

Situation Report 9

Polio Outbreak

26 November 2019

Highlights

Since 19 November 2019:

- Three new cases with circulating Vaccine Derived Polio Virus type 2 (cVDPV2) from Cotabato City, Midasayap (North Cotabato) and Talayang (Maguindanao).
- First human case confirmed with VDPV type 1 from Basilan, an island province part of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Case is not genetically linked to the environmental samples tested positive in Manila, indicating new emergence.
- Four healthy children from Maguindanao were found with cVDPV2, all linked to previously detected cVDPV2 from Mindanao.
- Five new environmental samples positive for cVDPV2 from several sites in Manila and 2 new environmental samples positive for cVDPV1 from two sites in Manila.
- Start of synchronized polio vaccination campaign on 25 November until 7 December targeting 4.4 million children under 5 in National Capital Region (NCR) and 6 regions in Mindanao.
- Current polio outbreak resulting from persistently low routine immunization coverage, and poor sanitation and hygiene.
- **Philippines is affected by both cVDPV1 and cVDPV2. cVDPV is considered a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).**

# of samples confirmed	VDPV1	cVDPV1	iVDPV2	cVDPV2
Environmental	0	13	0	14
Human	1	0	1	6
Healthy children	0	0	0	4



WHO polio consultant joining the investigation into the 2nd polio case from Manguindanao

Current Situation

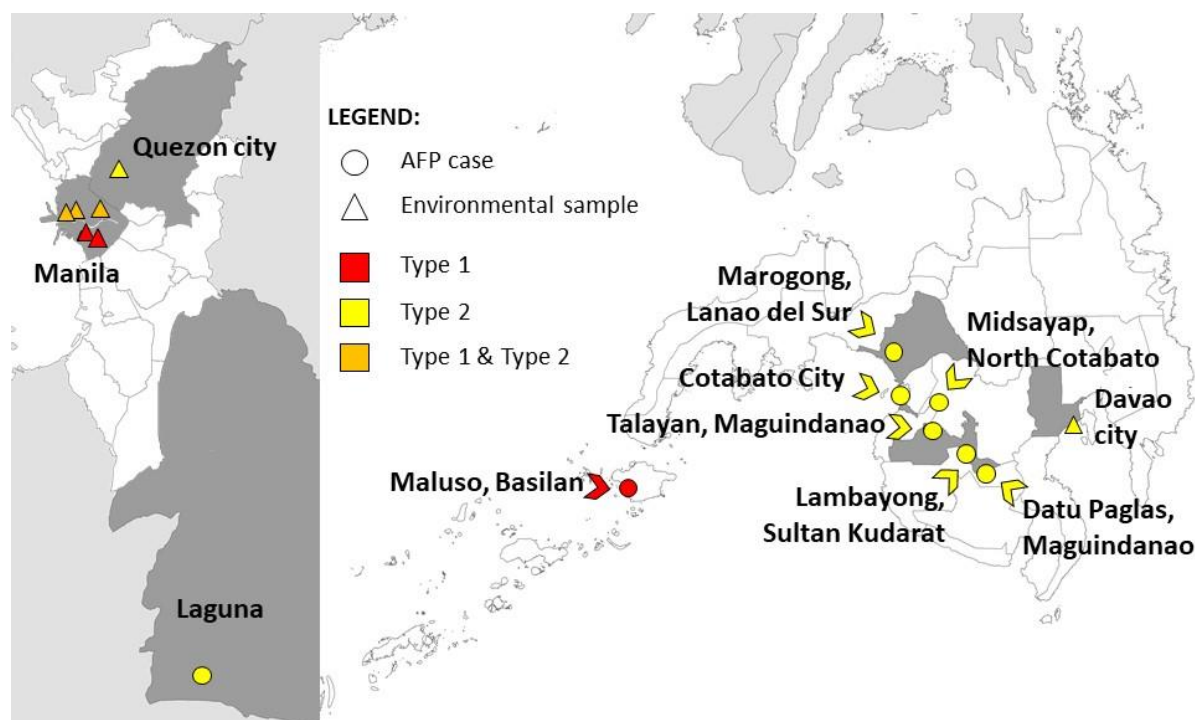
First human case tested positive for VDPV1 from the island province of Basilan in BARMM is a 9-year female with no history of previous vaccination against polio. The virus is 3.3% nucleotide divergence from Sabin1 and not linked to the environmental samples tested positive in Manila.

Three additional positive cVDPV2 cases were found from Cotabato City, Midasayap (North Cotabato) and Talayang (Maguindanao). There is frequent travel within the BARMM provinces and to other parts of Mindanao as well all the way to Manila. The case in Cotabato City had recent travel to Talayang where the case occurred. Both Midasayap and Talayang are located within an hour of Datu Piang, where an earlier cVDPV2 case was found, which is the cultural hub of Maguindanao province.

Furthermore, 4 positive cVDPV2 samples from 4 healthy children were taken in Datu Piang, Maguindanao province, confirming there is circulation of VDPV2 in the area. The samples were taken before the outbreak response immunization activity in Datu Piang, Datu Paglas and Lambayong on 4-8 November.

