

# Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

## Situation Report 6 Philippines 18 March 2020

Data reported by the Department of Health on 18 March 2020

### Highlights

- 62 new cases tested positive for COVID-19 since 16 March 2020.
- Out of the total of 202 confirmed cases, 19% are imported from outside of the Philippines, 14% are categorised as localized transmission, and the remaining cases are unknown or still under investigation. WHO is supporting the Department of Health (DOH) in investigating all newly confirmed cases and contacts.
- First 2 cases reported in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM): one with recent travel history to Malaysia.
- **Luzon-wide community quarantine** in place until 13 April 2020 as per Joint Resolution #13 of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), including additional measures such as hotel closures. An earlier restriction on departing international passengers was revoked, with all passengers with valid tickets allowed to leave during the entire quarantine period.
- Besides the DOH Emergency Operation Centre (EOC), a dedicated COVID-19 EOC will be made operational at the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC). All response clusters have now been activated.
- **Community quarantine measures are aimed at decreasing stress on health facilities through minimizing risk of infection, potentially resulting in lower morbidity and mortality.**
- Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) stepped up its testing capacity from 300 to 450 tests per day. As of 19 March, 4 sub national laboratories (Cebu, Davao, Baguio and Manila) will also be able to test for COVID-19, soon to be followed by the University of the Philippines National Institute for Health (UP-NIH). Additional 6 private laboratories are yet to be assessed.
- Third round of the supplementary polio vaccination campaign in Mindanao suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions. Routine immunization services continue at all health centres.
- Global shortages of urgently needed supplies seriously impeding ongoing procurements.
- A draft costed response plan to feed into the government's efforts was shared with partners.

### PHILIPPINES SITUATION IN NUMBERS

202	confirmed (62 new)
39	imported cases (19%)
28	local transmission (14%)
88	under investigation (44%)
47	unknown (23%)
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17	deaths (11 new)
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338	admitted Persons Under Investigation
2,825	Persons Under Monitoring
1,030	samples tested

<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

### DOH COVID-19 HOTLINE

OPEN TO ALL CALLERS NATIONWIDE:  
**(02) 894-COVID**

(02) 894-26843

FOR PLDT, SMART, SUN,  
AND TNT SUBSCRIBERS:

**1555**

We're working to have the 1555 hotline accessible for all.

f OfficialDOHgov @DOHgovph doh.gov.ph (02) 894-COVID

Relevant guidelines, issuances, and documents are available online at [bit.ly/COVIDPH](https://bit.ly/COVIDPH)

## Current Situation

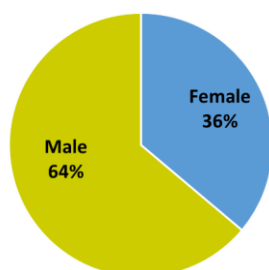
Between 16 and 18 March, 62 new cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in the Philippines, totalling 202 confirmed cases, including 17 deaths.

Out of the 17 deaths, 80% are male, and the majority are 60 years and older, ranging between 39 and 88 years of age with a median age of 66. 93% of deaths had either one or several known co-morbidities including diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and hypertension.

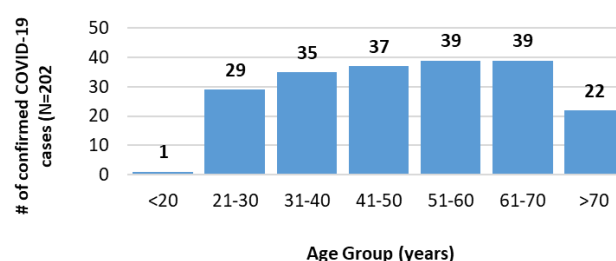
76% of all cases are located inside Metro Manila. Active contact tracing and case investigation is ongoing, looking for clustering of cases.

Among the 202 confirmed cases, 129 are male (64%) and 73 are female (36%). The most affected age groups are 51-60 and 61-70 years (both at 19%) followed by 41-50 years (18%)

**Gender distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines in %**  
18 January-18 March 2020 (N=202)



**Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines in #**  
18 January-18 March 2020 (N=202)



## Country readiness and response operations

### Country-level coordination

A draft Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Response Plan for COVID-19 was shared for inputs with partners. A final version will be shared with the government to ensure alignment with partners' commitments.

COVID-19-related restrictions are hindering many NGO partners in ongoing operations to provide support to displaced populations affected by recent disasters. WHO is advocating with DOH for supporting partners' exemption requests for increased access.

The BARMM Ministry of Health (MOH) is in the process of developing its own contingency plan, while hospital readiness assessment is ongoing remotely, with support from humanitarian partners including UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO and the World Bank. MOH BARMM has activated an EOC and is using daily reports.

Besides the DOH EOC, a dedicated COVID-19 EOC will be operational at the NDRRMC. All government-led response clusters have now been activated.

OCHA is supporting WHO in mapping all ongoing partner interventions, including risk communication, community engagement, hygiene promotion, and provision of supplies, training and equipment, to be shared broadly soon.

