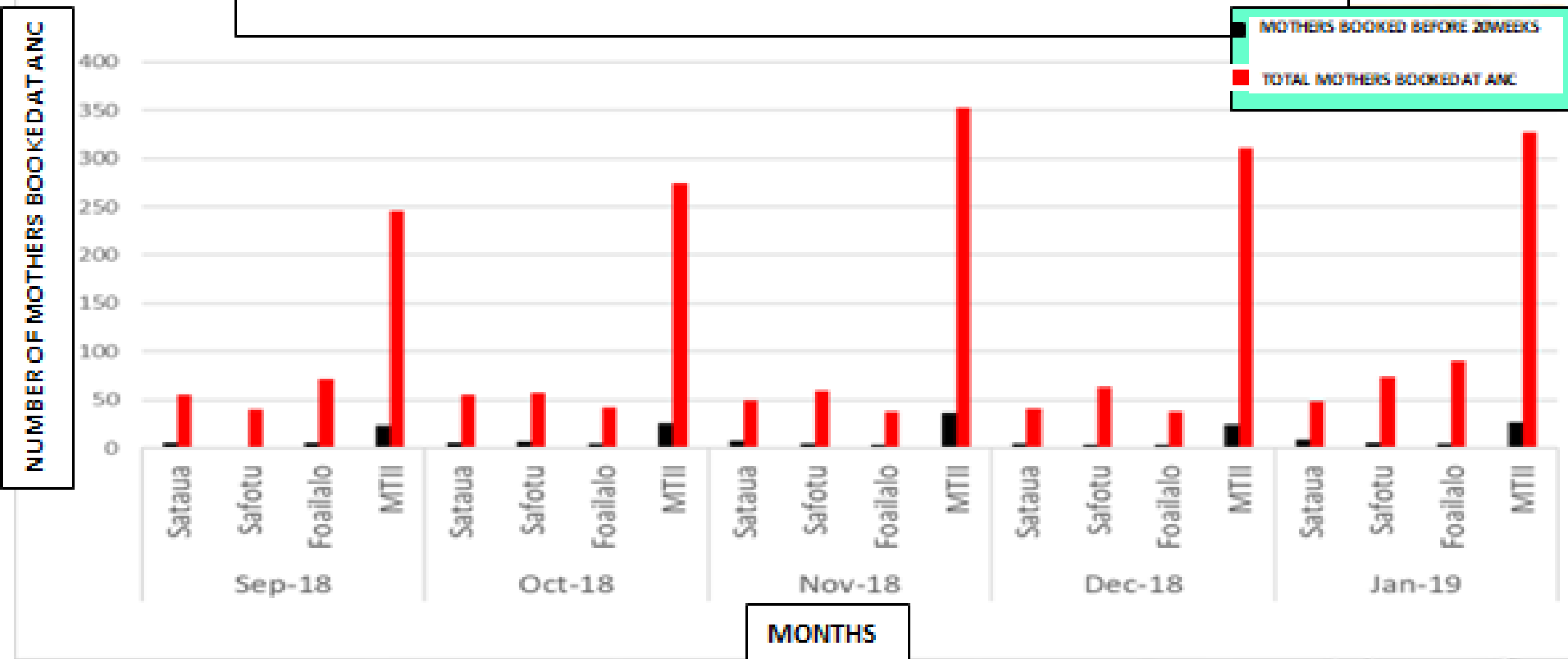


Figure 1: Antenatal booking before 20 weeks gestation in Savai'i (Savai'i Monthly KPI Report 2018/2019).



ISSUES/PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

SAVAI'I HEALTH SERVICES.

