

CASE STUDY: PHILIPPINES

Building on what works: Message testing with UNICEF Philippines



Vaccination
Demand
Observatory



THE
PUBLIC
GOOD
PROJECTS



Yale *Institute for Global Health*





This series of case studies offers a model for how organisations can collaborate to positively impact vaccine acceptance by applying data insights and testing and scaling online vaccine communication interventions. Published in partnership with UNICEF, Meta, the Yale Institute for Global Health (YIGH) and The Public Good Projects (PGP), this case study offers lessons for using social media insights and tools to encourage vaccine confidence globally.

Vaccine decision-making is complex. The success of vaccine communication efforts depends on delivering the right information at the right time, to the right people and through the right channels and messengers. To help build lasting confidence in vaccination, tailoring messages to specific community concerns is critical, as is regularly capturing contextual insights and trends around vaccination conversations to ensure that communications are relevant and responsive to community needs.

For the past three years, UNICEF, Meta, YIGH and PGP have been exploring how to use targeted online communications to help build vaccine confidence by identifying, designing, and testing more effective ways to highlight the importance of vaccination. In 2022, we have shifted our focus from COVID-19 vaccination to routine childhood immunization in eight countries – Argentina, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Africa – to support vaccine demand generation amid the ongoing pandemic.

Our partnership



UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to protect and advance the rights of children. With its partners, UNICEF supplies vaccines for 45% of the world's children under 5 years of age every year¹. Together with governments, the private sector, nongovernmental organisations and other United Nations agencies, UNICEF engages communities, increases demand for vaccines, procures and distributes vaccines, keeps supplies safe and effective, and helps ensure vaccine access, especially for the hardest-to-reach children and families.

To this collaboration, UNICEF brings its global network of Country Offices, recognized public trust, expertise and experience in immunization programming, leadership in social and behaviour change and vaccine demand generation, and context-specific questions to explore through iterative research and testing.



Meta teams and tools enable UNICEF, Yale and PGP to scale accurate messaging to communities in need around the world.

This is done by effectively tapping into how people are talking about vaccines, utilising media measurement tools and publicly available platform insights to understand which messages are positively impacting vaccine perceptions. Meta also advises on digital media best practice for effective health communication.



YIGH brings together world-class schools of public health, medicine and nursing to address public health issues around the globe.

Drawing on vaccine acceptance theory and behaviour change communication expertise, the YIGH team collects and triangulates data and crafts messaging strategies grounded in both evidence and global messaging principles. In parallel, YIGH designs and executes rigorous evaluations to measure the real-world impact of communication interventions.



PGP is a public health nonprofit specialising in large-scale media monitoring programs and social behaviour change interventions.

PGP brings social media analysis and insights from online public conversations about vaccines to help bridge data gaps in timely and cost-effective ways.

Additionally, its creative team works closely with YIGH and UNICEF to transform these insights into compelling creative assets that complement local messaging strategies.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/immunization>

Building on campaign learnings: Our work in the Philippines

Learning from past campaigns

Immunization helps protect the right of children to good health. Yet in the Philippines, coverage of lifesaving routine immunization has been in steady decline over the past five years². In recent years, outbreaks of both measles³ and polio have occurred⁴. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, disrupting both the delivery and uptake of routine immunization services. As a result, more than half of the children born during the pandemic – over 1 million children – have not yet received a single vaccine dose, placing the Philippines among the top five contributors to the world’s “zero-dose children”⁵. There remains an urgent need to find new ways to generate vaccine confidence and demand.

For the past two years, we have been working with UNICEF Philippines to encourage vaccination through different messaging approaches. We began our work in 2022 by looking to results from our past campaigns, and **we identified the following insights to guide our work:**



Testimonials can effectively shift attitudes:

In our 2021 joint campaign, testimonials performed well in a previous test, positively shifting attitudes about vaccination across all audience survey questions. This included strengthening the perceived importance of routine immunization across the target audience, the likelihood of recommending vaccines to friends or family, trust in vaccine information provided by healthcare workers, and social approval for childhood vaccines.



Multiple messaging strategies are needed:

A review of our joint campaigns demonstrated the value of testing different messaging approaches in context. Multiple campaigns, including values-based (liberty) messaging, were successful in positively moving attitudes in statistically significant ways on both the importance of childhood vaccination and the likelihood that people would recommend childhood vaccines to others – indicators that are likely to correlate with willingness to vaccinate⁶. In order to strengthen public trust in vaccines, we crafted a campaign strategy emphasising liberty (putting vaccination in the hands of parents), which strengthened attitudes on the importance of vaccination and likelihood to recommend vaccination to others.

