Situation summary

Please see the Philippines Department of Health (DOH) daily Situation Update for further information.

2,826,410 Cases

2,758,235 Recoveries

47,074 Deaths

33,488,997 Vaccinated

- DOH recorded 21,101[1] active cases as of 21 November 2021, with the breakdown of active cases (based on disposition upon accomplishing case investigation forms) as follows:
  - Asymptomatic: 918 (4.4%)
  - Mild: 11,996 (56.9%)
  - Moderate: 4,284 (20.3%)
  - Severe: 2,738 (13.0%)
  - Critical: 1,165 (5.5%)

- Top regions by Active Cases:

1	National Capital Region (NCR)	4,589
2	Region IV-A: CALABARZON	2,810
3	Region III: Central Luzon	1,985
4	Region VII: Central Visayas	1,440
5	Region II: Cagayan Valley	1,326
6	Region VI: Western Visayas	1,288
7	Region XI: Davao Region	1,007
8	Region IX: Zamboanga Peninsula	952
9	Region I: Ilocos Region	840
10	Region V: Bicol Region	834

- Out of the total 47,074 reported COVID-19 deaths, the most affected age group was 60-69 years old (26%) followed by 70-79 years old age group (22%) and 50-59 years old age group (19%). Around 14% of the deaths belong to the age group 80 years old and above.

- Twenty-three percent (23%) of the total number of deaths reported were from NCR, followed by Central Luzon (13%), CALABARZON (12%), Central Visayas (11%), and Western Visayas (7%).

- DOH recorded a total of 28,112 healthcare workers that tested positive for COVID-19 as of 21 November 2021. Of these, 27,889 (99.2%) have recovered, 107 (0.4%) have died and 116 (0.3%) are active cases. Of the 116 active cases, 40 (34.5%) were mild cases, 27 (23.3%) were asymptomatic, 19 (16.4%) in moderate condition, 21 (18.1%) in severe condition, and 9 (7.8%) in critical condition.

[1] Data as of 21 November 2021 can be found in DOH's BEAT COVID-19 report.

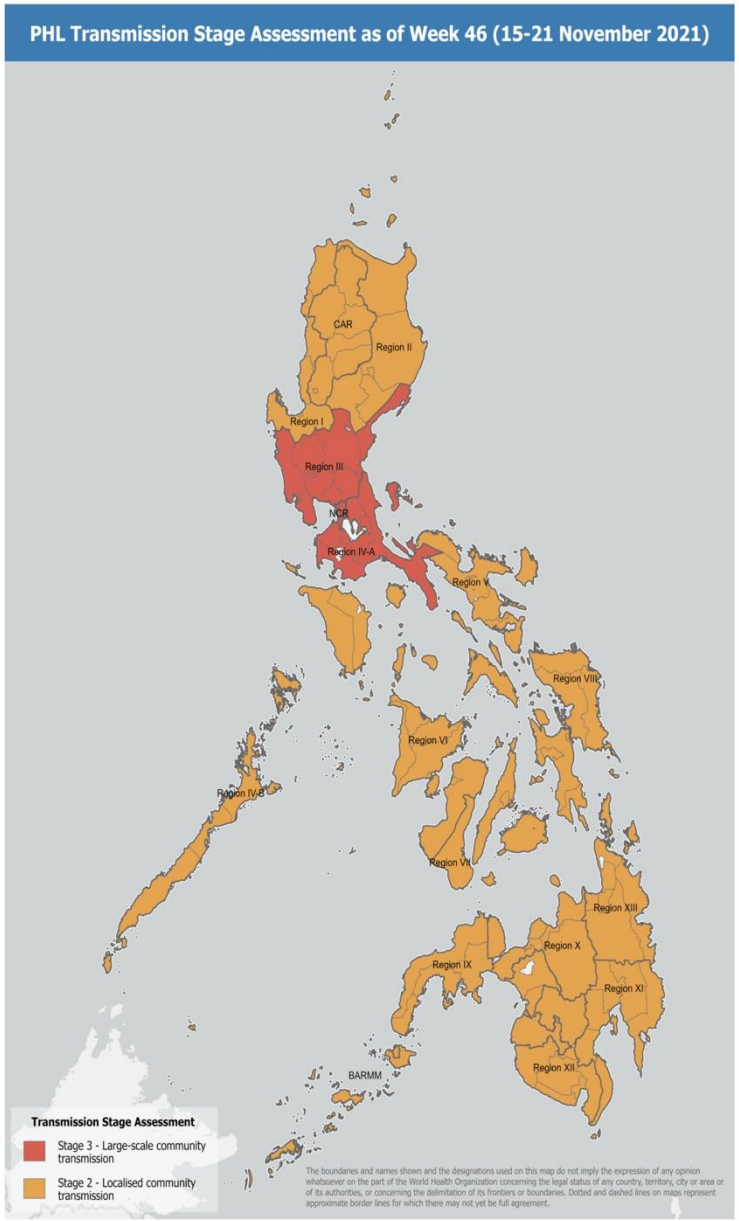
Transmission stage assessment

In terms of the overall situation of the Philippines, there were 9,970 new cases (9 cases per 100,000 population) reported in week 46, that is 28% lower than the previous week (13,808 new cases, 13 cases per 100,000 population).

A lower 7-day positivity rate (number of individuals that tested positive/number of individuals tested) was reported for week 46 at 3.1% (8,168/262,526), compared to week 45 at 4.3% (12,534/289,320).

