

African countries appear ill prepared for crash vaccine distribution effort

According to [a World Health Organization] analysis, based on countries' self-reporting, the African region has an average score of 33 per cent readiness for a COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, which is well below the desired benchmark of 80 per cent.

WHO, together with [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#), Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation and other partners, is working to ensure equitable access to vaccines in Africa through the COVAX facility, the vaccines pillar of the WHO [Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator](#). When vaccines are licensed and approved, [COVAX](#) will work to secure enough doses to provide protection to an initial 20 per cent of the African population, said WHO.

However, only 49 per cent have identified priority populations for vaccination and have plans in place to reach them, 44 per cent have coordination structures in place, according to WHO analysis.

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[WHO Regional Director for Africa Dr. Matshidiso] Moeti, underscored that developing a safe and effective vaccine "is just the first step in a successful rollout".

"If communities are not on-board and convinced that a vaccine will protect their health, we will make little headway. It's critical that countries reach out to communities and hear their concerns and give them a voice in the process," she added.

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