

WHO/UNICEF SECRETARIAT SUPPORTING MEASLES OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN THE PACIFIC

MEASLES OUTBREAK IN THE PACIFIC - SITUATION REPORT No 7

Reporting date:	17 December 2019
Reporting period:	11-17 December 2019

[Summary tables]

Table 1. Cases, deaths, and case-fatality ratio, by country.

Country	Cases previous week	Cases this week	Deaths	Trend
Samoa	4,693	5,331	75	Post-peak
Tonga	485	572	0	↗
Fiji	19	21	0	↔
American Samoa	9	10	0	↔

Table 2. Overview of Measles Containing Vaccines received and scheduled.

Country	Total MCV received in country since 01 Oct (doses)	Scheduled Deliveries (as of 16 Dec)
Samoa	265,500	0
Fiji	735,000	0
Tonga	58,000	0
Vanuatu	80,000	4,3760
Kiribati	14,000	0
Nauru	1,000	2,000
FSM	0	20,000
RMI	2,500	0
Solomon Islands	44,000	16,860
Cook Islands	1,000	3,000
Niue	2,000	0
Tokelau	2,000	0
Tuvalu	4,500	5,000
Total	1,209,500	90,620

[Situation update]

Samoa

- A total 5,331 cases, including 75 deaths, have been reported since the beginning of the outbreak, including 638 in the last week. As of 14 Dec 2019, there were 150 measles cases admitted in six hospitals (nil remaining in Lalomanu and Faleolo hospitals on Upolu and Sataua hospital in Savai'i).
- The highest age-specific attack rates continue to be reported in children aged 6-11 months (239.6 per 1000 which is over 1 in 5 infants in this age group), followed by infants 0-5 months (141.1 per

1000) and children aged 1-4 years (71.4 per 1000). Approximately 85% of deaths have occurred in the under 5s.

- Over 90% of the target population of 6 months to 60 years has been vaccinated; however, age-specific coverage data are still being collated and validated.
- The State of Emergency due to the measles epidemic was declared by the Government on 15 November 2019 and has been extended until Sunday 29 December 2019. Travel restrictions and social distancing measures on <20-year olds eased; now only apply to <15-year old age group.
- As of 27 November 2019, 16 Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) from the region and globally have deployed in the field. EMTs that are staying longer are rotating over time. The Health Emergency Operations Centre (HEOC) will continue to meet over the holiday period, and is aligning the build down of EMTs with the caseload to avoid coverage gaps.
- An emerging issue is the representation of children with post-measles infections. This situation is being monitored closely.

Tonga

- Tonga is seeing a 5th wave of transmission with fewer numbers of new cases being reported in recent weeks. Although it is too soon to call the outbreak post-peak, it appears to be slowing.
- A total 572 generally mild cases, including 12 admissions and 0 deaths, have been reported since the beginning of the outbreak. The age group primarily affected remains those aged 10-24 years, with an increasing proportion of females being affected from their male cohorts.
- The MOH is continuing to collect information on the vaccination status of the cases, aided most recently by two vaccine preventable disease epidemiologists from US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) to fully investigate underlying causes of the vaccination breakthrough cases.
- Secondary school vaccinations have been completed on almost all islands. The MOH has consulted the secretariat on whether an expanded group of younger children should also be offered vaccination. The plan is to complete vaccinations before Christmas.
- Although most government agencies are expected to close over the holiday period, selected staff of the Department of Public Health are slated to remain on duty.