A decline in the daily number (7-day average) of COVID-19 dedicated ICU beds occupied was observed (1,230 beds this week compared to 1,464 beds last week), and a downtrend in the utilization of COVID-19 dedicated mechanical ventilators (7-day average) for week 45 (615 ventilators compared to 713 ventilators last week) was observed.

The Philippines remains at **Stage 2, localised community transmission** with some geographic areas showing higher transmission intensity and indications of widespread community transmission. There is ongoing evidence of higher transmission in **NCR**, **Region III**, and **Region IV-A** at **Stage 3, large-scale community transmission**.



Data for analysis was extracted on 22 November 2021 from DOH COVID-19 Case Tracker wherein ROFs and records with no regions were excluded in the analysis. Projected 2021 population (national, n=110,198,654) was used as the denominator.

Epidemiological updates

As of 21 November 2021, a total of **2,826,410** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **47,074** deaths have been reported in the Philippines. The case fatality ratio is 1.7%.

	Tests	Cases	Deaths	ICU Occupancy
Epi Update COVID-19	279,641 Tests past 7 days	10,055 Cases past 7 days	55 Deaths past 7 days	32% 3,764 ICU beds for COVID-19 cases
	22,515,660 Cumulative unique individuals tested	2,826,410 Cumulative cases	47,074 Cumulative deaths	
	13.3% Cumulative Positivity Rate			
Health service provision COVID-19	28,112 Healthcare worker cases as of 21 November 2021 (cumulative) 116 HCW active cases	1,291 Hospitals admitting COVID-19 patients	36,896 Total hospital beds for COVID-19 patients 24% hospital beds for COVID-19 occupied	132,661 TTMF beds for COVID-19 cases (as of 21 November)

Strategic approach to COVID-19 Prevention, Detection and Control

Health Service Delivery

- WHO Philippines presented the WHO guidance on home care management and clinical care pathways in Region II, Cordillera Administrative Region and Zambales Province.
- WHO facilitated the reallocation of 20 oxygen tanks from Lazi Community to a newly-built hospital Caipilan Hospital in Siquijor.

Surveillance and Subnational Assessment

- On 13 November, the IATF placed the Province of Catanduanes under Alert Level 4 from 17 November to 30 November 2021 and on 20 November the provinces of Apayao, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Dinagat Islands, and Sulu were placed under Alert Level 3 from 22 November to 30 November 2021.
- In Aurora, increase in the number of cases was reported in September and declined in October. As of 7 November, there are only 36 active cases. Of the cumulative deaths, 51% are those above 50 years old and unvaccinated. The province has no facility that has the capacity to admit severe to critical

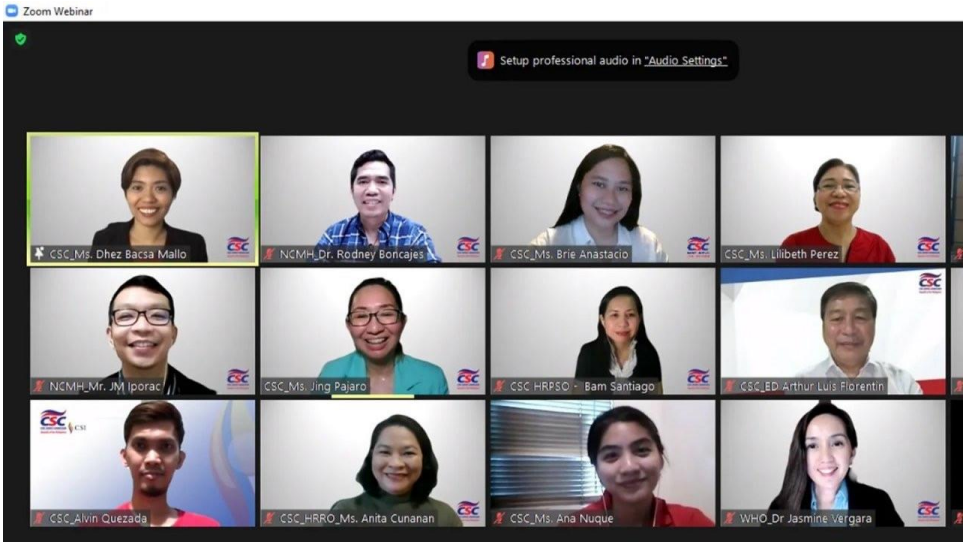
cases, these patients are referred to Department of Health-retained hospitals in nearby provinces. The province has no molecular laboratory and specimens for RT-PCR are sent to Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital in Pampanga. Rapid antigen test is also done with 14% positivity rate. As of 6 November, fully vaccinated A2 is at 54%. On accepting tourists, only those with negative RT-PCR valid within 72 hours are allowed entry. Additional requirements include an S-PASS and a confirmed hotel accommodation.