² https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/country-profiles/immunization/2022-country-profiles/immunization_phl_2022.pdf

³ <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/press-releases/unicef-urges-parents-get-children-immunized-calls-collective-actions-fight-measles>

⁴ <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/polio-outbreak-in-the-philippines>

⁵ <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/press-releases/philippines-top-5-country-world-zero-dose-children>

⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140673620315580>



Highlighting the safety and efficacy of routine vaccines can help build vaccine confidence:

In our 2021 assessment of vaccine-related public posts on Facebook, we observed prevalent concerns about vaccine safety and side effects. However, there was also emerging concern about the resurgence of vaccine-preventable disease. **Our past campaigns addressed this in two ways:**

1. By emphasising safety and efficacy, campaigns were shown to positively influence attitudes on the importance of vaccination and recommending vaccination to friends and family, and
2. By raising the threat level of vaccine-preventable diseases, and reminding the audience that immunization is an effective action that they can take to protect their children, campaigns were able to strengthen self-efficacy among the audience, with parents endorsing their ability to protect their children through vaccination.

These campaigns, as well as the liberty-focused campaign, were combined in a strategy to test in 2022.



Providing practical information and calls to action can help encourage behaviour change:

While communication interventions alone cannot address challenges of vaccine supply or service delivery, they can close knowledge gaps for people who are unsure when and how to get their children vaccinated following service disruptions.



Local languages should be prioritised:

Based on the strong past performance of Filipino content over English-language content, Filipino advertisements should be pursued.



Distinguishing between routine and COVID vaccinations may help reduce negative sentiment:

As COVID-19 vaccination was found to be a driver of negative audience sentiment and response, we opted to highlight our focus on “routine vaccines” and “routine immunization for children”

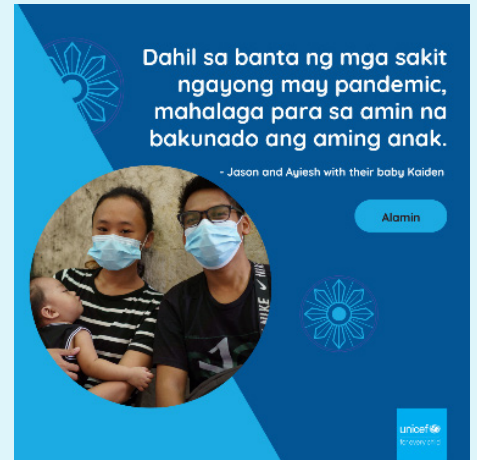
We then drew on these campaign learnings to launch an updated, three-arm campaign strategy, identifying opportunity areas that were strongly supported by evidence and responded to real community perspectives and concerns:



Self-efficacy and liberty

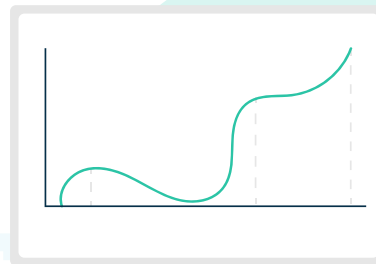


Access to vaccines



Testimonials

Collaborating closely with the UNICEF Philippines team, we worked to select, adapt and create responsive assets with key design considerations of audience, messages, messenger and tone. Where possible, we incorporated high-performing ads from our past campaigns and key messages from the Department of Health's communication strategy for routine immunization that aligned with these messaging strategies. **Below, we offer two examples of how we constructed messaging using behavioural insights:**



Example 1:



“Be sure your child is protected.”
 [Button: Learn more about routine vaccines]

Caption: There is a lot of uncertainty in the world, but one thing that you can know for sure is that your children are protected from diseases if you get them vaccinated.

Even with COVID-19, it is still critical to keep on schedule with vaccinations for babies and young children to keep them safe from disease outbreaks, like polio. For any missed doses, contact your nearest health provider today. **#VaccinesWork**

In this campaign, we grouped past high-performing creative into a single campaign and refreshed the copy.

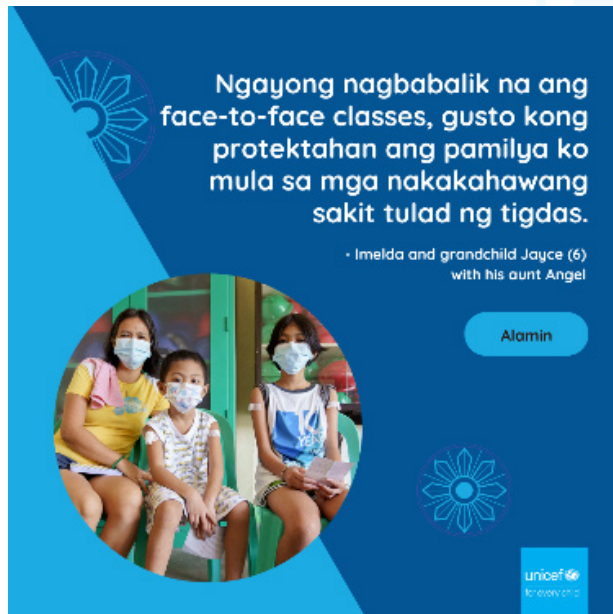
Here, we highlighted the **role that parents can play in protecting their children** from disease (through vaccination).

We also **acknowledged the concerns of parents** and their desire to keep their children safe, equipping them with additional knowledge to do so through on-time vaccinations.

