

COVID-19: Global vaccine promises ring hollow

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Vaccination campaign for COVID in Santiago, Chile. Credit: Municipality of Santiago / Flickr , under Creative Commons 2.0 license

This week, the first COVID-19 vaccine doses from the United Nations-led COVAX initiative arrived in Africa. This is a long-awaited piece of good news in a climate where vaccine procurement for developing countries has been hampered by empty promises, delays, infrastructure challenges and prejudice.

While many richer countries have begun vaccinating their populations in earnest, the world's poorest have been left behind in the global vaccines arms race. This disparity was highlighted by Henrietta Fore, executive director of Unicef, and Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, World Health Organization (WHO) director general, in a [joint statement](#).

While 10 countries had secured 75% of the 128 million administered doses, "almost 130 countries, with 2.5 billion people, are yet to administer a single dose," they said.

Those differences are not a coincidence. The ten countries that have dispersed the highest number of doses so far are developed countries that account for 60% of global gross domestic product, according to the WHO.

These countries, according to global research and data analysis outfit Our World in Data, are the United States, Canada, China, the United Kingdom, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Russia, Germany and Spain. Canada has acquired enough doses to vaccinate every citizen five times.

Provided by SciDev.Net

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