

Situation Report 8 Polio Outbreak

19 November 2019

Highlights

- No new confirmed cases in the past week.
- Preparations ongoing for next round of synchronized polio vaccination campaign on 25 November-7 December targeting 4.4 million children under 5 in National Capital Region (NCR) and 6 regions in Mindanao.
- Second batch of 1,206,000 doses of monovalent Oral Polio Vaccine against type 2 (mOPV2) to arrive on 25 November.
- High-profile preparatory meeting with over 60 governors, mayors and other key stakeholders for Mindanao held in Davao on 12 November.
- 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	cVDPV1	iVDPV2	cVDPV2
Environmental	11	0	5
Human	0	1	3



The Red Cross will be vaccinating 100,000 children under 5 during the next round of synchronized polio vaccination campaign on 25 November-7 December targeting 4.4 million children under 5 in National Capital Region (NCR) and 6 regions in Mindanao.

Current Situation

No new human cases confirmed this week.

So far, 4 human cases confirmed with polio: 3 with circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and 1 with immunodeficiency-related VDPV type 2 (iVDPV2) from Laguna; as well as 16 environmental samples: 11 for poliovirus type 1 and 5 for type 2.

In response to the 2 latest confirmed cases relatively close to one another, the Department of Health (DOH) vaccinated 16,664 children 0-59 months old in Lambayong (Sultan Kudarat province), Datu Piang, and Datu Paglas (Maguindanao province) on 4-8 November, 95% of the target.

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).

The NIID and CDC confirmed that 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 not to be genetically linked with any other known type 2 poliovirus, indicating new emergence. All other VDPV2 samples are genetically linked.

After the successful round of synchronized polio vaccination campaigns on 14-27 October, where 1,628,717 children 0-59 months old were vaccinated, preparations are currently on going for the upcoming round on 25 November-7 December in NCR using bivalent OPV against poliovirus type 1 and 3

(targeting almost 1.3 million children under 5) and the 6 regions of Mindanao using monovalent OPV against poliovirus type 2 (over 3.1 million children under 5). The second batch of 1,206,000 doses of mOPV2 is estimated to arrive in the country on 25 November.

Particularly the Mindanao vaccination campaign is expected to be challenging, since it involves 6 different regions with a target population of over 3 million children under 5.

Table 1: Outbreak Response Immunization Campaigns for cVDPV1 and 2

When	What	Where	Who	#
25 Nov-7 Dec 2019	m OPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)	<5 years	3,111,650
	bOPV	NCR		1,276,631
6-18 Jan 2020	m OPV2	Mindanao (all 6 regions)		3,111,650

Response

Risk assessment

Overall risk		
National	Regional	Global
High	Moderate	Low

The risk for further polio transmission in the country 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 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 national-level Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is now fully functioning with daily meetings with set agendas, updates and sending advisories to all concerned regions, provinces and cities. An all Mindanao EOC is being set up in Davao with all regions having their own EOCs for the polio outbreak response.

High-profile preparatory meeting with over 60 governors, mayors and other key stakeholders for Mindanao held in Davao on 12 November. WHO and UNICEF Representatives as well as staff and consultants also participated in this meeting.

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) conducted planning workshop for Mindanao chapters on 15 November, with a second planning workshop for NCR planned on 20 November.

UNICEF has been supporting micro planning and pre-campaign assessments (including cold chain assessments) in the BARMM island provinces of Basilan, Tawi Tawi and Sulu. Orientation of religious leaders from all municipalities has been completed. Biggest risk is lack of operational costs for transport of vaccine, ice packs and staff to remote Islands.

Training on Incident Command systems (ICS) and EOC for key staff from the 6 Mindanao regions to be conducted in Davao on 19-20 November facilitated by WHO. Training will include 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 13 international consultants who are supporting DOH with the implementation of the campaign: 9 in Mindanao and 4 in NCR, out of which one particularly focuses on strengthening of surveillance. An additional 10 Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP) consultants are expected to support the next rounds of the campaign. WHO is also supporting DOH with strengthening its ICS and EOCs at all levels.
- One CDC consultant has been supporting the team since the start of the campaign.

Surveillance

There were 82 Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases reported through the weekly Philippine Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (PIDSRS) System between 27 October and 2 November 2019. The accumulative total from 1 January to 2 November 2019 is 647 AFP cases.

After the first environmental samples were tested positive for polio in epidemiological week 30, AFP surveillance has been stepped up (Figure 1), 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 5 October 2019 is 0.72, whereas the annualised NPAFP rate from 5 October to 2 November is 1.22. Adequacy of stool collection from 1 January to 2 November 2019 is 39%.

