

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2022

FRENCH HUMANITARIAN MISSION IN PNG

ROUTINE IMMUNISATION

# MISSION REPORT

# AIDOCEAN !

# THE STORY

Marine Bayer is a former combat helicopter pilot in the French Navy. In 2009, she decides to become a nurse and wishes to travel the world offering care and taking care of the most needy.

Sébastien Destremau is a skipper who has taken part in two “Vendee Globe” races. A writer and author of a play, this jack-of-all-trades hangs up his racing/adventuring boots and devotes himself to humanitarian work.

In 2021, Sebastien and Marine join forces to help the less privileged in creating the “Ocean Vacci Tour” association in New Caledonia and the “Aidocean endowment fund” in France.

In 2022, WHO announced a massive surge of measles cases worldwide following the COVID-19 pandemic and a Strategic Plan is being established by the American Red Cross, WHO and UNICEF for the period 2021-2030 to eradicate Measles and Rubella.

Marine and Sébastien decide to offer their help to isolated tribes and villages in Papua New Guinea with a first campaign to be held in the fall of 2022 in the New Ireland Province. The goal is to help improve the routine immunisation campaigns for infants vital vaccines hence to prevent the resurgence of deadly epidemics.

Thanks to the support of French Ambassador in PNG, Guillaume Lemoine, the French Government decides to fund part of the project thru the « Pacific fund » of the « Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Etrangères ». The New Caledonian's Government, as well as several corporate sponsors and private donors join the project and help financing the expedition.

Following the signature of an MoA early September 2022 with the National Department of Health (NDOH) and the New Ireland Province Health Authority (NIPHA), Aidocean starts to patrol some remote parts of the New Ireland Province with a view to provide routine immunisation to a target population on **954 children** below the age of 5 y/o.

The **French Humanitarian Mission** will last five weeks, starting on September 14 and ending on October 18 2022.

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## THE TEAM

**Aidocean team:** Jean-Michel Pontier (doctor), Alexis Baudot (cameraman), Theodore De Kerros (documentarist) and the two founders Marine Bayer & Sébastien Destremau.

**NIPHA medical team:** Jacinta Malawa (Nurse from Namatanai Hospital), Peter (doctor from Kavieng Hospital), Abraham (dentist), Jack Talvia (dentist-assistant).

**Local medical team:** Along the way, nurses Tom (Lamassa), Elisabeth (Babase island), Dorothy (Tanga island) and the paramedical health workers Zillion (Lambom), Ignacius & Chris (Tanga), join the team on an add hoc basis .



**In order to maximise the mission, one of the key idea** is to use a vessel to allow the entire team to move from one remote location to the next. The Golden Dawn is a local ship owned and skippered by Craig de Wit, his wife Kamila, .... and Milo the pet dog.

## THE VACCINES

The routine immunization includes:

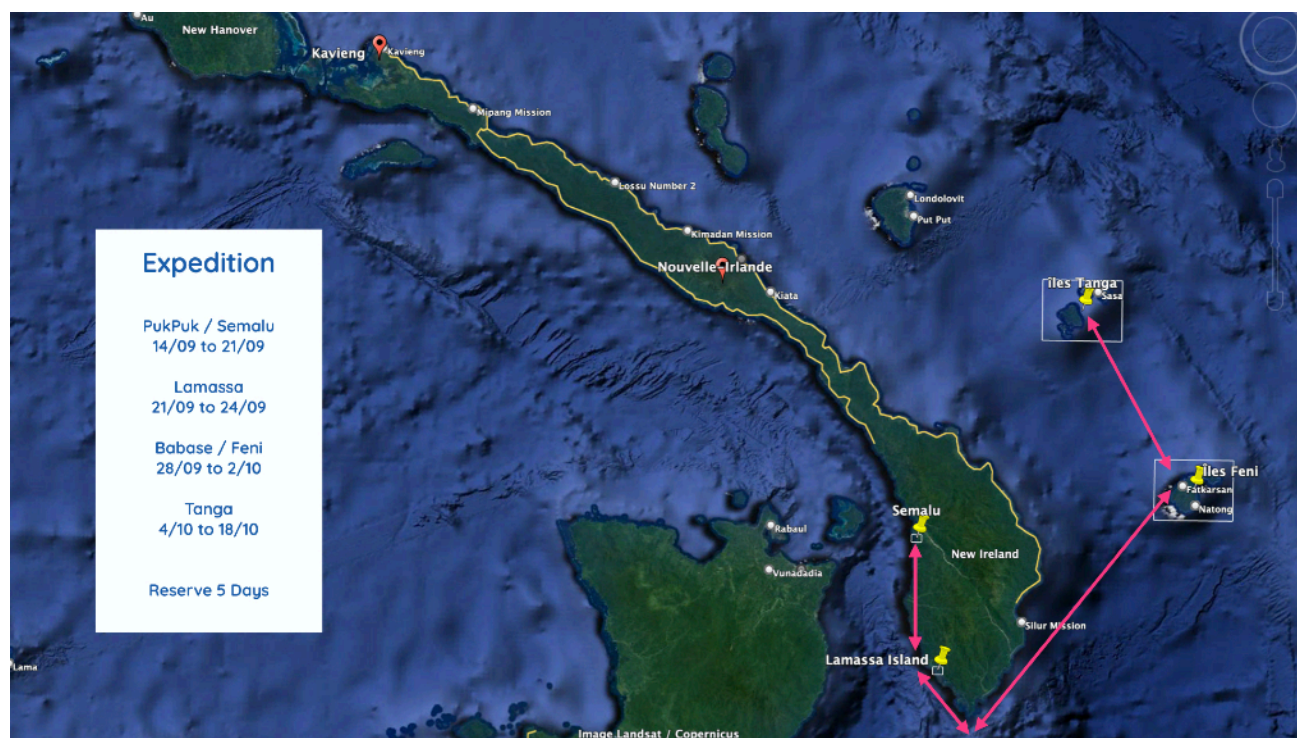
- PENTA ( Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenzae type b)
- M/R Measles & Rubella
- Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV)
- Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV)
- Pneumococcal conjugate Vaccine (PCV)
- BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) against tuberculosis
- Vitamine A