Fiji

- Two additional cases have been reported in the last week, bringing the total from 19 to 21 cases with 0 deaths. All laboratory confirmed cases have been reported from the Central Division to date, with the majority from Serua/Namosi, with additional cases from Naitasiri, Rewa and Suva subdivisions. The new cases were known contacts of confirmed cases. Eight (8) cases are aged 0-4 years and 13 cases 19-39 years; 5 of the age-eligible cases were unvaccinated, 2 cases fully vaccinated for age, 4 had received post-exposure vaccination but later than recommended and vaccination status was unknown in one case.
- Fiji aims to reach >95% coverage of the target population by 24 Dec. Over 200,000 people have been immunized, with overall 96% vaccination coverage in Serua/Namosi subdivision of Central division, the primary outbreak area in Fiji. Now entering the second and third phase of targeted immunization, in the Western & Eastern and Division Northern Division, respectively.
- Coverage data from Rewa currently being collated with the aim of finishing next week. Rewa and Suva subdivisions are planning to go house-to-house. Eastern and Western divisions are updating their microplanning to ensure that they meet daily targets. Western will be working with the

HEOC to access additional vehicles and drivers from other Ministries to support logistics for the immunisation teams.

- The HEOC continues to provide daily updates of immunisation coverage. They will be working with WHO to map coverage using GIS (geographical information systems).
- WHO will be supporting the Colonial War Memorial Hospital with additional PPE, especially disposable gowns.
- Fiji continues risk communication in three languages (i-Taukei, Hindi and English). Includes 12 public advisories, media interviews in the 3 languages, boosted (push) Facebook posts and printing of home-based care leaflets with WHO support, photographs from staff in the field for social media posts on the MOH website, and Fiji immunisation team T-shirts supported by UNICEF.

American Samoa

- 10 cases reported, 0 deaths.

[Actions to date]

Response & preparedness in the Pacific

Coordination

- WHO participates in a weekly VTC on measles preparedness with regional partners and representatives of the national health authorities of the US Affiliated Pacific Islands, hosted by US CDC.

Information and Planning

- WHO has been working with PICs and regional partners to update measles risk assessments for countries with extant immunity gaps and those with limited response capacities
- WHO has completed clinical management guidelines and is developing a training and response pack on clinical management and emergency preparedness and response, including hospital contingency planning. The clinical management guidelines are based on WHO and MSF materials and have been reviewed by CDC, PIHOA and SPC
- WHO provides guidance to PICs on the development and implications of travel advisories. To date American Samoa through the National IHR Focal Point (NFP) of the United States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Solomon Islands and Tokelau have formally notified WHO of additional measures against measles at international points of entry under Article 43 of the IHR (2005). These advisories have been shared with all NFPs on the Event Information Site for IHR NFPs and will also be made available to all stakeholders as a WHO International Travel and Health alert. Additional measures are based on a risk assessment and must be reviewed within 3 months of coming into force.

Risk communication and community engagement

- WHO is supporting a Pacific regional measles Facebook campaign with a focus on traveller vaccination and the signs and symptoms of measles for the public.
- WHO is also working on country-specific risk communication planning with PICs aligned to their supplementary immunisation activities (SIAs) to increase uptake by target vaccination groups.

Operational planning and response

- WHO has deployed a logistician and and EMT trainer to Kiribati for 2 weeks to review and strengthen emergency management arrangements for measles and conduct a measles simulation exercise.
- WHO deployed a clinician and humanitarian sector trainer to Niue to review emergency management arrangements, hospital contingency planning, infection prevention and control, and to provide training on the measles clinical guidelines.

Supplementary immunisation activities

- UNICEF is providing technical assistance to preparedness and supplementary immunisation activities, effective vaccine management, and data quality in Vanuatu, FSM, RMI, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Cook Islands and Tuvalu. Technical assistance is also provided to A summary of progress by country is below:

