

Situation Report 4 Polio Outbreak

17 October 2019

Highlights

- Synchronized polio vaccination campaigns were kicked off on Monday 14 October in National Capital Region (NCR), Davao City, Davao del Sur, and Lanao del Sur including Marawi City in response to a polio outbreak declared by the Philippines Department of Health (DOH) on 19 September 2019.
- Current campaign in NCR to vaccinate almost 1.3 million children under 5 and over 400,000 in Mindanao on 14-27 October.
- No further cases have been confirmed
- Current polio outbreak based on 9 confirmed environmental samples and 2 human cases, resulting from persistently low routine immunization coverage, and poor sanitation and hygiene.
- Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) is considered a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).
- To protect against both cVDPV type 1 and 2, a dose of inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) as recommended by the Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR).
- The Philippines administers IPV as part of the routine immunization program to children aged 3.5 months. Stocks are currently insufficient for the broader population.

# of samples confirmed	cVDPV1	cVDPV2
Environmental	7	2
Human	0	2



Marawi City Health Officer, BARMM Minister of Health and UNICEF representative at the Marawi City polio vaccination campaign launch

WHO RECOMMENDS:

All residents and long-term visitors to receive a dose of inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) which protects against all 3 polio types

Current Situation

Synchronized polio vaccination campaigns were kicked off on Monday 14 October in NCR, Davao City, Davao del Sur, and Lanao del Sur including Marawi City in response to a polio outbreak declared by the Philippines Department of Health (DOH) on 19 September 2019.

In NCR, 7 environmental samples from Tondo tested positive for cVDPV1. A 1st round of vaccination was conducted in Manila City on 19 to 31 August with bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV), which protects against poliovirus type 1 and 3. Only 53.8% of the targeted children up to 5 years old were vaccinated. The 2nd and 3rd round of the campaign aim to vaccinate almost 1.3 million children up to 5 years of age.

Two environmental samples from Manila and Davao tested positive for cVDPV2, followed by 1 positive human case from Lanao del Sur. A second human case from Laguna tested positive for immunodeficiency-related VDPV (iVDPV2). The currently ongoing vaccination campaign is targeting over 400,000 children up to 5 years of age in Davao City, Davao del Sur, and Lanao del Sur with monovalent OPV (mOPV), which only protects against poliovirus type 2. The 2nd and 3rd round will target over 3.1 million children in all 6 regions of Mindanao.

All samples were tested by the National Polio Laboratory at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM), whereas sequencing and genetic analysis were done at the Global Specialized Laboratory National

Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) in Japan and additional genetic characterization provided by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The NIID and CDC confirmed all VDPV1 samples were genetically linked but did not find a genetic linkage with any other known VDPV1 detected globally, indicating new emergence.

Comparison done at NIID and CDC in poliovirus databases showed the Laguna case is not genetically linked with any other known type 2 poliovirus, indicating new emergence. All other VDPV2 samples are genetically linked.

Table 1: Outbreak Response Immunization Campaigns for cVDPV1 and 2

When	What	Where	Who	#
14-27 Oct 2019	cVDPV2	Davao City, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Sur	<5 years	427,008
	cVDPV1	NCR		1,276,631
25 Nov-7 Dec 2019	cVDPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)		3,111,650
	cVDPV1	NCR		1,276,631
6-18 Jan 2020	cVDPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)		3,111,650

Response

Risk assessment

The current polio outbreak is not an unexpected event, as the Philippines has been assessed as high-risk for poliovirus transmission in the past years by the Western Pacific Regional Commission for Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication (RCC), because of chronically suboptimal immunisation coverage, sub-optimal performance of AFP surveillance, and, poor sanitation and hygiene conditions.

The regional risk of potential spread across international borders is assessed as moderate considering the large number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). Although many OFW work globally, the risk of international spread is still considered low, but not negligible, further influenced by dynamic migratory patterns (particularly the USA).