## THE TARGET & THE RESULTS

NIPHA established an itinerary, an agenda and fixed a target population of 954. This number was quite accurate as Aidocean saw 1 046 children. **A difference of +9,6%.**

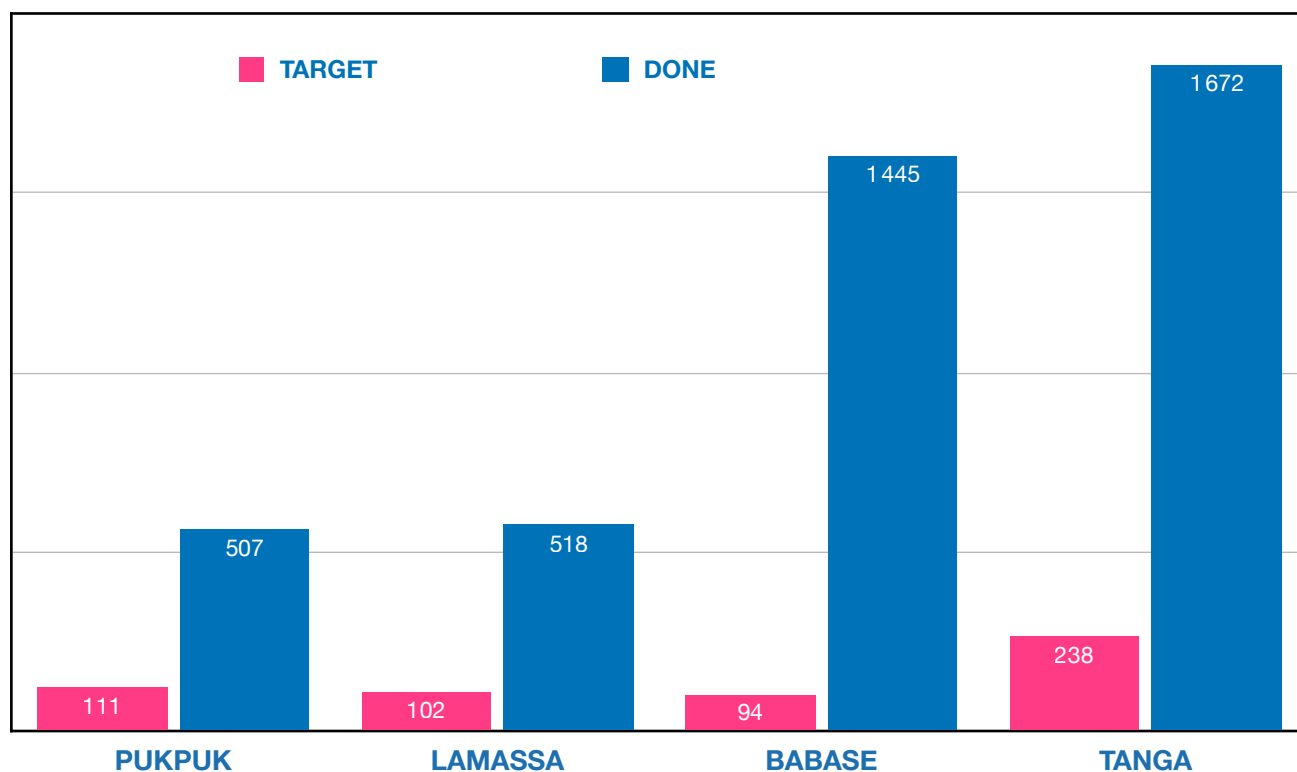
	AGENDA	POPULATION	
		TARGET	SEEN
PUK PUK	14 / 21 September	191	202
LAMASSA	21 / 24 September	146	165
BABASE	28 September / 2 October	170	201
TANGA	4 / 18 October	447	478
TOTAL	Five weeks program	954	1046