Finally, we **highlighted the importance of continued routine vaccination** amidst the pandemic and how to catch up on any missed doses.



Example 2:



“With face-to-face classes slowly returning, I want to protect my family from contagious diseases like measles.”

Imelda and grandchild Jayce Ken
[Button: Learn more]

Caption: Make sure your child is fully protected, and ready for school. Get them up to date with their vaccines by taking them to their nearest vaccination centre. **#VaccinesWork #foreverychild**



Within this campaign, we selected high-performing ads from our previous Testimonials campaign to model the creative, and updated the content with new voices from the field. In the previous campaign, we noted that parents featured with their children performed very well in terms of reach, impressions and clicks. **This insight led us to feature diverse parents and caregivers with their children in authentic testimonials.**

The key message and copy in this story showcases the three-part protection-motivation behavioural communication strategy. **Through the parent’s testimonial, we**

1. Highlight the risks of contagious diseases – e.g., measles – for children (risk salience);

2. Introduce an effective solution – vaccination – (response efficacy); and

3. Equip parents and caregivers with how they can protect their children through vaccination, i.e., by taking them to their nearest vaccination centre (self-efficacy).

We also linked the message to a timely and popular concern (resumption of face-to-face classes) to increase relevance with target audiences.

Testing and iterating

Next, we launched these campaigns on Facebook Feed, targeting males and females aged 21-44, for a one-month period country-wide. To understand the impact of these communication approaches on vaccine attitudes, **we deployed a five-question survey** on Facebook to audience members who were either exposed (test group) or not exposed (control group) to our advertisements.

1. Do you remember seeing a post about routine immunizations from UNICEF online or on a mobile device over the past two days?
2. How important is it for parents to get their children vaccinated against preventable diseases, such as polio or measles?
3. How likely are you to advise a close friend or relative who has a child to get him or her vaccinated?
4. How safe do you think that routine childhood vaccines are for children?
5. How much do you agree with this statement? "Parents have the ability to protect their children from diseases through vaccination."

Campaign results

Over 46 million people were reached through these campaigns, generating over 171 million overall impressions. Importantly, **this campaign led to over 332,000 people clicking on the UNICEF Philippines routine immunization web page** where people could learn more about why, where and how to access vaccines for children.



Survey Questions	Self-efficacy and liberty	Access	Testimonials
Do you remember seeing a post about routine immunizations from UNICEF online or on a mobile device over the past two days?	1.9 [^]	2.1 [^]	6.6 [*]
How important is it for parents to get their children vaccinated against preventable diseases, such as polio or measles?	No lift	No lift	2.5 [*]
How likely are you to advise a close friend or relative who has a child to get him or her vaccinated?	No lift	No lift	No lift
How safe do you think that routine childhood vaccines are for children?	No lift	No lift	No lift
How much do you agree with this statement? "Parents have the ability to protect their children from diseases through vaccination."	1.4 [^]	No lift	No lift

*90% confidence level
[^]80% confidence level

Of the three messaging strategies we tested, the Testimonials campaign performed the best, generating statistically significant movement on the importance of vaccination and being highly recalled amongst the target audience.

While the Access and Self-efficacy and liberty campaigns did not drive lift overall, they did positively shift attitudes among specific demographics. Sharing information on how to access vaccination positively moved attitudes on the importance of vaccination among women between the ages of 35 and 44. Positive directional movement on the likelihood of recommending vaccination to friends and family was also observed among men aged 25 to 34 exposed to the Access campaign. Similarly, the self-efficacy and liberty campaign positively influenced agreement with the statement, "Parents have the ability to protect their children from diseases through vaccination" among men aged 35 to 44.

Through the brand lift survey, we are also able to observe the percentage of respondents who give the desired answer(s) in both the test and control groups, which revealed some interesting results as well. For instance, the share of people who responded that routine immunization is important for children is very high: 83% to 89% among those surveyed. On the other hand, perceived safety of routine immunization is low : Only 27% to 32% responded that vaccines are safe. This shows that more work is needed to convey the safety of routine childhood vaccines.

Recommendations

The choice to vaccinate remains complex, influenced by knowledge, experiences, feelings, values and beliefs. To help UNICEF Philippines and core program partners continue to encourage vaccination, **we recommend:**

- **Centering trusted messengers through testimonials and storytelling:**
As in past campaigns in the Philippines, we saw that testimonial-style communications resonated strongly with our audiences in these campaigns too. We recommend continuing to explore the use of different trusted messengers through testimonials to encourage vaccination as a social norm. Posts featuring parents with their child resonated strongly as well.
- **Prioritising communication in local languages:**
Past tests determined that reaching people in the languages they prefer and use in their daily lives helps build trust and ensures that our messages are understood. Whenever possible, we encourage developing assets in local languages to increase access for communities.
- **Further explore messaging on safety of vaccines:**
Results show that the perceived safety of routine childhood vaccines is low. This could be targeted in future campaigns, using social norming and testimonials from trusted sources to strengthen the public's confidence in vaccine safety.