- As of 6 November, Catanduanes was placed under Alert Level 3 with a high risk COVID-19 Community Risk Classification. Increase in the number of cases was observed due to the following: clustering of cases in all municipalities, presence of Delta variant, poor health-seeking behaviour, non-observance of minimum public health standards and border control issues. The province has seven (7) government and two (2) private hospitals. Eastern Bicol Medical Center is a Level 2, 80-bed capacity provincial hospital with a 68.16% HCUR (average between 31 October and 6 November). The hospital is equipped with four (4) ICUs and four (4) mechanical ventilators. Currently, there are five (5) moderate and three (3) severe cases admitted on high flow oxygen. The hospital has no oxygen-generating plant and consumes 60-80 tanks of oxygen per day, with three days buffer. On testing capacity, specimens are sent to Bicol Regional Diagnostic and Reference Laboratory, with a turn-around-time of between 3-5 days. As of 8 November, priority A2 has a vaccination coverage of 77%.
- Siquijor has a 103,000 population with two (2) Level 1 hospitals, Old Siquijor Provincial Hospital (200-bed capacity) which caters to COVID-19 admissions and Lazi Community Hospital (30-bed capacity) which caters to non-COVID-19 patients. New Siquijor Provincial Hospital (NSPH) is a newly-built facility with 200 beds allocated for severe to critical cases. As of 11 November, the total active cases in the province were 151, 25% is admitted at NSPH, 60% is at LGU isolated facilities and 15% is in home care management. There is no molecular laboratory in the province and specimens are sent to Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center and Cebu TB Reference Laboratory with 3-4 days turn-around-time. As of 11 November, the vaccination coverage of A2 was 58%. Regular check points at port and other areas are carried out by the Philippine National Police (PNP) Medical Personnel.
- Based on the COVID-19 Community Risk Classification, Occidental Mindoro is on Alert Level 2. The province has three (3) Level 1 hospitals: Occidental Mindoro Provincial Hospital (OMPH) (100-bed), San Jose District Hospital (50-bed), San Sebastian District Hospital (50-bed). OMPH allocated 30 beds for COVID-19 and it has 2 mechanical ventilators. Currently one patient is on high flow oxygen. The hospital has no oxygen-generating plant and consumes 25-30 tanks/day. GeneXpert laboratory is also housed in OMPH with a turn-around-time of 24 hours. Specimens are also routed outside the province, with Dr Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital allocating 70 specimens and San Lazaro Hospital allocating 70 specimens for the province, with 3-5 days turn-around-time. Aggressive Community Testing (ACT) was also done in 3 municipalities. As of 14 November, the positivity rate for RT-PCR is 24.6% and for Antigen RDT is 14.5%. On NPIs, wearing masks is not observed among indigenous people. As of 13 November, fully vaccinated A2 is 47%.
- As of 16 November, Sulu has 59 active cases, 19 are admitted in the hospital and 40 are in the temporary treatment and monitoring facilities (TTMF), majority of which are asymptomatic. Most of the active cases are in Jolo and Patikul. Travelers coming from Zamboanga City and Basilan may have contributed to the increase in the number of cases. Health screening is situated at the port in Jolo where symptom check, vaccination card for fully immunized and a negative RT-PCR for those who are unvaccinated are the requirements upon entry to the province. Sulu is placed under Alert Level 2 until 30 November by the IATF-EID. There is poor compliance to NPIs, social gatherings and non-wearing of masks are observed in communities in island municipalities. There are also reports of celebrations and private gatherings with no masks and physical distancing.
- In Zamboanga del Norte, decline in the number of cases is observed in the last week of October though there is an increasing healthcare utilization rate in November. These can be attributed to delayed

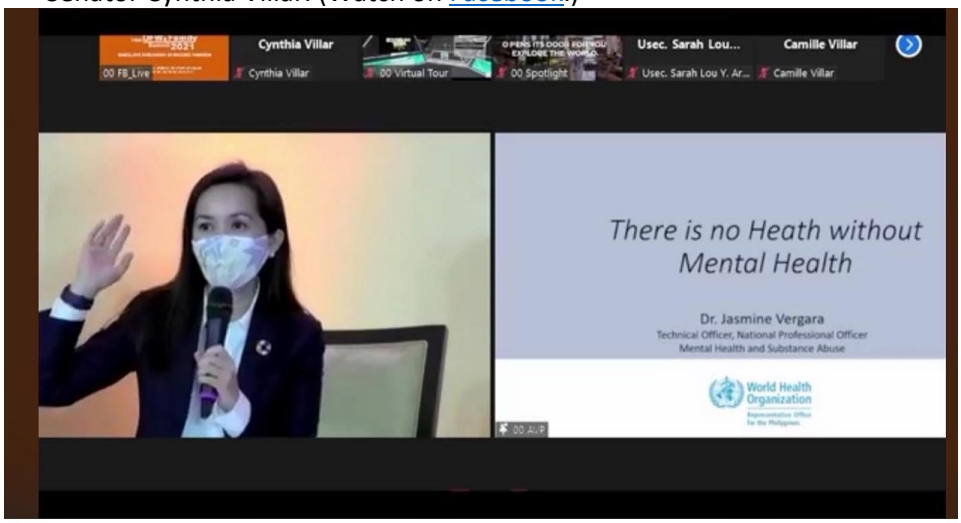
treatment seeking behavior and a high number of severe and critical cases arriving at the ER of Zamboanga Del Norte Medical Center (ZDNMC). HCUR for the hospitals in the province are as follows: 58% in Zamboanga del Norte Medical Center (Level 2), Dr Jose 30% in Rizal Memorial Hospital (Level 1) and 57% in Corazon C. Aquino Hospital (Level 1). ZDNMC has an average oxygen consumption of 400 tanks/day. Currently, the ICU utilization rate is at 60% and mechanical ventilator utilization rate is at 77%.

