

# Information bulletin

## Philippines: Polio Outbreak

<b>Glide n°</b> <a href="#">2019-000110</a>	<b>Date of issue:</b> 20 September 2019
<b>Date of disaster:</b> 19 September 2019	<b>Point of contact:</b> Patrick Elliot, Operations Manager
<b>Operation start date:</b> TBC	<b>Expected timeframe:</b> TBC
<b>Category of disaster:</b> Yellow	
<b>Host National Society:</b> Philippine Red Cross (PRC)	
<b>Number of people affected:</b> One confirmed case of vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VPDV2) in humans, four environmental samples tested positive for vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (VPDV1) and two environmental samples tested positive for VPDV2.	<b>Number of people to be assisted:</b> TBC
<b>N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation (if available and relevant):</b> PRC is coordinating with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in areas of Mindanao.	
<b>N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation (if available and relevant):</b> Department of Health (DOH), UNICEF, World Health Organization and Health Cluster partners.	

***This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. Philippine Red Cross, with the support of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is currently considering whether external assistance is required.***

*<click [here](#) to view the map of the affected areas, or [here](#) for detailed contact information>*

## The situation

On 19 September 2019, the Department of Health (DOH) confirmed the re-emergence of polio in the Philippines and declared a national polio outbreak. This follows a confirmed Vaccine Derived Poliovirus Type 2 (VPDV2) case in a three-year old child in Lanao de Sur (Mindanao). Subsequently, another case of polio (strain to be confirmed) was reported on 20 September, and this time in a five-year-old boy from Laguna, bringing the total number of people afflicted with the disease to two. The re-emergence of the disease comes almost 20 years since the Philippines was declared polio-free in 2000. The last known case of wild poliovirus recorded in the Philippines was in 1993.

Between 1 July and 27 August 2019, four environmental samples tested positive for VPDV1 from Tondo (Manila) with no genetic linkage found with any known VDPV1, indicating new emergence. Between 13 and 22 August 2019, two environmental samples tested positive for VDPV2 from Tondo (Manila) and Davao City. Both samples were founded to be genetically linked. As a result, VDPV2 was classified as circulating (cVDPV2).

After the confirmation of the VDPV2 case in Mindanao, the DOH is prioritizing the following activities in collaboration with UNICEF, WHO and other partner organizations<sup>1</sup>:

- Second round of synchronized polio vaccinations (planned October 2019).
- Development and dissemination of appropriate risk communication messages.
- Case investigation and tracing activities, as well as enhanced surveillance.
- Procurement of required vaccine supplies for campaigns.

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF and WHO. *Philippines Situation Report 1: Polio Outbreak*. Online at [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20WHO%20PHL%20SitRep1\\_Polio%20Outbreak\\_19Sep2019.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20WHO%20PHL%20SitRep1_Polio%20Outbreak_19Sep2019.pdf), 19 September 2019.

UNICEF and WHO are supporting DOH with convening the Health Cluster for coordination with partner organizations in response to the outbreak. This is expected to happen during week of 23 September 2019.

The re-emergence of polio in the Philippines comes as the DOH and other partners continue to respond to the ongoing Dengue Fever and Measles outbreaks. According to the latest reports until end of August 2019, there have been 271,480 dengue cases and 1,107 deaths, and 41,024 measles cases and 552 deaths.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is leading the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement response to the polio outbreak, and has demonstrated experience in social mobilization and awareness raising through response to dengue and measles outbreaks. As auxiliary to the public authorities, there is ongoing dialogue between PRC and the DOH which will inform the support required from the National Society. Additionally, the following activities are in progress:

- In accordance with PRC's response standard operating procedures (SOP), the operations center (OpCen) is on call 24/7, monitoring the situation and providing regular updates to leadership staff.
- PRC has issued a memo to its local Chapters to be on standby.
- Training of volunteers in 10 Chapters on Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV).
- Discussion with ICRC, which has presence in Mindanao to support the start-up of a response in this locality.

IFRC Philippine Country Office is providing technical support to PRC as requested. There are ongoing Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and emergency appeal operations being implemented in response to dengue (MDRPH033) and measles (MDRPH032) outbreaks. IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) surge desk is coordinating with sister National Societies to identify a specialist in epidemiology to support these operations, which would then also be extended to the polio disease outbreak if required. IFRC Country Office held a coordination meeting with WHO on 19 September and with ICRC on 20 September.

At this stage, there has been no request for support from PRC, however, the situation is being monitored by IFRC Country Office in close coordination with IFRC APRO in Kuala Lumpur. Preparedness measures are being put in place to ensure adequate readiness to activate IFRC tools, if required.



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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

### **In Philippine Red Cross**

- Elizabeth Zavalla, Secretary General; phone: +63 2 790 2300; email: [secgen@redcross.org.ph](mailto:secgen@redcross.org.ph)
- Mark Alvin Abrigo, acting Manager for Health Services; phone: +63 917 953 8211; email: [markalvin.abrigo@redcross.org.ph](mailto:markalvin.abrigo@redcross.org.ph)

### **In IFRC Philippine Country Office**

- Chris Staines, Head of Country Office; phone: +63 998 585 0794; email: [chris.staines@ifrc.org](mailto:chris.staines@ifrc.org)
- Patrick Elliott, Operations Manager; phone: +63 998 961 2140; email: [patrick.elliott@ifrc.org](mailto:patrick.elliott@ifrc.org)
- Gopal Mukherjee, Health Manager; phone: +63 998 961 2133; email: [gopal.mukherjee@ifrc.org](mailto:gopal.mukherjee@ifrc.org)

