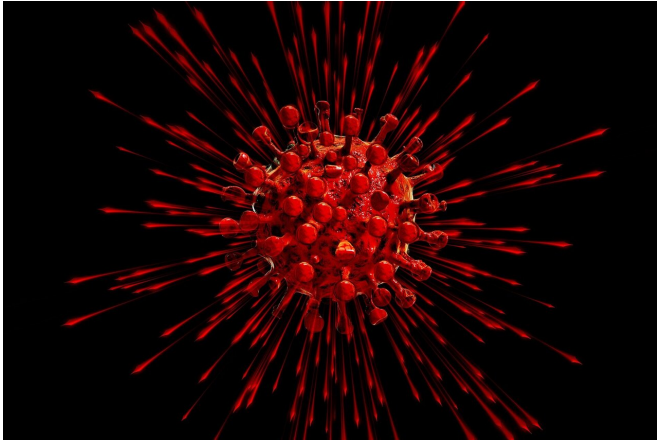


# With 2 pct vaccinated against COVID so far, Africa on 'sidelines'

8 April 2021



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Africa is on the "sidelines" of the worldwide vaccination drive against COVID-19, with only two percent of the global total to have received jabs, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Thursday, citing supply, funding and personnel shortfalls.

WHO's director for Africa, Matshidiso Moeti, blamed the slow pace of vaccinations in Africa on "inadequate supplies, lack of financing and lack of qualified personnel" as well as [logistical problems](#).

Speaking to an online press briefing, she noted in particular that exports of vaccines from India under the Covax global vaccine-sharing facility had slowed.

Africa has been the least affected by the pandemic, with 4.3 million cases including 114,000 deaths in an overall population of 1.2 billion, according to the latest figures from WHO Africa.

The global death toll is 2.9 million.

Mohamed Malick Fall, head of the eastern and

southern Africa section of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), told the press briefing that delivery has hit transport snags as well as logistical woes over refrigeration requirements.

These problems have led to wastage, he added.

But Fall said vaccines through the Covax programme are now "arriving in all African countries" and appealed for improved efficiency and distribution capacities.

Both Moeti and Fall recognised the "reticence" in Africa over the AstraZeneca vaccine, the most widely used in the Covax scheme, with concerns over side effects making world headlines.

Both stressed the importance of shunning rumour and disinformation.

They recalled that resistance to the [polio vaccine](#) had been overcome in many African countries, notably Nigeria.

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