



## Situation summary

(Highlights of the current report)

- Out of a total 574,247 confirmed cases reported in the Philippines as of today, 54% are male, with the most affected age group 20-29 years (25.97%) followed by the age group 30-39 years (23.58%)
- 41% of the total number of cases are from the National Capital Region (NCR), followed by CALABARZON (17%), Central Visayas (6.9%), Central Luzon (6.6%), Western Visayas (4.6%).
- Out of the total 12,289 confirmed deaths, 60% are male, with the most affected age group over-70 (35.3%) followed by the age group 60-69 years (27.7%)
- 39% of the total number of deaths reported are from the NCR, followed by CALABARZON (12.6%), Central Visayas (12.4%), Central Luzon (8%), Western Visayas (5.7%).
- Currently, 174 laboratories using RT-PCR are accredited for COVID-19 testing, as well as 51 laboratories using GenXpert.

574,247

Cases

524,865

Recoveries

12,289

Deaths

## Transmission assessment

At national level, the Philippines remains in **Stage 2, localised community transmission** with some geographic areas showing higher transmission intensity and indications of widespread community transmission. There is ongoing evidence of an increasing trend in the number of cases and higher transmission in Region 3, Region 4A, and in the NCR which are at **Stage 3, large scale community transmission**. At national level, the bed occupancy rate for COVID-19 allocated beds is currently at 30.3% occupancy, with variation between regions.

## Epidemiology

As of 27 February 2021, a total of **574,247** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **12,289** deaths have been reported in the Philippines. The case fatality rate is **2.24%**.

Epi Update COVID-19	Tests 383,523	Cases 27,022	Deaths 780	ICU Occupancy 37.07%
	Tests past 14 days	Cases in past 14 days	Deaths in past 14 days	
	8,248,320	574,247	12,287	2,068
	Cumulative unique individuals tested	Cumulative cases	Cumulative deaths	ICU beds for COVID-19 cases
	7.8%			
	Positivity rate			
Health service provision	535	1,282	25,838	149,159



COVID-19	Healthcare worker cases reported in past 14 days	Hospitals admitting COVID-19 patients	Non-ICU beds for COVID-19 cases	TTMF beds for COVID-19 cases
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## Strategic approach to COVID-19 Prevention, Detection and Control

### Health service delivery

Closely working with the DOH is critical to monitor the compliance of public and private hospitals on COVID-19 bed allocation. Furthermore, the efficient and rational utilization of these facilities and the appropriate referral and back referral systems should be in place to avoid overutilization of Level 3 facilities and improved bed utilization of intermediate care facilities. Coordination with the Regional Outreach Pillar has facilitated discussion among the regions and priority areas on appropriate referral and rational utilization of health facilities.

### Laboratory and Testing

WHO donated 100,000 sample collection kits to complement the laboratory supplies for the COVID-19 laboratory network. In addition, 83 COVID-19 laboratories participated in the WHO-led quality assurance program that ended last February 15, 2021. All participating laboratories successfully submitted their results to the quality assurance provider.

Recent information on new variants highlighted the need for enhanced genomic surveillance across the world. As of February 12, the Philippines has reported 44 cases of B.1.1.7 variant from travelers and local transmission. All samples, following the DOH criteria, are submitted to the Philippine Genome Center (PGC). The Philippines has the capacity to perform 750 sequences per week, provided that supplies are available. WHO is currently collaborating with PGC on the needed support.

### Risk Assessment, Surveillance and Contact Tracing

#### Risk assessment

Closely working with the DOH Epidemiology Bureau to continue to strengthen national surveillance and risk assessment criteria. Coordination with other pillars, specifically the Regional Outreach Advisers, has facilitated a better understanding of the sub-national assessment process and of how to develop recommendations and actions to be taken in areas assessed to be at high risk for Covid-19 transmission.

#### Surveillance

In line with WHO WPRO's Indicators to monitor health-care capacity and utilization for decision-making on COVID-19, analysis of COVID-19 bed and equipment utilization rates of hospitals and temporary treatment and monitoring facilities (TTMFs) is currently being done. Moreover, data analysis support to DOH PHL in contributing to the weekly Health Facility Capacity Report is also being provided.

With the support of EU ECHO, Department of Health, BARMM Ministry of Health and WHO Philippines are monitoring health resources and services availability through Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS), to ensure continuity of essential health services in health facilities during outbreaks and emergencies in Mindanao including BARMM during the COVID-19 pandemic.



This is being implemented in collaboration with the Field Epidemiology Training Program Alumni Foundation, Inc. (FETPAFI). The HeRAMS Initiative aims to ensure that core information on essential health resources and services is readily available to decision-makers at country, regional, and global levels.

### **Risk Communication and Community Engagement**

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) in support of COVID-19 prevention measures continues to be of vital importance, particularly in regions where community transmission is occurring. WHO continues to provide technical support to DOH, regions and partners to further improve the impact and effectiveness of their RCCE. During February, WHO has worked with three Civil Society Organizations – selected via an open call for proposals – to develop action plans for prevention of COVID-19 in vulnerable communities. Activities under these plans will receive financial and technical support from WHO.

WHO contributes directly to public debate on COVID-19 as an authoritative scientific voice and advocate for effective public health action. Communicators in DOH and WHO are also busy preparing communication plans for the imminent introduction of COVID-19 vaccines in the Philippines.

### **Vaccines**

WHO, along with UNICEF, has multiple roles in support to the readiness of the country in the roll-out of vaccines. WCO works with WPRO to provide the tools, guidance, monitoring, and on the ground technical assistance for the planning and roll out of the vaccines.

The Philippines is expecting to receive Pfizer BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines from the COVAX facility, with a cumulative number of indicative doses amounting to 9M throughout the second the quarter, provided that all COVAX requirements are fulfilled. To date, other sources of COVID-19 vaccines include donations and bilateral agreements. Nevertheless, WHO is keen in monitoring all vaccines to be introduced in the country and is working closely with the government to ensure that safe and quality vaccines are allocated equitably.

The Philippines has successfully published its National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 vaccines which was technically supported by the country office. The national plan is based on the framework of the National Task Force (NTF) Against COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster and WHO guidelines



which includes a chapter on prioritization of eligible populations for vaccination where foremost in the list are healthcare workers. There are currently more than 4,000 sub-national and some local government units' vaccination teams who were trained with the support of WHO technical staff on the 8-modules of the DOH on COVID-19 vaccination. A functional National Vaccination Operation Center (NVOC) is physically set-up at Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City which is led by the Department of Health and co-lead by the Department of Interior and Local Government. A national full-scale simulation exercise on delivery and cold chain management of COVID-19 vaccines was held last 9th of February which was facilitated by WHO and UNICEF staff. More than 30 hospitals and all cities in the National Capital Region had conducted their own simulation exercises on cold chain management and vaccine administration based on their microplans.

### Logistics

The Logistics pillar supported in the design and facilitation of the full drill simulation exercise with government, focusing on the transporting, storing and distribution of the ultralow temperature vaccine from Pfizer BioNTech as part of the preparations for the upcoming mass vaccinations against COVID-19.

