



Press release

# 1.4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine arrive in Afghanistan through COVAX global dose-sharing mechanism

09 July 2021

**KABUL, 9 July 2021** – More than 1.4 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine arrived today in Afghanistan. Donated by the United States to COVAX, the 1,484,900 doses were delivered through the COVAX Facility's dose-sharing scheme to the Government of Afghanistan.

This is the first of two vaccine consignments to arrive this month, bringing the total donation to around 3.3 million doses.

"These vaccines arrive at a critical time for Afghanistan as the country faces a difficult surge in COVID-19 infections," said UNICEF Representative in Afghanistan Hervé Ludovic De Lys. "As many countries face vaccine supply challenges, the dose-sharing mechanism is a rapid way to close the immediate supply gap and ensure the most vulnerable, including healthcare workers, teachers, the elderly, and those in hard-to-reach areas, are protected against COVID-19. UNICEF welcomes this shipment which is an important step in the continued fight against COVID-19 in Afghanistan. However, much more needs to be done. I hope that other governments will step up and share their doses, supplies and therapeutics to protect those most in need."

Between April 2020 and 8 July 2021, a total of 131,586 people was infected with COVID-19; there have been 5,561 deaths. But since the beginning of the <sup>third</sup> wave in June 2021, there has been an exponential increase in the num

of the population vaccinated, and the virus continues to deeply affect the lives of the most vulnerable children and families across the country as they face the compounded impact of the pandemic, conflict and drought.

“Equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines is the clearest pathway to end this pandemic for all of us, children included,” added Mr. De Lys. “These donations are an important step for all of us to see the light at the end of this tunnel.”

UNICEF is leading the procurement and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility in what is the largest, most complex ground operation in the history of immunization. In Afghanistan, apart from supporting the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, UNICEF continues to support the immunization programmes of the government through planning, cold chain and vaccine management, demand generation, technical know-how and training. Building on over 70 years of experience in ensuring children are vaccinated against deadly childhood diseases, UNICEF is working with partners to build the capacity of local communities and ensure that they are engaged in the overall vaccination process.

[COVAX](#) is a partnership between the World Health Organization (WHO), the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and UNICEF; it aims to provide equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

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