Among reported AFP cases, 50% had been vaccinated with at least 3 doses of OPV, whereas the vaccination status of 38% of the cases was unknown (Figure 2).

A total of 16 environmental samples from six sites tested positive between 1 July and 2 November 2019. VDPV type 1 has been isolated from 11 environmental samples, which were collected from sewage collection site and its tributary pumping stations in Manila, between 1 July and 9 October 2019.

VDPV type 2 has been isolated from five environmental samples, which were collected from sewage collection site and its tributary pumping stations in Manila in NCR, and Davao city in Region XI, between 13 August and 9 October 2019.

Immunization response

The first of three rounds of scheduled mass vaccination campaigns has been successfully implemented in polio affected areas. Between 14 and 27 October 2019, a total of 1,628,717 children under 5 were vaccinated out of a targeted 1,703,639 in NCR, Davao del Sur, Davao City and Lanao del Sur. Both NCR and Davao City have reported reaching the target of 95% children vaccinated.

In response to the 2 latest confirmed cases relatively close to one another, the Department of Health (DOH) vaccinated 16,664 children under 5 in Lambayong (Sultan Kudarat province), Datu Piang, and Datu Paglas (Maguindanao province) on 5-8 November, 95% of the target.

Preparatory meetings for the next round of vaccination starting on 25 November next with the 6 regional health directors have been conducted on 6 and 12 November in Davao, under the coordinating authority of the Field Implementation and Coordination Team (FICT) for Mindanao based in Davao.

Figure 1: Number of weekly reported AFP cases in the Philippines (epidemiological week 30-44)

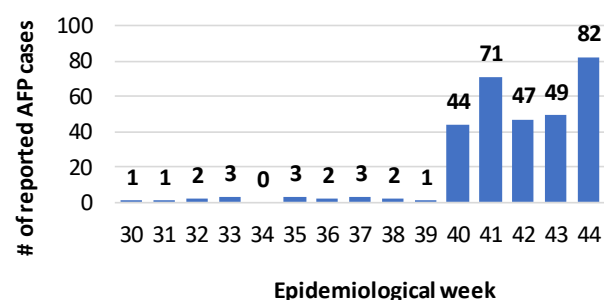
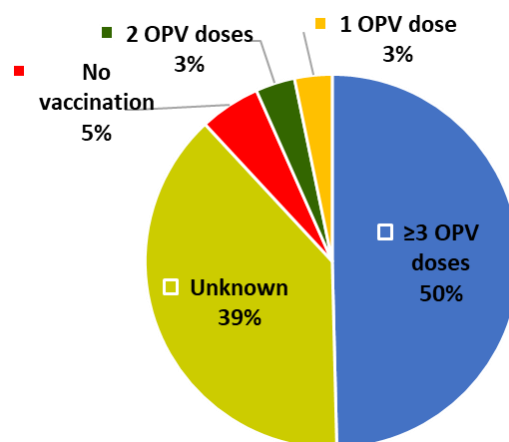


Figure 2: OPV status of reported AFP cases (N=647) the Philippines 1 January-2 November 2019



All children in these areas will be vaccinated in November-December 2019 and January 2020. More rounds may be needed in 2020 depending on whether or not additional polio cases are detected.

UNICEF facilitated the delivery of around 3.6M doses of mOPV2 to all regions of Mindanao, including to all provinces of BARMM. Additional cold chain equipment and logistics for BARMM (vaccine refrigerators, vaccine carriers, transport boxes) are currently being delivered to augment in cold chain needs in time for the next rounds of the polio campaign.

85 health workers from eight districts in Zamboanga received training in communication and social mobilisation. UNICEF is continuing to develop communication strategies to address vaccine hesitancy and safety concerns especially for BARMM, other parts of Mindanao and NCR.

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.

PRC conducted planning meetings for its chapters in Mindanao on 15 November and for NCR on 20 November.

With UNICEF's support, up to 50 barangays in Zamboanga will be reached with community-based activities in the next rounds of polio vaccination campaign. In Manila, 12 locations with high-risk populations will be targeted by community-level events to support vaccination teams.

UNICEF continues its support the DOH Health Promotion and Communication Services Unit to upgrade key communication materials as per Rapid Convenience Assessment (RCA) recommendations, including guidelines for health workers, social mobilisers, posters and banners and video and audio materials.

A monitoring framework was developed for partners to report social mobilisation activities and target communities in the upcoming vaccination campaigns.

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: **Junaisa: A little girl with polio** <https://www.who.int/philippines/news/feature-stories/detail/junaisa-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>