

Vaccine refusal mania has captured entire indigenous communities in Mexico

In Aldama, a small town of about 7,000 located in the central highlands of the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, some people say they will not get vaccinated, regardless of any vaccination plan or where the vaccine comes from.

“Why would I get vaccinated? I’m not sick. It wouldn’t be good if they tried to force us to get vaccinated. I don’t know,” said María Magdalena López Santís, an Aldama resident to CNN in broken Spanish.

Indigenous communities like Aldama have a history of mistrust toward the federal government. In the best of cases, community leaders say, they have been ignored. In the worst of cases, they’ve been subjected to land-grabs, discrimination, abuse and attacks. This time, it seems a lack of information and conspiracy theories that have spread in the region like wildfire are to blame for vaccine hesitancy.

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Tomás López Pérez, Aldama’s town secretary, told CNN that people there, including himself, strongly believe vaccines can do more harm than good.

“People are not well informed regarding this. Since we don’t really know what vaccines are made of, we believe that they contain the [Covid-19] virus and that’s the main reason why people don’t want to get vaccinated,” López said.

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