The main objectives of the response are to:

1. Interrupt current circulation and prevent new emergence of **VDPV1** and **2** by achieving vaccination coverage of at least 95% in under-five children in affected areas
2. To enhance AFP surveillance, especially in high risk areas
3. To explore the expansion of environmental surveillance

Overall risk		
National	Regional	Global
High	Moderate	Low

Coordination

DOH is coordinating the response through its Emergency Operating Centre, where the Incident Management Team meets twice-daily to discuss progress as updated through the Centres for Health Development (CHD), Provincial and City Health Officers. WHO and UNICEF are closely coordinating the response with DOH at all levels:

- UNICEF mobilized 5 consultants on supply chain and vaccine management, communication for development (C4D) and information management. A real time reporting system for coverage and vaccine stock was set up using the mobile application ODK.
- UNICEF allocated emergency funds to support DOH with vaccine delivery and supply chain, training and orientation, social mobilization and awareness raising, amongst other
- WHO allocated emergency funds to support DOH with monitoring and coordination at all levels.
- The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) mobilised 13 international consultants who are supporting DOH with the implementation of the campaign: 5 in Mindanao and 8 in NCR.
- CDC mobilised 1 consultant to support with the monitoring of the campaign.
- Both UNICEF and WHO staff are monitoring the campaign in Mindanao and NCR.

Surveillance

In spite of strengthened surveillance of both Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases and environmental samples, no further cases have been confirmed.

Immunization

The below concerns arising from Rapid Coverage Assessments and other monitoring conducted during the first 4 days of the campaign are being addressed:

Recording of children:

- Not all vaccination teams had access to functional markers. Additional markers had to be sent to different areas, and more markers are currently being procured.
- Use of tally sheets and immunization cards needs to be emphasized as an alternative means to record the number of children vaccinated.
- (Optional) House marking should be done properly to prevent vaccination teams to search for unvaccinated children in areas already covered.
- Use of the mobile application is not always feasible due to limited internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas.

Staffing:

- All trained health staff including Barangay Health Workers can be mobilised as vaccinators, not only nurses and midwives

Vaccines:

- Importance to monitor vaccine utilization before properly discarding empty vials into ziplocked bags.
- Official operational guidelines issued do not allow for use of multi-dose vial policy for mOPV2 resulting in some vaccination teams not opening vials unless there are 20 children or after 5 PM.
- Official operational guidelines also do not allow use of bOPV for routine immunization in areas using mOPV2 during the outbreak response immunization activity. Concerned provinces are worried this will negatively affect their routine immunization coverage and create immunity gaps for type 1 and type 3 for children who are missed during this period.
- Many vaccination teams are keeping the vaccine droppers inside the vaccine carriers making them hard and difficult to squeeze thus affecting the administration of OPV

Special vaccination sites:

- Designated teams need to be appointed for day-care centres, churches, and malls.
- Transit and hospital sites are not being implemented or for only 1-2 days in Davao City and other cities due to concerns about giving vaccine to non-resident children and that these vaccination sites were not included in the vaccine allotment for their catchment areas.



UNICEF supported with:

Logistics and vaccine management

- Finalization of supply chain inventory in Davao Del Sur, Davao City and Lanao Del Sur, as well as in Region 9, 10, 11, 12, including gap management for in Mindanao and NCR for current campaign.

- Shipment of vaccine fridges, cold boxes, vaccine carriers and ice pack to Lanao Del Sur. Procured 15 ice pack freezers, 3000 ice packs and other for Lanao Del Sur cold chain capacity to store the vaccine during the campaign and ensure proper management
- Printing and distribution of daily register for proper mOPV2 vaccine recording and reporting
- Delivery, customs clearance of the first batch of mOPV2 vaccines (25,200 vials) to health facilities in Davao Del Sur, Davao City and Lanao Del Sur covering 427,008 targeted children under 5 years as well as to all regions in Mindanao for Round 1 & 2
- Repacking and shipping of vaccines bundled with other logistics on 9 October following the approved distribution flow.

