



## European Union, World Health Organization, Ministry of Public Health, National Vaccine Institute, and World Vision Foundation partner to support COVID-19 emergency preparedness and response in Thailand

*Joint press release*

**23 July 2021, BANGKOK** – The European Union (EU), Thailand’s Ministry of Public Health, the World Health Organization Country Office for Thailand, the National Vaccine Institute and World Vision Foundation of Thailand today launched a programme to support the COVID-19 response of the government of Thailand and strengthen preparedness for future pandemics.

To mark this important partnership, a virtual launch event was held in which attendees were addressed by His Excellency Mr Pirkka Tapiola, Ambassador of the European Union to the Kingdom Thailand, His Excellency Mr Anutin Charnvirakul, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Health Thailand, Dr Daniel A. Kertesz, WHO Representative to Thailand and representatives from the Department of Disease Control, the National Vaccine Institute and the World Vision Foundation of Thailand.

The EU is providing € 1.9 million (72 million THB) to Thailand, as part of the overall €20 million (760 million THB) programme for “The EU Southeast Asia Health Pandemic Response and Preparedness Programme in Thailand” with eight other ASEAN member countries and ASEAN Secretariat. The action will focus on COVID-19 activities such as multi-source surveillance and testing strategies, subnational analysis and risk assessment, risk communication and community engagement, support to the national COVID-19 Immunization Programmes, and strengthening of essential health services.

“To win the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic, global cooperation and solidarity are crucial. The EU is already at the forefront of this effort. Team Europe is a lead contributor with over € 3 billion for the COVAX Facility ensuring at least 1.8 billion doses for 92 low and lower middle-income countries across the world. No one is safe until everyone is safe” said H.E Pirkka Tapiola, Ambassador of the European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand “The significant partnership between the EU, the Kingdom of Thailand and WHO under this project will contribute to strengthen the capacity of the Thailand health system to control COVID 19. This is to make sure no one is left behind. We want to build back better and emerge stronger together. I am proud that Team Europe is part of this collaborative effort - United against COVID-19,” added Ambassador Tapiola.

WHO, through its Western Pacific and South East Asia Regional Offices, will also bolster its engagement and the exchange of best practices in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote regional cooperation for the COVID-19 pandemic response. In this initiative, WHO plays a critical role in supporting coordination, providing technical expertise across critical pandemic management areas and capturing lessons from the ground up to help address systemic challenges and effectively deal with future disease outbreaks.



Dr Daniel Kertesz, WHO Representative to Thailand

“Ending the pandemic is our collective goal. Human solidarity – humanity working together has never been more important. An end to this pandemic is in sight as long as we remain Unit(ed) against COVID-19.”

### **About WHO**

The World Health Organization provides global leadership in public health within the United Nations system. Founded in 1948, WHO works with 194 Member States, across six regions and from more than 150 offices, to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable. Our goal for 2019-2023 is to ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and wellbeing. #HealthforAll

For more information about WHO and its work in Thailand, please visit <https://www.who.int/thailand>

### **About the European Union**

The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 Member States. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedom.

### **About Team Europe**

Team Europe - comprising the EU, its Member States and financial institutions - has provided over €800 million to assist ASEAN and member states of ASEAN in their response to the coronavirus. The support is given to health facilities and health workers, provisions of personal protective equipment and sanitizers, as well as technical assistance and institutional support.

Team Europe also contributes to the financing of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) facility, a global initiative to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines to everyone including citizens of ASEAN. The initial contribution was doubled on 19 February 2021, making Team Europe one of the lead donors to COVAX providing over €2.47 billion in funding.

For more information about the Delegation of the European Union to Thailand and its work in Thailand, please visit: [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand_en)