Samoa

- In collaboration with UNICEF, WHO supported procurement of MR vaccines and Vitamin A as well as delivery of human immunoglobulin donated by French Polynesia.
- A total of 265,500 bundled doses of MCV have been delivered by UNICEF to Samoa since 1 October of which 100,000 doses were donated by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZ MFAT) and 35,000 Vitamin A capsules.
- UNICEF currently has on the ground one maternal and child health specialist, one risk communications/communication for development specialist, one child protection in emergencies (CPiE)/Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) specialist, one WASH specialist and a senior emergency coordinator to provide technical assistance to government and augment the Samoa-based immunisation specialist and child protection officer.
- The MoH, CDC, UNICEF and WHO conducted a rapid coverage assessment visiting an estimated 57 households. At the same time, mop up vaccination was done for anyone not previously vaccinated.
- UNICEF continues to provide technical assistance in the area of planning and implementation of measles mop up activities including provision of outreach services, effective vaccine management, improving data quality, and supervision and monitoring. Importantly, UNICEF is working with the MoH to strengthen routine immunisation activities. UNICEF provided technical and product advice on medical equipment.
- UNICEF is supporting MOH in the development of communication messages and materials on how parents can care for children with measles discharged from hospital, on preventing and managing malnutrition, on information about herd immunity, on PFA, and other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). UNICEF also proposed the inclusion of disability-friendly messages on immunization.
- UNICEF, in collaboration with UN Women, is continuing the daily sessions with outreach teams of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) composed of 90 staff and volunteers. The initial sessions were aimed at developing the team members' understanding of the need to cope with the challenges they face in their daily work with affected communities. Concerns related to field-equipment, personal safety, physical and mental fatigue and the emotional impact on their wellbeing were discussed and taken into consideration for immediate and future action.
- UNICEF also completed a training session on Psychological First Aid (PFA) among the members of the outreach teams. The training employed interactive activities and encouraged participants to

share their experiences so far. These helped provide practical applications and real-life situations on key PFA concepts.

- UNICEF drafted positive and supportive messages for parents and adult-family members to reassure and help children cope with a situation of distress or emotional difficulties. The messages were circulated among partners for further review and finalization. The aim is to have a common integrated package of messages that can be used by all actors working with affected communities.
- UNICEF delivered (15 December 2019) the following biomedical devices and cold chain equipment requested by the MOH:

Description	Unit	Quantity
CPAP/BiPAP machine (Transport ventilator)	pc	10
Patient Monitor	pc	20
ECG Machine	pc	10
Syringe Pump	pc	30
Nebulizer	pc	11
Pulse Oximeter	pc	20
Ice-Lined Refrigerators with power pack	pc	6

Six of the 10 ventilators are already installed and being used by patients in ICUs.

Tonga

- Since 1 October, UNICEF has delivered a total of 58,000 bundled doses of MCV to Tonga and 1,500 capsules of Vitamin A. UNICEF continues to provide technical assistance in the area of supervision, monitoring as well effective vaccine management and product support.
- UNICEF provided 2 ice lined refrigerators.

FIJI

- Since 1 October 2019, UNICEF has delivered a total 735,000 bundled doses of measles-containing vaccine and 210,000 capsules of Vitamin A. Of this 735,000 doses, The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Aus DFAT) and NZ MFAT funded a total of 400,000 bundled doses (200,000 bundled doses each).

Vanuatu

- WHO has been working with the Vanuatu MOH to develop a detailed risk assessment of measles risk
- National Task Force Committee established on 14 October, followed by establishment of VCH and provincial Task Force; and regular weekly task force meeting conducted
- Measles preparedness and response plan developed and endorsed
- SIA started in Shefa Province targeting risk groups including children from 6 months to 15 years
- As part of the ongoing support, UNICEF has delivered 50,000 doses of MCV
- Immunization activities of transportation and hospitality staff are ongoing
- Expansion of preparedness activities to provinces with priority focus on Luganville/NPH, Santo and Lenakel, Tanna Province

FSM

- Department of Health and Social Affairs (DHSA) Measles response task force established, and action plan developed.
- WHO has deployed an epidemiologist to conduct a detailed measles risk assessment