All relevant guidelines, issuances, and documents from key government departments on actions taken so far are available online at [bit.ly/COVIDPH](https://bit.ly/COVIDPH).

## Risk communication and community engagement

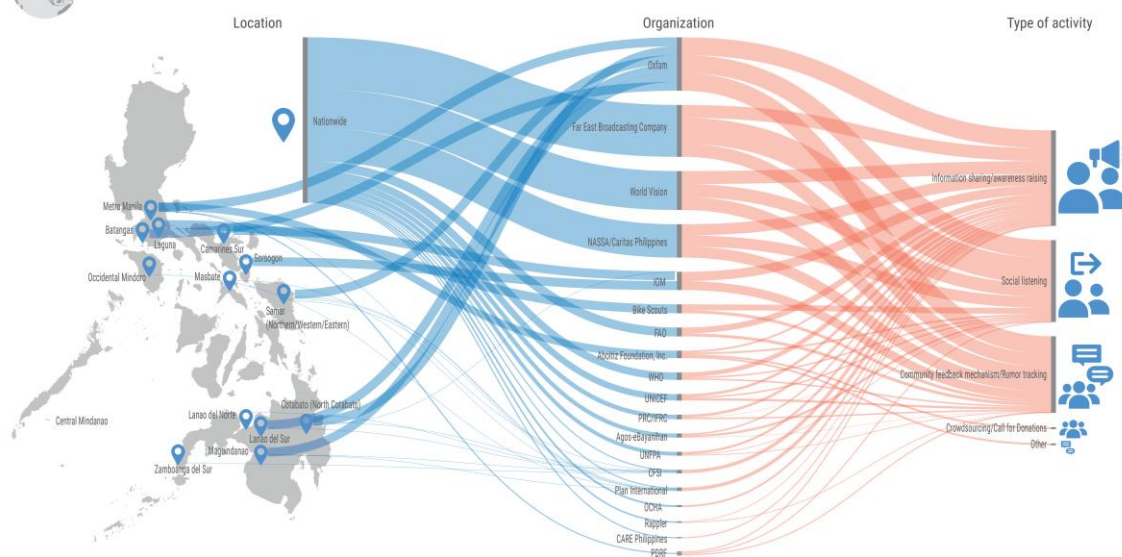


### PHILIPPINES: COVID-19 OPERATIONAL PRESENCE Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

As of 17 March 2020



The World Health Organization announced the COVID-19 as a pandemic. On 12 March, Philippine government raised COVID-19 alert system to Code Red sublevel 2 imposing community quarantine in NCR and on 16 March to the whole Luzon Island. The snapshot reflects the general location of Risk Communication and Community Engagement activities by members and partners of the Community of Practice on Community Engagement.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
Creation date: 18 March 2020 Sources: COPCE, Organizations, Clusters, PSA/NAAMRIA Feedback: arevalog@un.org www.unocha.org www.reliefweb.int

All official DOH communication materials are available at: <https://www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCov/in-fographics> and <https://www.doh.gov.ph/COVID-19/Gabay-sa-Publiko>

### Surveillance

WHO is supporting DOH with intensified surveillance to actively look for clusters of cases of COVID-19, aimed at improved coordination with Epidemiological Surveillance Units (ESU) at municipal, city, provincial and regional level, while continuously conduct Event-based (or rumour-based) investigations, in close collaboration with LGUs.

DOH will also initiate enhanced surveillance of Influenza Like Illness and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness to actively find suspected COVID-19 cases.

### National laboratory system

Thanks to additional supplies received from WHO, RITM was able to increase its daily testing capacity from 300 to 450 tests.

As of 19 March, the 4 sub national laboratories of Baguio General Hospital and Medical Centre, San Lazaro Hospital in Manila, and the Southern Philippines Medical Centre in Davao and Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Centre in Cebu will be operational, soon to be followed by the UP-NIH laboratory. WHO is supporting RITM with the assessment of an additional 6 private laboratories for COVID-19 testing.

Global shortage of key supplies is resulting in serious delays with delivery of reagents, primers, probes, extraction kits and transport media. WHO and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are supporting DOH with the sourcing of urgently required laboratory supplies.

**No rapid testing kit has so far been certified by WHO or the DOH’s Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in the country. Validation processes are ongoing by WHO at global level and by FDA at national level.**

### Infection prevention and control

With the current quarantine ongoing, partners are organizing online training on IPC and rational use of PPE for public and private hospital focal points, as well as for community health workers, with the support from USAID's Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPs), UNICEF and WHO.

The first ever virtual WASH cluster meeting was conducted on 17 March to discuss partners' COVID-19 response activities as well as the formal activation of the WASH cluster.

### Case management and continuity of essential services

WHO is looking into how to best support DOH with ensuring the continuation of essential health care services, including TB, HIV, mother and child health care, non-communicable diseases, nutrition, and routine immunization through use-friendly and practical guidance.