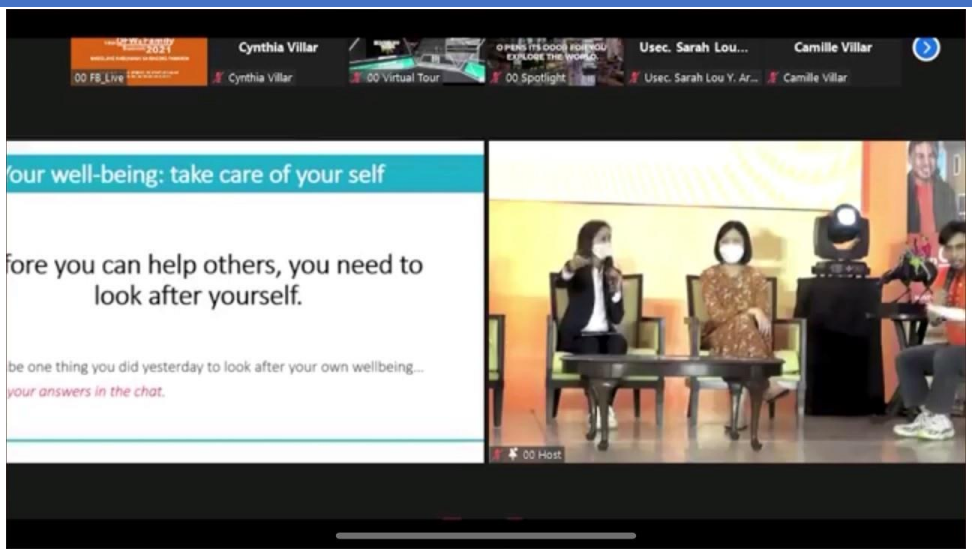
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

- WHO supported the Civil Service Commission's Mental Health Program in the Public Sector Webinar Orientation on Mental Health Program in the Public Sector. (Watch on Facebook.)



- WHO also supported the 10th Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) Family Summit held 19th November 2021 at a hybrid virtual/face-to-face event at Villar Sipag Complex, hosted by the OFW Office Desk of Senator Cynthia Villar. (Watch on Facebook.)

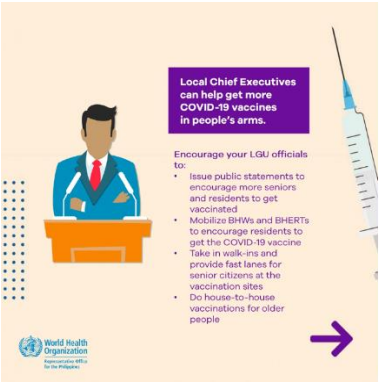




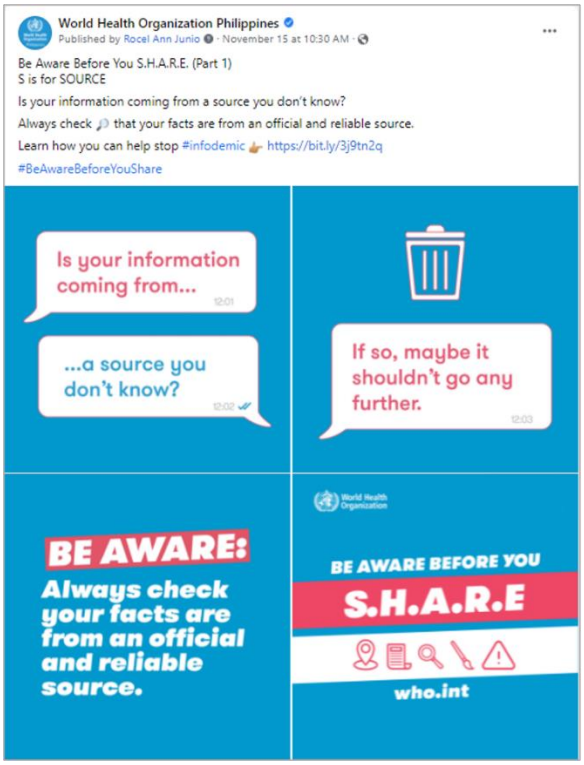
Risk Communication and Community Engagement

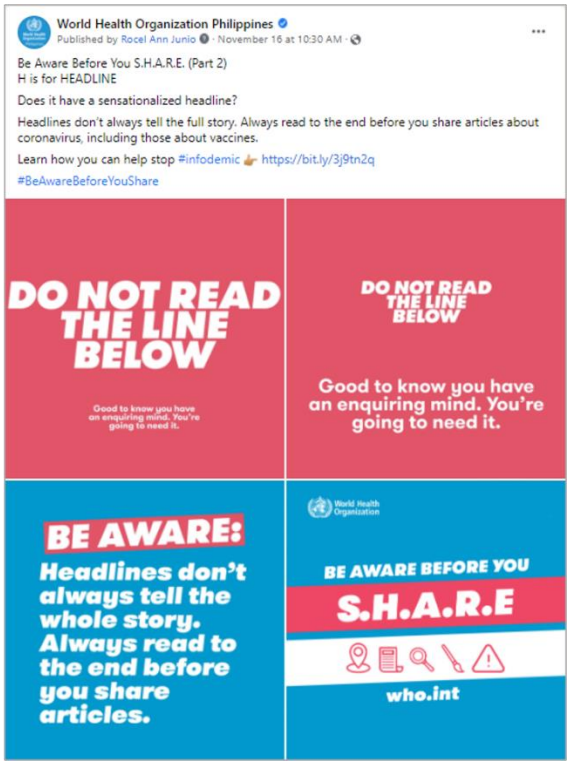
- WHO Philippines covered the arrival of 793,900 COVID-19 doses donated by the German Government through the COVAX Facility, completing over 1.6 million doses from Germany. The post was retweeted by DG Dr Tedros in his account.

