



**World Health  
Organization**

Western Pacific  
Philippines



# UN agencies support three-day vaccination drive, remind LGUs to prioritize the most vulnerable

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The United Nations in the Philippines, including UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization, supports the three-day National Vaccination Days on 29 November to 1 December that aims to inoculate up to 9 million Filipinos.

We recognize the Philippine Government's ongoing efforts in ramping up COVID-19 vaccination to minimize the loss of lives from future surges of COVID-19 due to existing or potential new variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The vaccination drive will contribute to the resilience of Filipinos in all regions, especially when we bring vaccination services closer to vulnerable people and hard-to-reach communities in the spirit of leaving no one behind, recognizing the potential of the virus to reach all corners of the globe.

Amid the wider rollout, the Philippines must continue to intensify efforts in vaccinating all senior citizens, persons with comorbidities, and the indigent population (Priority Groups A2, A3 and A5). The vaccination drive should also include vulnerable groups who so often fall through the cracks due to their circumstances, such as refugees, asylum seekers, stateless and at risk of statelessness populations, and internally displaced people. These groups are facing an emergency on top of an emergency, and their vulnerabilities must not be forgotten as no one is safe until everyone is safe.

The impact of vaccination is most optimized in vaccinating as many persons as possible from these vulnerable groups as they have to overcome more barriers to vaccination but are more vulnerable to developing severe COVID-19.

With the country's large volume of COVID-19 vaccines – over 40 million COVID-19 vaccine doses currently available and at least 40 million more doses expected to arrive within the year – it is incumbent upon all sectors to come together now to ensure that all eligible population are fully vaccinated ahead of the holiday season. Over 34 million COVID-19 doses in the country were donated from the COVAX Facility.

We commend the Government of the Philippines, local authorities, the medical community, religious organizations, development partners, private health care providers, as well as the sectors of education, transport, peace and order, business, and other involved entities in coming together to amplify the information drive, deliver vaccines where they are needed most, and volunteer at vaccination sites nationwide.

Prioritizing the vulnerable population for COVID-19 vaccines saves lives, prevents hospitalization, and avoids the accompanying financial hardships due to severe illness. Unless the most vulnerable are fully vaccinated and minimum public health standards continue to be practiced at individual level and implemented at community level, COVID-19 will keep slowing down the pace of economic recovery through recurrent surges.

The accelerated rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines is essential to slowing down COVID-19 transmission, especially with the increasing mobility following the gradual opening of the economy and the start of the holiday season.

Together with our partners, UN agencies led by WHO and UNICEF will continue to work closely with the Philippine Government in support of ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, a crucial tool in ending the pandemic and towards the path of a healthy and resilient Philippines.