All samples were tested by the National Polio Laboratory at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM), whereas sequencing and genetic analysis is done at the NIID in Japan and additional genetic characterization provided by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Figure 1: VDPV Locations in the Philippines as of 25 November 2019



The next round of the synchronized polio vaccination campaign started on 25 November and will last until 7 December targeting 4.4 million children under 5 in NCR and 6 regions in Mindanao.

Table 1: Outbreak Response Immunization Campaigns for cVDPV1 and 2

When	What	Where	Who	#
25 Nov-7 Dec 2019	mOPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)	<5 years	3,111,650
	bOPV	NCR		1,276,631
20 Jan-2 Feb 2020	mOPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)		3,111,650

Response

Risk assessment

Overall risk		
National	Regional	Global
High	Moderate	Low

With an increasing number of human cases and environmental samples testing positive for poliovirus type 1 and 2, the risk for further polio transmission continues to be assessed as high at the national level, 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 still 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).

Coordination

The Department of Health (DOH) has issued guidelines for all 7 regions involved in the vaccination campaign to establish Incident Command Structures (ICS) and Emergency Operation Centers (EOC). Coverage data for the 6 Mindanao regions will be collected by the DOH EOC based in Davao, with national coverage data being compiled by the national DOH EOC based in Manila.

UNICEF and WHO have been supporting micro planning and pre-campaign assessments (including cold chain assessments) in all regions, as well as orientation of religious leaders from all municipalities. Biggest risk is lack of operational costs for transport of vaccine, ice packs and staff to remote Islands.

Training on ICS and EOC for key staff from the 6 Mindanao regions was conducted in Davao on 19-20 November facilitated by WHO. Training included orientation of use of the mobile application ODK for rapid collection of coverage data facilitated by UNICEF.

WHO and UNICEF are closely coordinating the response with DOH at all levels:

- UNICEF mobilized 5 consultants on supply chain and vaccine management, 3 local immunization technical consultants, 2 communication for development (C4D) consultants and information management. Additional international consultants for cold chain/vaccine management and C4D are currently being recruited.
- WHO mobilised 20 international consultants who are supporting DOH with the implementation of the campaign: 14 in Mindanao and 6 in NCR. These include the Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP) consultants. WHO is also supporting DOH with strengthening its ICS and EOCs at all levels.

Surveillance

There were 46 Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases reported through the weekly Philippine Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (PIDSR) System between 3 and 9 November 2019. The accumulative total from 1 January to 9 November 2019 is 685 AFP cases.

After the first environmental samples were tested positive for polio in epidemiological week 30, AFP surveillance has been stepped up (Figure 2), with a notable increase in the number of AFP cases since epidemiological week 40 (29 September-5 October 2019).

The Non-Polio AFP (NPAFP) rate from 1 January to 9 November 2019 is 2.25. Adequacy of stool collection from 1 January to 9 November 2019 is 39%.

Among reported AFP cases, 49% had been vaccinated with at least 3 doses of OPV, whereas the vaccination status of 38% of the cases was unknown (Figure 3).

A total of 27 environmental samples from six sites tested positive up to 25 November 2019. VDPV1 was isolated from 13 environmental samples, which were collected from sewage collection site and its tributary pumping stations in Manila.

VDPV type 2 has been isolated from 14 environmental samples, which were collected from sewage collection site and its tributary pumping stations in Manila in NCR, and Davao city in Region XI.

Figure 2: Number of weekly reported AFP cases in the Philippines (epidemiological week 30-45)

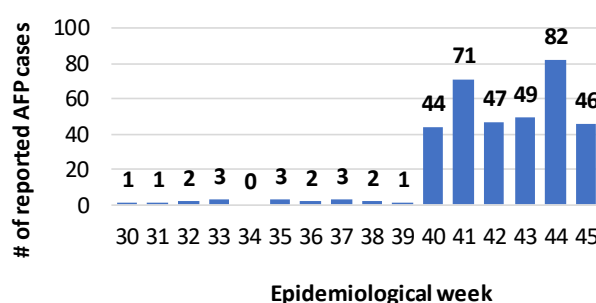
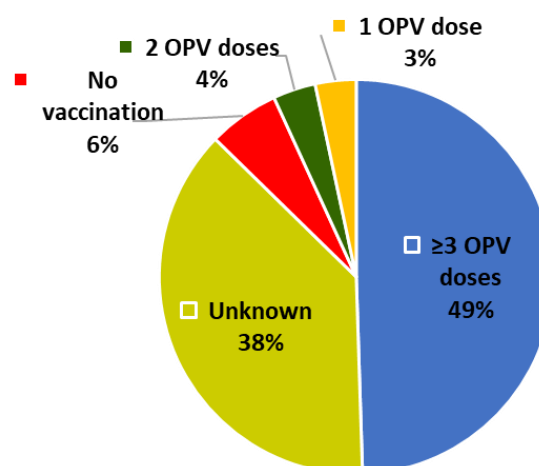


Figure 3: OPV status of reported AFP cases (N=685) the Philippines 1 January-9 November 2019



Immunization response

The next round of the synchronized polio vaccination campaign started on 25 November and will last until 7 December targeting 4.4 million children under 5 in NCR and 6 regions in Mindanao.