- WHO produced and published a series of social media content on encouraging Returning Overseas Filipinos (ROFs) and local travelers to get vaccinated before traveling, in anticipation of increased mobility and family gatherings in the coming holidays.



- WHO published a series of social media content on spotting misinformation online, in relation to health issues and COVID-19.





- Introductory meetings were conducted between WHO, CHD 8, CHD 10 and CSO partner People In Need (PIN). PIN's COVID-19 CSO project in Guiuan, Eastern Samar aims to sustain reduction in COVID-19 cases and increase vaccine uptake. CHD 8's Regional Director Sabalberino thanked WHO and PIN for choosing Manicani Island, Guiuan, Eastern Samar as one of their project areas to this CSO Initiative. RD Sabalberino added how this initiative is very timely as the areas identified in the project have very low coverage of vaccine. CHD 8 expressed full support to this COVID-19 CSO Initiative. PIN's COVID-19 CSO project in Iligan City aims to sustain reduction in COVID-19 cases and increase vaccine uptake through RCCE and community based COVID-19 response activities. Iligan City's DMO, Jucel Q. Arnado, expressed support to the project.

- On 10 November, WHO Philippines hosted day 3 of the WHO Strategy for Engaging Religious Leaders, Faith-Based Organizations and Faith Communities in Health Emergencies. This is part of the WHO and Religions for Peace global conference on strengthening national responses to health emergencies.

- Philippines' COVID-19 CSO Initiative in Itogon, Benguet on Offline Contact Tracing was published in the HQ's weekly operational update on COVID-19 - 8 November 2021. The link to the story can be found here: **Community Innovation to Support Surveillance and Contact Tracing**: *An offline intervention from WHO's Civil Society Organization Initiative (CSO) in the Philippines*

COVID-19 Preparedness: engaging civil society organizations

Community Innovation to Support Surveillance and Contact Tracing: *An offline intervention from WHO's Civil Society Organization Initiative (CSO) in the Philippines*

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WHO is working with and providing funding for Families Choice for Health and Development through the WHO Solidarity Response Fund's CSO Initiative to enhance their work in COVID-19 response and health support to indigenous and mining communities.

> **"This health tracker has been very helpful for us to monitor our family members, especially our children," said Gladys Gapongli, a homemaker and wife of a small-scale miner in Itogon, Benguet in northern Philippines. "Now we can know and record if they are ill during this pandemic."**

Gladys' household is one of 400 beneficiaries of the Home as Active Advocate and Network to COVID-19 Prevention and Control ("HAAN COVID") project, implemented by Families Choice for Health and Development under WHO's Civil Society Organization (CSO) Initiative in the Philippines.

In the Ilocano language, *haan* means no, creating a strong message of 'No COVID' in the gold mining communities of Benguet where the organization operates.

The HAAN COVID project is a community-level response to the surge of COVID-19 cases in the mining areas in Benguet in October 2020. Unlike those working in established mining companies, small-scale miners in the Philippines have inadequate access to healthcare. They are often from indigenous populations, living and working in crowded, poorly ventilated conditions, and rarely use the Internet, smartphones, or personal protective equipment.

- WHO published a joint statement with UN Philippines, UNICEF, and UNESCO on the start of limited in-person schooling in the country. The agencies emphasized the need for risk-informed approach that considers safe operations and focuses on learning for the most marginalized.
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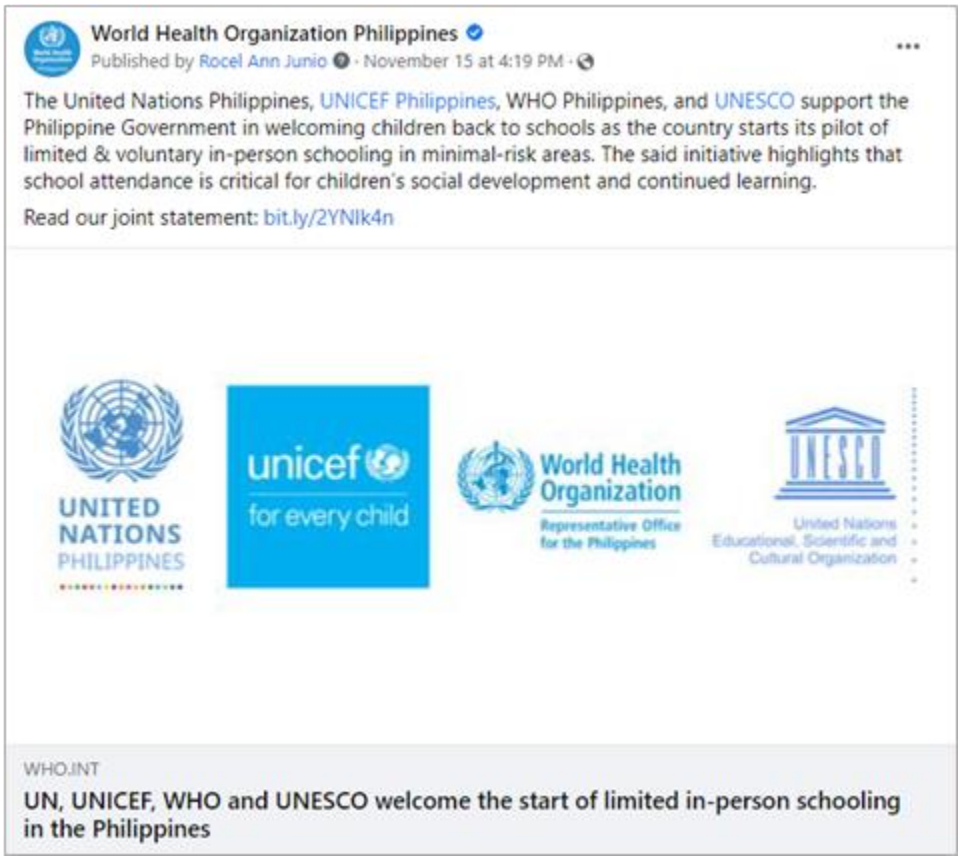