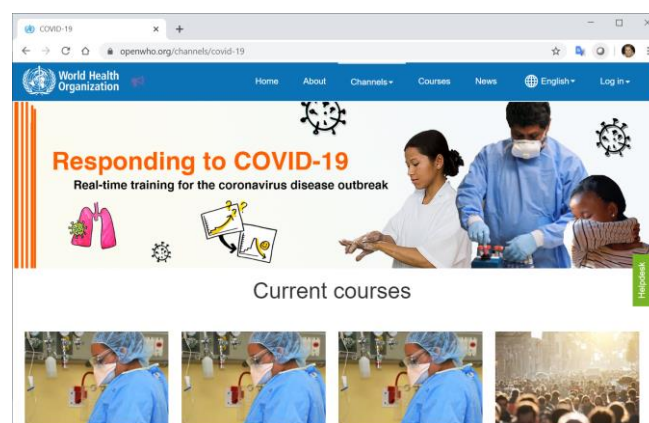
DOH issued several guidelines facilitating electronic prescription for (dangerous) drugs.

Besides the DOH hotline, LGUs have set up their own hotlines, facilitating transport to municipal hospitals for assessment.

LGUs are reportedly in the process of identifying adequate space for treatment of mild cases, such as multi-purpose halls and evacuation centres. LGUs are also looking into subsidizing families in need of financial assistance.

DOH is identifying one large hospital in NCR to be dedicated for severe and critical COVID-19 cases, to reduce the burden on other health facilities currently at risk of being overwhelmed.

WHO has made a large number of COVID-19 online training available for free at: <https://openwho.org/channels/covid-19>



### Logistics, procurement, and supply management

Who	What		When	
PRC	Medical tents for isolation and treatment	30	In country	
	Face masks	20,000	Philippines General Hospital	
	PPE	2,000		
	Medical supplies, masks, alcohol, food		6 Manila district hospitals	
UNFPA	Face masks	100,000	Donated to DOH	
	Handheld thermometers	1,130		
	PPE	± 60,000 USD	For frontline health workers	
UNICEF	Tents for triage and isolation purposes	44	20 on 11 March/24 on 23 April	
	Disinfection kits	44	In country	
USAID	PPE	20,000	Awaiting delivery	
WHO	PPE	12,000	Donated to DOH	
	<b>Laboratory supplies</b>			
		<i>E-gene EAV kits</i>	45	Donated to RITM
		<i>RdRP-gene kits</i>	70	
		<i>N gene/E gene/RdRp gene vials</i>	12	
	<b>Universal Transport Media</b>			
		<i>UTM Viral transport kit</i>	300	Awaiting delivery
		<i>Flexible Mini Tip</i>	1000	
		<i>Regular Flocked Swab</i>	1000	
	<b>Extraction kits</b>			
	<i>QIAGEN Qlamp Viral RNA Mini Kit</i>	18	17 delivered/21 on the way	
	<i>SuperScript III Platinum One-step qRT-PCR</i>	20		
World Vision	Mobile Storage Unit 10 x 32m	4	2 in Manila and 2 in Cebu	
	Tents (child-friendly space) 7 x 6m	17	Clark, Pampanga	

## Resource mobilization

	Committed in USD*	Details
ADB	3,000,000	Support to DOH for COVID-19 control, including procurement of essential items such as laboratory supplies and equipment, ventilators, PPE, mobile hospitals
UNICEF	1,100,000	Risk Communications and Community Engagement; critical supplies and logistics, including PPE and disinfection supplies; addressing primary impacts of the pandemic on health, nutrition and WASH; and secondary impacts on children and families
USAID	2,700,000	Laboratory supplies, risk communication, IPC, surveillance, planning, training, WASH and community engagement
WHO	250,000	Laboratory supplies, PPEs, mobilization of experts, training of trainers and planning workshops

\* Up to 18 March 2020

## Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak

**The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel worried.**

**Get the FACTS; not the rumors and misinformation. Facts can help to minimize fears.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Minimize watching, reading or listening to news that cause you to feel anxious or distressed.**

**Seek information only from trusted sources and mainly to take practical steps to prepare your plans and protect yourself and loved ones.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Honor caretakers and healthcare workers supporting people affected with COVID-19 in your community.**

**Acknowledge the role they play to save lives and keep your loved ones safe.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Health workers**

**Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection that you cannot do your job or that you are weak.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Health workers**

**Some may unfortunately experience avoidance by their family or community due to stigma or fear. This can make an already challenging situation far more difficult.**

**If possible, staying connected with your loved ones including through digital methods is one way to maintain contact.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Health workers**

**Feeling under pressure is a likely experience for you and many of your health worker colleagues.**

**It is quite normal to be feeling this way in the current situation.**

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World Health Organization

**Learn simple daily physical exercises you can perform at home.**

**This will help to keep you active and reduce boredom, in case you need to stay at home.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**Protect yourself and be supportive to others.**

**For example, check-in by phone on neighbors or people in your community who may need some extra assistance.**

**Working together as one community can help to create solidarity in addressing COVID-19 together.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

**COVID-19 has and is likely to affect people from many countries. Do not attach it to any ethnicity or nationality.**

**Be empathetic to all those who are affected, in and from any country - they deserve our support, compassion and kindness.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19  
World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/risk-communication-and-community-engagement>