## THE ITINERARY



## THE NUMBER OF ACT

NIPHA gave a target number of 545 immunization acts to be carried out during the entire mission. This number was inaccurate as the number of immunization acts provided by Aidocean was 4142. **A difference of +760%**



IN DETAILS		HEPAT B	VIT- A	MRV	IPV	OPV	PCV	PENTA	BCG
PUK PUK	TARGET	2		8		7	45	45	4
	DONE	4	0	151	51	118	60	60	63
LAMASSA	TARGET	4		7	6	7	37	37	4
	DONE	1	54	129	35	101	91	83	24
BABASE	TARGET	5		8	6	10	30	30	5
	DONE	6	316	288	74	212	251	239	59
TANGA	TARGET	10		15	8	15	90	90	10
	DONE	4	367	368	77	284	264	261	47
TOTAL TALLY	TARGET	21	0	38	20	39	202	202	23
	DONE	15	737	936	237	715	666	643	193

# DATA ANALYSIS

## **National figures:**

Poliomyelitis: The percentage of children on a full polio vaccination schedule fell nine points dropping from 41% to 32% between 2020 and 2021, estimated the World Health Organization (WHO). In other words, one in three children under the age of five is not immune to poliomyelitis.

DTP1: During the same period a fall of 9 points is also observed for the DTP1 vaccine, which serves as a reference to assess the vaccination coverage in a given country, to reach 39%. Almost two children out of three are not immune against the Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis diseases.

## **Aidocean figures:**

Aidocean noticed precisely the same proportion of children not immunized against Pentavalent, (an improved equivalent of DTP). Of the under five Y/O children vaccinated against Pentavalent by Aidocean, 39% had missed their booster vaccination in recent months or even years.

Aidocean also observed that an average of one in three children has missed their booster against poliomyelitis and one in two children has missed their last shot against measles.

Averaging 10,37kg and 26 months old, the total number of children immunized during the five weeks campaign is 1,046 and includes 4,142 acts of immunization. Further, the Aidocean patrol used 2,690 syringes for a total of 7,650 vaccines injected.

Whilst the number of children is quite accurate (+9,6%), the data clearly shows a staggering difference between the number of immunisation (545 acts) estimated by the local authorities and the result seen on the ground by Aidocean (ie: 4,142 acts or +760%).

Over the 5 weeks of the mission, Aidocean administered an average of seven and half times more vaccines than anticipated and this discrepancy made the provisioning of vaccines and syringes very challenging.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**Immunization :** The sheer difference between the forecast number of immunization act and the achieved number, caused a great deal of logistical difficulties regarding Vaccins / Syringes. On day 3, Aidocean had to restock in Pukpuk, then on day 11 in Kokopo (New Britain), then on day 9 in Lamassa, then on day 13 in Babase and on day 20 in Tanga before making a special trip back to Namatanai / Kavieng on day 28 before returning to Tanga and complete the mission on day 34.

## **Recommendations:**

- Accurate data and better forecast from NIPHA.
- A dedicated logistic support person in Kavieng.

**Local Team :** After the third week of the mission, the "local health staff" were tired and wanted to have a break and return to their family's. Jacinta has been very professional and an asset to the organisation. In Lambom, paramedical health worker Zillion is looking after the health post and has not been paid for three years.

## **Recommendations:**

- To keep the local team sharp and motivated, a rotation every fortnight is necessary.
- Provide Lambom area with a proper health structure

**Medical :** A team doctor is a bonus however Jean Michel wasn't able to do much due to the lack of material / hygiene / knowledge. Skin diseases are a very big problem with lots of scabies / tropical hazard / burn wounds / taenia / infection.



**Recommendations :**

- Malaria tests and treatments
- Antibiotics for kids / adults (tablets & IM)
- Amoxicillin / Panadol / Dressings / eye drops
- Bandages and gutter to immobilise broken bones
- Lidocaine (spray and injection)
- A better baby scale

**Various requests:** The team received a number of requests for family planning. Generally speaking, adults need glasses and the school do not have books. Dry season is very long and villages are suffering from the lack of fresh water.