Vaccines

- As of 22 November 2021, a total of 76,522,732 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered. Out of these, 46,241,103 eligible individuals received their 1st dose, 30,239,030 eligible individuals received their 2nd dose, and 42,599 received a 3rd dose.
- There were 1,907,633 frontline healthcare workers (A1) fully vaccinated, 182,472 partially vaccinated, and 42,007 received a booster shot.

Cumulative Coverage Rate % (A1)

REGION	Masterlisted (Priority Group A1)	Booster Shot	%	Fully Vaccinated	%	Partially Vaccinated	%
6	85,506	932	1.1%	131,740	154.1%	15,489	18.1%
4A	136,169	2,080	1.5%	192,259	141.2%	30,266	22.2%
1	87,409	463	0.5%	118,104	135.1%	6,425	7.4%
11	84,692	492	0.6%	113,235	133.7%	10,293	12.2%
9	82,047	61	0.1%	107,485	131.0%	10,330	12.6%
10	84,733	-	0.0%	108,158	127.6%	7,038	8.3%
5	56,773	2	0.0%	67,737	119.3%	4,592	8.1%
Mimaropa	46,120	55	0.1%	52,816	114.5%	3,691	8.0%
7	129,459	11,957	9.2%	144,151	111.3%	2,835	2.2%
8	131,781	406	0.3%	144,179	109.4%	19,419	14.7%
BARMM	21,451	5	0.0%	23,445	109.3%	2,223	10.4%
3	151,402	4,176	2.8%	157,373	103.9%	20,701	13.7%
12	75,357	131	0.2%	78,176	103.7%	8,202	10.9%
NCR	301,749	16,933	5.6%	312,605	103.6%	24,139	8.0%
2	64,390	438	0.7%	61,798	96.0%	4,891	7.6%
CAR	44,552	3,876	8.7%	42,701	95.8%	1,887	4.2%
CARAGA	55,327	-	0.0%	51,671	93.4%	10,051	18.2%
PHIL	**1,638,917**	**42,007**	**2.6%**	**1,907,633**	**116.4%**	**182,472**	**11.1%**

Vaccination Coverage per region for Priority Group A1 as of 22 November 2021.

- A total of 5,076,339 senior citizens, or 61.5% of the masterlisted eligible A2 population, were fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and a total of 551,570 senior citizens, or 6.7% of the Priority Group A2 population, were partially vaccinated and 547 received a booster shot.

Cumulative Coverage Rate % (A2)

REGION	Masterlisted (Priority Group A2)	Booster Shot	%	Fully Vaccinated	%	Partially Vaccinated	%
NCR	1,050,589	60	0.0%	957,354	91.1%	35,103	3.3%
4A	1,117,556	260	0.0%	865,205	77.4%	96,260	8.6%
CAR	150,507	44	0.0%	103,948	69.1%	10,544	7.0%
10	316,557	0	0.0%	214,799	67.9%	30,765	9.7%
2	350,464	0	0.0%	236,057	67.4%	21,914	6.3%
1	536,376	0	0.0%	322,172	60.1%	43,832	8.2%
9	300,197	0	0.0%	179,319	59.7%	37,204	12.4%
CARAGA	198,874	0	0.0%	114,215	57.4%	(904)	-0.5%
3	1,145,288	127	0.0%	653,389	57.1%	71,534	6.2%
7	655,860	52	0.0%	355,169	54.2%	43,341	6.6%
5	237,311	0	0.0%	123,077	51.9%	16,230	6.8%
6	473,075	0	0.0%	238,460	50.4%	25,472	5.4%
8	567,177	4	0.0%	241,580	42.6%	30,481	5.4%
11	458,573	0	0.0%	192,873	42.1%	40,132	8.8%
12	322,224	0	0.0%	134,609	41.8%	18,023	5.6%
Mimaropa	261,592	0	0.0%	106,895	40.9%	18,914	7.2%
BARMM	112,311	0	0.0%	37,218	33.1%	12,725	11.3%
PHIL	8,254,531	547	0.0%	5,076,339	61.5%	551,570	6.7%

Vaccination Coverage per region for Priority Group A2 as of 22 November 2021.

Operations Support Logistics

- WHO Philippines supported the logistics for the 2nd batch of oxygen concentrators donated by the Australian government. The inspection was completed, and the concentrators are awaiting final release documentation. WHO will carry out the transport to the final destination.