DOH issued guidelines with adapted strategies on how to reach children in difficult to hard to reach areas such as slums, gated communities and apartment buildings.

Standardized house marking for house to house visits has been put in place, as well as strengthened participation from public hospitals. Risk communication messaging was updated to increase the risk perception by improving the understanding that vaccination is the only way to protect children.

In response to the 9-year old girl found positive for VDPV1 in Malsulu municipality, on the island province of Basilan (BARMM), DOH is planning to vaccinate children up to 10 years with bOPV during the ongoing vaccination campaign.

Partners' engagement

Partners' contributions have been significant during the vaccination campaign. A coordination meeting was held on 15 November to orient health partners on ways to collaborate on social mobilization and independent monitoring. Partners are requested to:

- Raise awareness about the outbreak, campaign schedules and locations; and promote correct information about polio and the risk of not being immunized.
- Disseminate key messages to religious leaders, indigenous populations (IP) leaders and other influencers and encourage their members to participate in the mass immunization campaigns and report all children found with weakness in their limbs (arms and legs) to their local health centre
- Engage national and local officials to strengthen political leadership and commitment to achieve 95% coverage.
- **Report on Who is doing What Where in polio to better measure the impact of activities and ensure coordination by updating <https://tinyurl.com/phpolio3W>.**
- **Support with social mobilization, and report through UNICEF's Social Mobilization Indicators tool at <https://enketo.ona.io/x/#MNquhgob>**
username: spvrca
password: spvrca123

The **Philippine Red Cross (PRC)** conducted planning meetings for its chapters in Mindanao on 15 November and for NCR on 20 November. Approximately 1000 Red Cross volunteers and 100 staff divided over 200 vaccination teams will be vaccinating 50,000 children under 5 in Metro Manila (Quezon City, Pasay, Marikina, Manila, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Pasig, Taguig, Muntinlupa, and Parañaque), and another 50,000 children in Mindanao (Davao City, Davao Del Sur, Lanao Del Sur, Davao Oriental, Davao Del Norte, Surigao Del Norte, Agusan Del Norte, Agusan Del Sur, Sultan Kudarat, Cotabato, Bukidnon, General Santos City, Iligan City, Zamboanga City, Sulu and Tawi Tawi)

Each team is composed of a team leader, vaccinator, recorder and health educator. Besides ensuring children are given vaccination, health education will be provided to the parents on the importance of vaccination as well as good hygiene advice.

Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) raised funds to deploy monitors to support with Rapid Convenience Assessments (RCAs) for independent monitoring of the campaign in Parang, Maguindanao.

The **Adventist Development and Relief Agency Philippines (ADRA)** is advocating with its nation-wide church network for further collaboration in awareness raising, social mobilization and setting up of vaccination posts.



NGOs like **Action Against Hunger (ACF)**, **Americares**, **Community and Family Services International (CFSI)**, **International Medical Corps (IMC)**, **Médecins du Monde (MDM)**, **Plan International**, **Relief International**, **Save the Children**, as well as the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** have been supporting with social mobilisation and awareness raising efforts in their target areas.

Case management

With an increasing number of polio victims, access to effective rehabilitation services is becoming more important, either through government or if necessary through external support (e.g. ICRC or Rotary). The National EOC has asked the Epidemiology Bureau to update its polio case after care guidelines that will include provision of physical evaluation then subsequent rehabilitation services for the polio cases.

WHO is looking into the review of current guidelines on paediatric injections in the buttocks of paracetamol, antibiotics, or steroids to avoid possible adverse events of accelerating paralysis by poliovirus.

Risk communication

- Global Polio Eradication Initiative: <http://polioeradication.org/where-we-work/philippines/>
- 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.

Other relevant information can be found here:

- Disease outbreak news: Update Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1, The Philippines 24 October 2019 <https://www.who.int/csr/don/24-october-2019-polio-the-philippines/en/>
- 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.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>
- Human Interest Story about the 1st human case infected with polio in the Philippines: **Junaisha: A little girl with polio** <https://www.who.int/philippines/news/feature-stories/detail/junaisha-a-little-girl-with-polio>

Funding allocation and budget

(US\$)	Budget	Allocation
Government*	6,772,249	6,772,249
WHO	3,176,858	574,320
UNICEF	3,245,205	380,362
Other partners (IFRC, Red Cross) ⁱ		522,807
Total	13,194,312	8,249,738

*Government has pledged US\$ 9 million

** Equivalent to CHF 517,719

ⁱ IFRC Revised Emergency Appeal Philippines: Re-emergence of vaccine preventable diseases <http://adore.ifrc.org/Download.aspx?FileId=268179>