**Recommendations :**

- Implants and condom
- Glasses (+0,5 to +3)
- Learn and teach various ways of making fresh water





# KEY MOMENTS

- **On September 13 in Ulaputur, a traditional welcoming ceremony officially launches the French Humanitarian Mission in PNG.**



- **Along the way, Aidocean has distributed Books for schools, glasses for the elderly people as well as little things like fishing gear / playing balls / makeup kit for kids.**
- **On September 16** and a couple of days after the beginning of the vaccination patrol, local doctor Peter who is supposed to be our main officer for the entire expedition, leaves the team for "a few days" and never comes back.



- **On September 19** in PukPuk, the team discovers Sarah foot's injury: Decision is made to provide financial assistance and sending her to Rabaul Hospital for surgery. After two weeks and whilst waiting to have a second surgery for a skin graft, Sarah asks to be discharged and walks away from the hospital without even a dressing.

- **On October 2** in Babase Hospital, the team helps delivering a kid who is nicknamed Aidocean by his parent.
- **On October 4**, the dentist and his assistant suddenly leave the program following four days of drinking coconut juice and not working at all.
- **On October 5**, Aidocean arrives at dawn in Balanwarasau Village (Tanga) to find a woman who just gave birth and is retaining the placenta. The nurses and doctor are on hand to help and eventually stitched the woman's perineum.

- **On October 11** in Tanga hospital, 18 months old named Benard arrives by Banana boat semi conscious. He has been severely sick for two weeks. Sadly, Benard dies in front of us less than an hour later due to a suspected diphtheria. The team immediately takes off for the Emo village to check whether there are other cases of diphtheria.



- **On October 18** in Nunu and for the final day of the mission, a 7 months old baby weighing only 2,5 kg is suspected to have contracted tuberculosis. That night, **the Aidocean mission was now believed to be complete** and the team gives all the leftover vaccines/syringes/medicine /esbies etc. to Nurse Dorothy in Tanga and sail away towards Moresby.
- **However on October 23** and whilst sailing in the Bismarck Sea located in the northern coast of New-Britain (Papua New Guinea), the French ONG Aidocean's boat comes across a drifting banana boat. The skipper ran out of fuel the day before with 10 people onboard including four kids. The "castaways" have been drifting offshore since. Craig de Wit skipper of the "Golden Dawn" immediately launches the dinghie boat with water/food and petrol supplies to rescue the very lucky castaways ...1/2 hour later, the banana boat is sailing again towards the coast of New Britain.



**A nice epilogue to  
the 2022 French  
Humanitarian  
Mission in PNG**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It would probably take us too long to thank every single person who helped us putting this expedition together, however there are a few people we would like to specifically acknowledge as the French Humanitarian Mission to PNG wouldn't have existed if it was not for them.

- French Ambassador Guillaume Lemoine, Bruno Bellanger and Clement Abellard for their tremendous support during the preparation of this mission.
- The French Government, the Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, the AFD and the Fonds Pacifique for the fund allocated to this mission with a special thanks to the New Caledonia High Commissioner Mr & Mme Faure.
- The New Caledonian Government for their financial backing and more specifically Mr Charles Wea and Alexandre Lafargue.
- Force Armées de Nouvelle Calédonie and more specifically General Valéry Putz and Commander Laura Serhal for their guidances and recommendations.
- The National Health Secretary Doctor Liko and his staff for allowing Aidocean to help PNG with a special thought for Kapilin and Margaret.
- The Governor of New Ireland Sir J.Chan and more specifically Monica and Joanna.
- Nipha's Chairman Doctor S.Kome Komunt and CEO S.Hiasihri staff with a special thought to J.Taulo, A.Wena, B.Aruke and Jacinta Malawa.
- The Sponsors, Icape Planete Bleue (T.Ballenghien), Van Web (A.Bayer), Voyage Tropical (E.Labat), Easy skill (A.Declety and C.Lorho), NC 1ere (G. De La Bourdonnaye), Advanced Tracking (C.Allan), Optic Discount (H.Courtot), Buk bilong Pikini (A-S. Hermann), Unicef (C.Kamenga).
- The long list of our generous and private donators.
- Our outstanding team of volunteers including Jean-Michel Pontier, Alexis Baudot, Théodore de Kerros.
- And last but not least, Craig, Kamila de Wit and the whole crew of Golden Dawn. The mission would not have been the same without your fantastic support.





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**THANK YOU**