Partner Coordination

Updates from USAID

USAID's EpiC visit to Eastern Samar Provincial Hospital (ESPH) to deliver ventilator consumables and orient hospital staff on ventilator use and management.

- In a recent visit to Eastern Samar Provincial Hospital (ESPH), USAID's EpiC COVID-19 Project and partner RG Meditron (RG Med) delivered ventilator consumables including oxygen hoses and oriented the hospital staff in using and maintaining the two USG-donated ventilators.
- Together with the Eastern Visayas Center for Health Development (CHD), EpiC and RG Med inspected, assembled and installed the ventilators and also used this time to assess and monitor the use and functionality of the ventilators. The team also discussed with ESPH's Chief, Dr. Jessica Sabalberino, how to continue supporting the hospital through technical assistance, capacity building, procurement, and maintenance

RG Med orients ESPH staff on ventilator use and management

EpiC and RG Med meets with ESPH's Chief and management team

USAID's IDDS continues to strengthen laboratories for COVID-19 testing in Bulacan, Palawan, and Rizal.

- Since its Phase III started in October 2021, USAID's Infectious Disease Detection and Surveillance (IDDS) Project transported 1,147 COVID-19 specimens from the collection units to its designated laboratories within Bulacan, Palawan, and Rizal provinces. To date, IDDS facilitates the transportation of 57 samples per day on average among these project sites. Also, the cumulative average turnaround time (TAT) for specimen transport from collection facilities to the laboratory is 1 hour 52 minutes.
- The procurement of additional COVID-19 testing kits and consumables is ongoing, while training is expected to commence in December 2021, along with specimen transport activities in Cavite, Laguna, and Isabela provinces.

IDDS staff picking -up COVID-19 specimens at Roxas Medicare Hospital in Palawan.

IDDS transports COVID-19 specimens from Rizal Province and endorses them to the Lung Center of the Philippines for COVID-19 testing.

Updates from International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Support to health authorities in Mindanao

- **Provided PPEs, basic medical equipment (sphygmomanometer, stethoscope, pulse oximeter) and hygiene and sanitation materials to City/Provincial Health Offices** for use in their vaccination centers. This included health centers in Zamboanga City, Lanao del Sur, Cotabato and Maguindanao.

- **Provided tents for use as pop-up testing and vaccination sites in BARMM**

Vaccination in places of detention

- **Mobilization of Regional DOH (NCR), Muntinlupa City Health Office and Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) for vaccination roll-out to persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) in New Bilibid Prison (NBP).** The ICRC facilitated the planning meeting between the Department of Health (DOH) and the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) to define the needs and the support needed from the partners. The DoH provided the vaccines and technical support to set up vaccination sites in the prison while BuCor assigned human resources for the vaccination team.

- ICRC coordinated with NBP authorities on the physical set-up, provision of PPEs, training on IPC, waste management and health information recording/reporting of the vaccination centers within the prison for 28,000 PDLs.

- Provision of **2 vaccine refrigerators with voltage regulator and universal power supply to NBP for proper cold storage, along with portable tables and chairs, tents, sharps containers, and other consumables**. Two tranches of 10,000 and 15,000 vaccine doses have been allocated to NBP through ICRC coordination with DOH and CHO. As a result, 43% of inmates have received their dose 1 by mid-October.

Vaccination of PDLs in New Bilibid Prison (NBP) in Muntinlupa City

- **Continuing advocacy and support of detention with health authorities to ensure vaccination for PDLs in other jails and prisons**

- As of October, the number of PDLs vaccinated under **BuCor** are as follows:

	Population	*Total Vaccinated*	*Percentage*	*Comments*
New Bilibid Prison, Muntinlupa City	28,516	9,254	32%	1st dose end-Oct
Correctional Institute for Women, Mandaluyong City	3,360	3,100	92%	Fully-vaccinated
Sablayan, Mindoro Occidental	2,387	600	25%	1st dose
San Ramon, Zamboanga City	2,304	716	31%	Fully-vaccinated
Iwahig, Palawan	2,729	0	0%	
Leyte	2,163	822	38%	1st dose
Davao del Norte	7,230	60	1%	

  - As of end-Oct, 93% of **BJMP** personnel (18,869) have been vaccinated/received at least 1 dose: 88% fully vaccinated (16,649)
  - Among the 125,082 PDLs managed by **BJMP**, 91% have been vaccinated/received at least 1 dose: 65% of those vaccinated have received full dose

Support to Philippine Red Cross

- Provided financial assistance to PRC's COVID-19 vaccination efforts nationwide. The assistance supported the:
    - Operationalization of PRC Bakuna Centers in Mindanao (Davao City, Iligan City and Zamboanga City) where 41,659 doses have been administered, with a total of 17,141 individuals being fully vaccinated as of 23 November 2021;

PRC Iligan City Chapter opened a vaccination site in Iligan City last July 14, 2021. ©ICRC/2021

PRC Davao City Chapter administers the second dose to more than 600 individuals last Oct. 23, 2021. ©PRC/2021

ICRC supported the PRC Zamboanga City Chapter to open a vaccination site in Zamboanga City. ©ICRC/2021

    - Deployment of 11 PRC Chapter Bakuna Teams to their respective LGU vaccination sites in Mindanao that inoculated 52,321 individuals (administered total). The 11 Bakuna teams come from the PRC Chapters of Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental, Gingoog City, Davao del Sur, General Santos City, Sultan Kudarat, Agusan del Norte-Butuan, Surigao del Norte, Lanao del Sur-Marawi, Cotabato-Maguindanao, Iligan City
    - Deployment of PRC Bakuna Bus to support the vaccination of detainees in 3 BJMP facilities (Talisay, Bogo, Danao) in Cebu province. A total of 4,485 doses were administered, while fully vaccinated PDLs have reached 1,787 as of 23 November 2021.

