



COVAX



From
the People of Japan

PRESS STATEMENT

Japan supports Samoa with COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility

The Government of Japan has provided 112,000 doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to Samoa via the COVAX Facility to strengthen Samoa's vaccination rollout.

Apia, Samoa 23 August 2021 - Today, Samoa received COVID-19 vaccines from the Government of Japan through the COVAX Facility – a partnership co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the World Health Organization (WHO), with UNICEF as the key delivery partner.

The 112,000 doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, manufactured in Japan, will contribute towards fully vaccinating more than 56,000 Samoans by the end of 2021.

These vaccines were handed over to the Government of Samoa by H.E. Mr. Genichi Terasawa, Ambassador of Japan to Samoa, in an official ceremony held at the Ministry of Health. In attendance at the handover ceremony were cabinet ministers and government officials as well as Samoa's development partners who have also contributed to ensuring Samoa's full access to vaccines for its eligible population.

"The arrival of the vaccines from Japan has added impetus to speed up the rollout of our vaccination programs with the assurance of secured supplies; for this we are appreciative of the coordinated approach to reach our target," said the Director General of Health in Samoa, Leausa Dr. Take Naseri.

The Government of Samoa will use the latest vaccine doses provided by Japan to continue vaccinating people above 18 years of age, in line with the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan.

"I am delighted to see that these vaccines arrived at Apia and am hoping our assistance will promote the vaccine rollout for people of Samoa. While Japan has been supporting Samoa's effort to counter the COVID-19 pandemic through providing various medical

equipment, I would like to highlight that the vaccine is the first case of our assistance realized by Japan's new 'Pacific Bond [Kizuna] policy,' which was pledged at the 9th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held last month. Under this policy, Japan will further strengthen our cooperation with Pacific Island countries to cope with various agenda such as the COVID-19 pandemic," said H.E. Mr. Genichi Terasawa, Ambassador of Japan to Samoa.

"We thank the Government and people of Japan for supporting our joint efforts in combatting the ongoing threats posed by COVID-19 throughout the Pacific region," said UNICEF Pacific Representative (a.i.), Vathinee Jitjaturunt. "We also acknowledge the Government of Samoa's strong efforts in their preparedness and response plans. UNICEF, together with our partners, will continue to support the government in keeping communities, including children, safe and protected from this global pandemic."

"I would like to encourage the public to continue to learn about the benefits of vaccination and get these life-saving vaccines, which have been donated through the COVAX Facility by the Government of Japan. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and prevent severe disease, hospitalization and death. Vaccination, along with practising all the public health social measures will continue to keep Samoa safe," said Dr. Boaping Yang, Officer in Charge, WHO, Samoa.

As vaccines are now rolling out around the world, they should complement, and not replace, proven public health measures. Samoa, like other countries, will continue to apply tried-and-tested measures to successfully prevent and control transmission, such as physical distancing, masks, ventilation and hand hygiene, alongside robust programmes to test, trace, isolate and treat.

COVAX is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator. The ACT Accelerator is a ground-breaking global collaboration to boost the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. Its aim is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access to every country in the world.

In ensuring the safety and efficacy of the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, the vaccine has undergone rigorous clinical trials and safety assessments to ensure it meets the highest level of safety standards.