Training and orientation

- Orientation and microplanning workshops in NCR, Lanao Del Sur and Davao del Sur, including to partners specifically for social mobilization, monitoring and rapid coverage surveys
- Orientation to rally support from the Positive Youth Development Network, IFRC/ICRC/PRC, Philippine Navy and Marines, private paediatricians of St Luke's Hospital Global and Taguig City
- Meeting with Barangay Captains of Pasay City, and Heads of Rotary District 3810
- Orientation and microplanning workshops are planned during the 2nd half of October for Regions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and the remaining provinces of BARMM

Social Mobilization

- Outbreak communication response plan with an implementation plan and costing
- Review of current DOH communication materials on polio to refine messages and RCA form to include specific question on campaign awareness
- Printing of 3000 copies of health worker communication guide to be distributed to health facilities
- Pre-campaign & post campaign for social mobilization, initiated the conceptualization of the launch in Davao City and facilitated the engagement of an event organizer to design and manage the launch and conduct pre-event awareness raising activities
- Planning of advocacy and social mobilization activities in Davao Del Sur and Lanao Del Sur
- Engagement of religious groups (Imam Council of the Philippines, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Seventh Day Adventist, Iglesia ni Cristo, Jehovah's Witnesses Philippines, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) and ABS CBN News Public Service to draw support for the campaign.

Establishment of Realtime reporting system

- Development of Mobile Data Collection App for instant online and offline access, real time submission of the report from RHUs, seamless consolidation of data with online Dashboard for quick analysis and use of data for action



Partners' engagement

Region	Province	Partner	EPI								Supplies				
			Social Mobilization	O Immunization	Recruitment of vaccinators	Training of health workers	Transport means	Coordination with RHUs	Monitoring	RCA	Waste Management	Prepositioning in warehouses	Cash	Local procurement	Emergency fund
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	AAH	x				x	x	x	x					
NCR	Metro Manila	Americares	x		x	x	x	x				x			
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	CFSI	x					x	x						
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	ICRC	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
All	All	IFRC													x
NCR	Manila	IMC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						
NCR	Manila	MDM	x			x		x	x						
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	MSF	x	x	x	x	x								
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	Plan	x		x		x	x	x			x			x
NCR	Metro Manila	Plan	x		x		x	x	x			x			x
All	All	PRC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
NCR	Caloocan	SC	x	x	x	x	x					x	x		x
NCR	Malabon	SC	x	x	x	x	x					x	x		x
NCR	Navotas	SC	x	x	x	x	x					x	x		x
BARMM	Lanao del Sur	SP	x	x				x						x	x
NCR	Manila	SP	x	x				x						x	x
All	All	UNICEF	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
All	All	WHO	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
XI	All	WV	x									x	x	x	x
XI	Davao del Sur	WV	x									x	x	x	x

Acronym Detail

AAH	Action Against Hunger
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
EPI	Expanded Program for Immunization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMC	International Medical Corps
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDM	Doctors of the World
MSF	Doctors Without Borders
PRC	Philippine Red Cross
RCA	Rapid Coverage Assessment
RI	Relief International
SC	Save the Children
SP	Samaritan's Purse
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WV	World Vision



Risk communication

DOH Advisory: Polio Vaccination for Travelers Coming to the Philippines 10 October 2019

<https://www.doh.gov.ph/advisories/Polio-Vaccination-for-Travelers-coming-to-the-Philippines>

DOH approved risk communication messages for different audiences available at

<https://poliofreeph.wixsite.com/poliofreeph> with password: AdiosPolio:

- Polio Outbreak Communication Plan (26 September 2019)
- Microplanning Tool (18 September 2019)
- Messaging Grid for the Public (11 October 2019)
- Visibility/Out-of-Home Materials
- Social Media Cards Set
- Health Workers' Conversation Guide
- Media Releases, Print Ads, and Branding Elements

Other relevant information can be found here:

- Disease outbreak news Polio outbreak, The Philippines 24 September 2019
<https://www.who.int/csr/don/24-september-2019-polio-outbreak-the-philippines/en/>
- <https://www.doh.gov.ph/node/18012>
- <https://www.who.int/philippines/news/detail/19-09-2019-who-unicef-and-partners-support-philippine-department-of-health-s-polio-outbreak-response>
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/questions-and-answers-on-the-polio-outbreak-in-the-philippines>
- <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/polio-outbreak-in-the-philippines>