



Australian Government



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Samoa receives its first ever vaccine delivery vehicle to transport lifesaving vaccines

Apia, Samoa, 26 September 2024 – UNICEF and Australia are working with Samoa to improve access to vaccinations across the country, with an innovative new vaccine delivery vehicle handed over today. New waste management supplies were also provided, including bins and masks to improve safety in handling hazardous wastes.

The new vehicle, and waste management supplies also provided, will benefit all the people living in Samoa, including healthcare providers in 13 healthcare facilities.

“Ministry of Health is immensely grateful to the Australian Government for their timely support and also to UNICEF for their able technical guidance and support for strengthening our health system to get equipped to provide quality services in a cost-effective way,” said Samoa’s Hon. Minister of Health, Valasi Luapitofanua To’ogamaga Tafito Selesele.

“Though this vehicle will have priority for vaccines, it may be considered to accommodate the pharmaceutical supplies for distribution to the health facilities across the country to improve the cost efficiency.”

The Pacific nation’s first vaccine delivery vehicle = A boost in the health system:

Receiving its first vaccine delivery vehicle means cost effective utilization and less wastage of resources, including time, for the healthcare workers in Samoa.

Previously, a smaller vehicle was used to transport vaccines from the airport to the National Vaccine Centre before transporting to health care facilities. This meant more trips to ensure that the potency and efficiency of the vaccines could be maintained, as well as to cater for the quantity.

“This vehicle will support Samoa to maintain its goal of 90 per cent coverage for routine immunization. Australia is proud to be a long-term partner for Samoa in achieving its vision for a healthier community and delivering better health for all,” said Australia’s High Commissioner to Samoa, H.E. Mr. Will Robinson.

Samoa has been making steady progress in terms of reaching all eligible children with the vaccines as per the national immunization schedule. There are significant developments, through technical support from UNICEF, in cold chain and capacity building of health workers to strengthen the health system’s immunization schedule. However, the transportation and distribution of vaccines in the country was identified as a gap.

Now, with this new vehicle procured with support from the Australian Government and UNICEF, transportation of vaccines will be faster, which means a boost in efficient and timely vaccine supply and logistics to the healthcare facilities. The vehicle is also covered to protect vaccines against unfavourable weather conditions.

“Most of the health issues faced, especially by children in Samoa and the Pacific, are preventable. However, preventing them requires an effective primary healthcare system well-supported by sound resources,” said UNICEF Pacific’s Chief of Samoa Field Office, Khin Moe Aye.

“UNICEF is pleased to partner with the Australian Government and Ministry of Health in Samoa towards the strengthening of healthcare systems. This will enable children and their families to access quality services, while also ensuring that healthcare workers benefit from better resources and services.”

UNICEF will continue to provide on-the-ground support, under the leadership of Samoa’s Ministry of Health, to ensure that healthcare workers are protected as well as receive the best resources to deliver high-level services to children and their communities.

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Note to Editors

[Click here](#) to download photos.

Reaching all eligible children with vaccines in Samoa:

This year, the coverage for the two doses of measles vaccine has been quite encouraging for Samoa. The first dose of measles has reached 91 per cent for the first time in the last five years after the measles outbreak and the second dose of the measles vaccine is around 64 per cent.

The Expanded Programme on Immunization team of Samoa’s Ministry of Health is hopeful to cover the missed children in the remaining months of this year to achieve good coverage for the year. The new vaccine introduction initiative, post-measles outbreak recovery plan and COVID-19 pandemic, brought a significant change to the immunization domain of Samoa.

For more information, please contact:

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