RMI

- House to house vaccination in Majuro and Ebeye completed for children under 5 yrs; ongoing for outer islands; catch up campaign in schools as well as vitamin A supplementation
- All persons from the age of 6 months and above travelling to measles affected areas are to be vaccinated at least 10 to 12 days before travel.
- All personnel at the airport and points of 1st contact should be vaccinated.
- The RMI Chief of Immigration is working with immigration authorities of Guam and Hawaii, Honolulu to give notice that, effective 12 Dec 2019 all passengers travelling to RMI should provide proof of vaccination before boarding the flight.
- Vitamin A supplementation, influenza vaccination, deworming and MMR are all being carried out at the same time
- The WHO epidemiologist (above) will also be working with RMI to conduct a detailed risk assessment for measles

Kiribati

- As of December 7, a total number of 729 front-line clinical service providers and public service providers were vaccinated. These included airport/seaport staff, Staff from Immigration, Customs, Biosecurity, National Intelligence Unit Police and ANZ bank
- Vaccinating frontline workers Hotel staff and local staff of the diplomatic corps are also targeted for vaccination
- Phase I of SIA – fixed site and outreach activities - started in South Tarawa on 14 December for a period of 3 days, followed by Phase II in outer islands

Solomon Islands

- Completed SIA on 6 December with estimated 97% coverage of under 6 years.
- WHO provided a measles tabletop exercise for public health and clinical staff of the MHMS.

Cook Islands

- Continuing to vaccinate all the schools, defaulters, vulnerable children, government officials and border staff.

Tuvalu

- Developed a measles preparedness plan and is vaccinating according to priority target groups.

Niue and Nauru

- Vaccinations to close immunity gaps in Niue and Nauru are continuing.

[Next steps]

WHO deployments

- WHO operational plan; including restructured 3-month HR plan and financial resource plan to clearly identify gaps.

Table 3. WHO Deployment overview as of 17 December 2019.

Function	Deployed/Completed
EMT Coordination & Information management	3
Clinician	1
Public Health Specialist	3
Epidemiology/Vaccination Systems	4
Risk Communications	2
Infection Prevention Control	1
MH & Psychosocial Support	1
Logistics	2
Finance & Admin	2
ERM trainer	3
TOTAL	22

SAMOA

- The MHO, MWCSO, UNICEF, WHO and other partner agencies met to coordinate the implementation of MHPSS and PFA activities. It was agreed that all messaging and communication materials relating to MHPSS and PFA will be vetted by the MOH. The MOH and the MWCSO also agreed to jointly manage community mobilization activities relating to the outbreak.

FSM

- DoHSA: Planning for phase 1 of SIA in Chuuk and Pohnpei States
- DoHSA: The implementation plan for mass combined mass immunization, deworming and vitamin A supplementation is being finalized with attachment of detailed budget and breakdown of activities and sensitization plans, focus on 6 months to 5 years. Mass campaign to include 6-17 years old those in and out of schools in a selective approach.

RMI

- MoH: A nurse and a doctor will be stationed at the airport for additional surveillance and syndromic screening for measles

Kiribati

- Implementing operational guidelines for measles defaulters tracing activities and administering 'zero' dose

Solomon Islands

- Planning for vaccination of any remaining susceptible groups, frontline workers and children who missed being vaccinated during the SIA.
- 16,860 doses of MR vaccine underway to support these additional steps in addition to the routine supply of 44,000 doses

Tuvalu

- UNICEF plans to send an additional 5,000 doses of MR vaccine to expand its target group to cover the entire population.

WHO/UNICEF weekly coordination meeting

The secretariat would be pleased to include the support provided by other partners in the next and subsequent sitreps.

Weekly coordination meetings are held every Wednesdays at 09:30am at the WHO office in Suva – please let us know if you will join in person or by Zoom, by emailing Measles2019@who.int Any change in venue will be advised.

For those wishing to call in:

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://wpro-who.zoom.us/j/5993964937>

Or Telephone:

+1 669 900 6833 (US Toll), +1 646 876 9923 (US Toll). Meeting ID: 599 396 4937

International numbers available: <https://wpro-who.zoom.us/j/acZxLvmltF>