- No obstetrician nor surgeon based in Savai'i.
- Obstetrician visit: Wednesdays, fortnightly
- **If no** high risk clinics - cases referred to TTM Hospital.
- Most mothers did not come when referred (ended up transfer)
- Urgent chartered plane (SAT \$3500) or ferry (SAT\$22,000).
- Staff allocation (escorting)
- Savai'i budget

RESEARCH AIMS

A map of Samoa is shown in the background. The map includes labels for various locations: Falealupo, Falelima, Fagafau, Samata-i-Tai, Vāipua, Sagone, Satuiatua, Sala'ilua, Silisili, Sato'alepai, Safotu, Lefagaoali'i, Mauga, Samalae'ulu, Patamea, Asaga, SATUPAITEA, FA'ASALELEAGA, Gataivai, Satupaitea, Tafua-tai, and Taga. The Google logo is visible at the bottom center. Two white text boxes with black borders are overlaid on the map. The first box contains the text '1. To explore barriers and facilitators to ANC early engagement.' and the second box contains the text '2. To inform practical, educational, and policy changes to improve maternal health outcomes.'

1. To explore barriers and facilitators to ANC early engagement.

2. To inform practical, educational, and policy changes to improve maternal health outcomes.



RESEARCH QUESTION.

- What are the experiences and views of women in Savai'i regarding antenatal care?





RESEARCH ETHICS.

- VUW Human Ethics Committee (approval number 28457 on the 6th July 2020).
- Samoa Ministry of Health Research and Ethics Committee (approved on the 11th August 2020).
- Participants consent.



METHODOLOGY.

Qualitative descriptive Study .

Sample selection

- **Eligible** - pregnant women at >36 weeks gestation and postnatal women within 6 weeks of giving birth, age 18 - 49 yrs.
- **Sample** - a total of up to 18 (three groups of six)
 - 6 mothers *booked* <20 weeks gestation
 - 6 mothers *booked late* > 20 weeks gestation
 - 6 mothers *do not booked at all (unbooked)*
- **Interview** (semi - structured interview) focusing on Knowledge, attitudes and Behaviours.

Key Findings: Themes Identified

Discovery of Pregnancy

- Knowing – Self, Knowing – Others
- Positive Feelings (Happy, Excited) vs Negative Feelings (Fearful)
- Conflicting Feelings (Happy but shocked, Happy but Stressed, Uncertain.

Knowledge of Pregnancy

- awareness of maternity service available in Savai'i
- understanding of booking visits vs the time they prefer to start their first antenatal care visit
- access to Traditional Birth Attendants and Traditional Healers

**Barriers to
early
booking**

- Accessibility
- Knowledge gained from previous pregnancies
- Fearful feelings (hospital and needles)
- Unfamiliarity with the hospital setting and schedule
- Mother's role as a caretaker
- Being severely ill at the first months of pregnancy
- Availability of Traditional birth attendance in their village

**Facilitators
to early
booking**

- Satisfied with the services provided,
- Having a good understanding of the benefits of early antenatal care,
- The desire for gender and pregnancy confirmation,
- Family support



Barriers: Challenges to Early ANC

Global Similarities:

- Fear of hospital procedures,
- Accessibility challenges,
- Knowledge from previous pregnancies
- Lack of knowledge.

Local Context:

- Heavy reliance on Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).
- Socio-cultural factors.



WAY FORWARD

- Integrate midwives into community nursing teams.
- Strengthen outreach and transportation.
- Revive registration and trainings for TBAs to align with evidence-based practices.
- Strengthen collaboration between TBAs and midwives and REVIEW their guideline
- **Impacts:**
 - Improved maternal and child health outcomes.
 - Empowered communities with better healthcare access.



CHALLENGES

- Covid-19 pandemic.
- Work commitment – Vaccination rollout in Savaii
- Availability of mothers (participants)
- Rescheduling of interviews
- Mothers did not answer their phone numbers given (recruit more others)
- Transcribing and translation of interviews
- Family commitment
- Funding



Key Message: Together, we can make antenatal care accessible and impactful for all women in Savai'i.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- ✓ Almighty God:
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- ✓ Supervisor Associate Professor Dr. Robyn Maude
- ✓ Families and friends



FA'AFETAI TELE LAVA.