Updates from UNICEF

Support to the COVID vaccination roll-out

- On November 15, 2021, the Government of Japan and UNICEF Philippines turned over the cold chain equipment (CCE) the Government of the Philippines, with the City of Manila as the first of 35 local government units to receive support under this partnership. The PHP36 million worth of CCE is part of the PHP190 million support from Japan through UNICEF to strengthen vaccination efforts in the Philippines.
- In the following weeks, disaster-prone and geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas will benefit from Japan's support which includes walk-in cold rooms and freezers, solar-powered refrigerators, power generators, temperature monitoring devices, spare parts, and thermal jackets.
- The coverage of the event reached 772,000 users on Facebook, and the joint press release published by major print and online media.

The Government of Japan and UNICEF Philippines formally hand over the cold chain equipment to the City of Manila. From L-R: Manila Health Officer Dr. Arnold Pangan, UNICEF Philippines Chief of Health and Nutrition Dr. Malalay Ahmadzai, DOH Undersecretary Maria Carolina Vidal-Taino, Manila Vice Mayor Dr. Maria Sheilah Lacuna-Pangan, Ambassador of Japan to the Philippines Koshikawa Kazuhiko, Japanese Minister of Economic Affairs in the Philippines Nakata Masahiro, and UNICEF Philippines Chief of Communication Niko Wieland. ©UNICEF Philippines/2021/Julian Wainright

Education

- **Distribution of 2nd Batch of Alas Singko Storybooks.** UNICEF is distributing additional copies of the Alas Singko storybook to benefit 20,000 children aged 3-4 years old enrolled in Child Development Centers in priority municipalities in Northern Samar, Samar and Zamboanga del Norte and in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Valenzuela. Alas Singko is a book recommended for children ages 3 and above which tells the story of how a girl wakes up in her house where suddenly, everything has changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A first batch of these storybooks was distributed in late 2020 to 28,000 children in the same three provinces and Zamboanga City.

- **Second ECEiE DCPG Meeting.** The second meeting of the Earl Childhood Education in Emergencies (ECEiE) Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG) was conducted on 26 October 2021, where the ECCD Council's Pilot Proposal of Safe ECE Reopening was presented. Issues discussed were on readiness of local government units to implement, costs, timelines, and the importance of including children with disabilities in the pilot. The meeting ended with expressions of commitment of development partners in terms of advocacy, capacity building, contextualization and cascading in the partner's specific areas of operation.

A Kindergartener reading the storybook during a learning session in Samar. ©DepEd Division of Samar/2021

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF, through its implementing partner Relief International, continues to support risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) for COVID-19 prevention and vaccination in selected local government units (LGUs) in Regions VI (Iloilo and Guimaras), IV-A (Laguna and Quezon), and NCR (Paranaque and Navotas).
- Through the technical support, 10 local governments have updated their demand generation plans; 3,431 health workers and volunteers were trained on COVID-19 RCCE; 1,379 local officials, 195 local leaders, and 43 community-based groups have been engaged to support the COVID-19 campaign; and 5.4 million people were reached with COVID-19 messages through various channels.

- UNICEF, through Relief International, is also supporting partner LGUs in the region in rolling out pediatric vaccination for 12-17-year-olds and accelerating vaccination of A2, A5, and other vulnerable groups.

UNICEF partner Relief International conducts a quick group learning session in a pediatric vaccination site in Navotas City. ©Relief International/2021

A social mobilizer from Relief International holds an advocacy and awareness-raising session for pedicab drivers in Barangay NBBN, Navotas City. ©Relief International/2021

Relief International briefs local officials of Barangay Wakat in Nagcarlan, Laguna on the latest developments related to the national COVID-19 vaccination program. ©Relief International/2021

The technical support also helps partner LGUs develop targeted interventions, such as providing transportation assistance for vaccine-eligible populations in Barangay Manaol, one of the hard-to-reach barangays in Nagcarlan, Laguna, to address accessibility concerns. ©Relief International/2021

- UNICEF, in partnership with the Human Development and Empowerment Services Inc. (HDES), has started supporting selected local governments in Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula) in demand generation and RCCE for COVID-19 vaccination and routine immunization. HDES has started deploying social mobilizers and volunteers to support LGUs in updating and implementing their demand generation plans, capacity building, advocacy, social mobilization, awareness-raising, and social listening.

HDES holds a briefing session with the Municipal government of Alicia, in Zamboanga del Sur, on the technical support from UNICEF. ©HDES/2021

- UNICEF's #SaferTogether social media campaign reached 6.4 million users on Facebook as of November 17. Promoting the continued practice of COVID-19 preventive actions and vaccine confidence, the latest posts encourage young people to remind others and their family members who are at risk to continue practicing safety and prevention actions despite the lowering of alert levels. Join the campaign by sharing your stories here: https://www.facebook.com/102248760571/posts/10160290783350572

- UNICEF released a joint statement with the World Health Organization and UNESCO supporting the Philippine Government as the Department of Education begins its limited face-to-face in 100 public schools on November 15. The statement was picked up by major news outlets and is available here: https://uni.cf/3kQejau