### In Asia Pacific Regional Office, Kuala Lumpur

- Mohammed Omer Mukhier, Deputy Regional Director; email: [mohammedomer.mukhier@ifrc.org](mailto:mohammedomer.mukhier@ifrc.org)
- Necephor Mghendi, Head of Disaster and Crisis Unit (DCPRR); email: [necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org](mailto:necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org)
- David Fogden, Operations Coordinator; email: [OpsCoord.SouthEastAsia@ifrc.org](mailto:OpsCoord.SouthEastAsia@ifrc.org)
- Riku Assamaki, Logistics Coordinator; email: [riku.assamaki@ifrc.org](mailto:riku.assamaki@ifrc.org)
- Rosemarie North, Communications Manager; phone: +60 12 230 8451; email: [rosemarie.north@ifrc.org](mailto:rosemarie.north@ifrc.org)

### In IFRC Geneva

- Tiffany Loh, Operations Coordination Senior Officer; email: [tiffany.loh@ifrc.org](mailto:tiffany.loh@ifrc.org)
- Cristina Estrada, Response and Recovery Lead; phone: +412 2730 4260; email: [cristina.estrada@ifrc.org](mailto:cristina.estrada@ifrc.org)

### For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

- Alice Ho, Resource Mobilization in Emergencies Coordinator; email: [alice.ho@ifrc.org](mailto:alice.ho@ifrc.org)

### For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries):

- Siew Hui Liew, PMER manager; email: [siewhui.liew@ifrc.org](mailto:siewhui.liew@ifrc.org)

## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



**Save lives,**  
protect livelihoods,  
and strengthen recovery  
from disaster and crises.



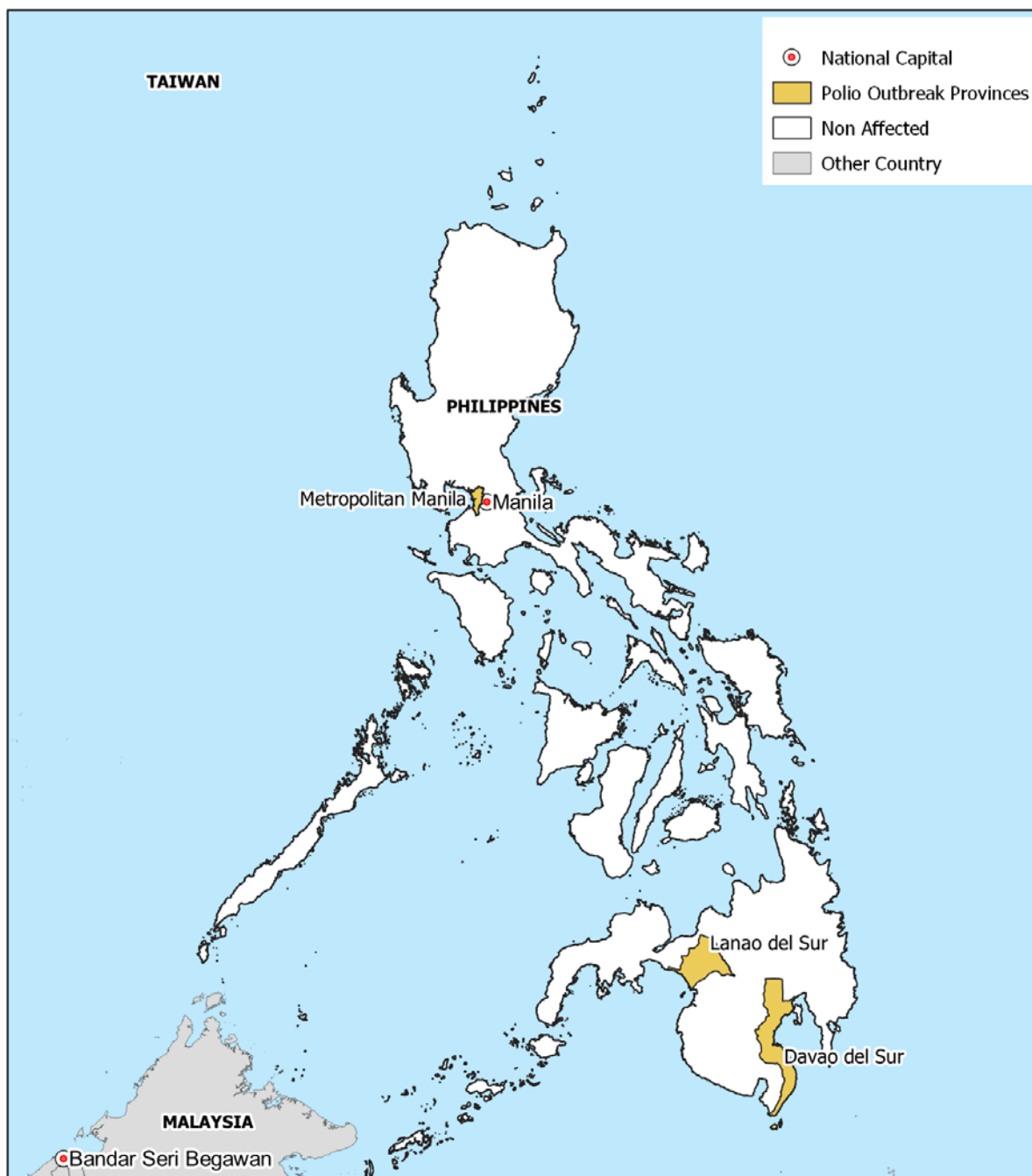
Enable **healthy**  
and **safe** living.



Promote social inclusion  
and a culture of  
**non-violence** and **peace**.

### Philippines, Polio Outbreak: Informal Update

20 September 2019



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of territory or its authorities. Map data sources: OCHA, OSM Contributors, GDACS, ICRC, IFRC

