



Baghdad, 1 December 2021 – Over 2.9 million doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine arrived in Iraq this month, bringing the total vaccines procured for this country through the COVAX Facility to over 6 million doses.

Vaccination rates in Iraq have recently been a priority of national health authorities, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and other health partners. As of 1 November, the vaccination services were significantly expanded across the country where over 120 external vaccination sites were set out Iraq-wide to target 12 million people including children aged 12 years and above. The local health authorities, WHO, UNICEF, and other health actors are collaborating on efforts to rapidly increase COVID-19 vaccination coverage by end of this year.

“The Ministry of Health of Iraq affirms the continuity of its efforts to provide vaccines procured through the COVAX Facility, of which Iraq is a partner, and to increase the number of outlets to increase vaccine uptake in the shortest possible period. The Ministry would like to thank all our local and international partners for their efforts to make the vaccine accessible to all eligible recipients in Iraq,” said Iraqi Acting Minister of Health and Environment, Hani Mousa Badr Al-Akabi.

UNICEF, WHO and the Iraqi Ministry of Health have, moreover, intensified the vaccine uptake activities in the past few months, by building the capacity of the local delivery system in Iraq and engaging communities in the COVID-19 vaccination rollout process. Collaborative work on the timely procurement and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines is also ongoing, and more doses of WHO-approved vaccines are expected to arrive over the next few months.

“We welcome the arrival of these vaccines as they arrive at a time where Iraq is stepping up efforts to contain the pandemic. This shipment is an important part of the continuing fight against COVID-19 in Iraq,” said UNICEF Representative in Iraq, Sheema SenGupta.

“We cannot end the pandemic without the vaccine. However, vaccines alone do not replace the need for public health and social measures; they complement them,” said Dr. Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Iraq. “These recent vaccine shipments from COVAX are a step in the right direction in our joint quest to increase population immunity against COVID-19 in Iraq,” Dr. Zouiten added.

The COVAX Facility is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi and the World Health Organization (WHO), alongside key delivery partner UNICEF. Its aim is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world. It is the only global initiative that is working with governments and manufacturers to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are available worldwide.

These deliveries of BioNTech Pfizer vaccines to Iraq are another milestone towards the COVAX Facility’s goal on access. In addition to ensuring sufficient vaccine supply, partner agencies are working to ensure community awareness and provide support to vaccine administration by local health authorities. WHO, UNICEF, and other key health contributors are striving to end this pandemic in Iraq, and globally, as quickly as possible.

About UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child; in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.

For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit <https://www.unicef.org/iraq/>, Follow UNICEF on Twitter and Facebook

About WHO

Founded in 1948, WHO is the United Nations agency that connects nations, partners and

people to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable – so everyone, everywhere can attain the highest level of health.

Media contacts:

MOH

Dr Saif M Badr. Ministry of Health and Environment
Mob: +9647901925907
dr.saif.moh.iraq@gmail.com

UNICEF

Miguel Mateos Munoz
Chief of Communication – UNICEF Iraq
mmateosmunoz@unicef.org
+964 7827820238

WHO

Ajyal Alsultany
WHO Communications Officer in Iraq
sultanya@who.int
+964 7740 892 878

Monday 29th of April 2024 10:58:43 AM