

## Vaccine Apartheid

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The emergence of the new coronavirus variant, Omicron, has exposed the risks of an unvaccinated world. What does global vaccine inequality look like? According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 37.5 million people have received a booster dose in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> That exceeds the number of people who have gotten a *single* COVID-19 vaccine dose in eight Southern African countries.

**Table 1: Vaccination Coverage in Southern Africa**

Country	People with at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose <sup>2</sup>
<b>Botswana</b>	883,188
<b>Eswatini</b>	259,022
<b>Lesotho</b>	581,857
<b>Malawi</b>	1.12 million
<b>Mozambique</b>	6.26 million
<b>Namibia</b>	355,254
<b>South Africa</b>	17.02 million
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	3.77 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>30.25 million</b>

Since the start of the pandemic, the U.S. has sent 11.2 million doses to those eight countries in Southern Africa. That is less than what the U.S. distributed at home in one week in November (Nov. 17 – 24).<sup>3</sup>

**Table 2: U.S. Donations to Southern African Countries**

Country	Pfizer	Moderna	J&J	Unspecified	Total
<b>Botswana<sup>4</sup></b>	81,000	0	0	100,620	181,620
<b>Eswatini<sup>5</sup></b>	100,620	0	302,000	0	402,620
<b>Lesotho<sup>6</sup></b>	100,620	0	302,400,	0	572,090
			169,070		

<sup>1</sup> <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home>

<sup>2</sup> Data Retrieved from November 29 2021, <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>

<sup>3</sup> 13.7 million doses. November 24, 572190175 to November 17, 558460315. <https://data.cdc.gov/Vaccinations/COVID-19-Vaccinations-in-the-United-States-Jurisdiction/uns-k-b7fc>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/botswana/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/botswana/#covid_map_link)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/eswatini/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/eswatini/#covid_map_link)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/lesotho/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/lesotho/#covid_map_link)

<b>Malawi</b> <sup>7</sup>	302,400	0	0	168,000	470,400
<b>Mozambique</b> <sup>8</sup>	0	0	302,000 336,000 840,000	0	1,478,000
<b>Namibia</b> <sup>9</sup>	100,620 124,020	0	0	0	224,640
<b>South Africa</b> <sup>10</sup>	5,660,460 2,217,150	0	0	0	7,877,610
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,686,890</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,251,470</b>	<b>268,620</b>	<b>11,206,980</b>

The lack of supply for developing countries is a key constraint to vaccinating the world. Indeed, many low- and middle- income countries have higher rates of vaccine acceptance than wealthy countries.<sup>11</sup> In Botswana—where Omicron was first detected—national surveys showed a 76% vaccine acceptance rate.<sup>12</sup> Yet only 20 percent of the population has gotten fully vaccinated so far.<sup>13</sup> Some people in Botswana have even travelled to other countries to get the vaccine.<sup>14</sup>

The Biden administration has responded to criticisms about prioritizing booster shots over global vaccinations by calling it a “false choice.”<sup>15</sup> But until the U.S. government uses its power under the Defense Production Act to share the vaccine recipe and make surge investments in global vaccine production, that choice will remain true—and only become increasingly stark.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/malawi/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/malawi/#covid_map_link)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/mozambique/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/mozambique/#covid_map_link)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/namibia/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/namibia/#covid_map_link)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/south-africa/#covid\\_map\\_link](https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/south-africa/#covid_map_link)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-021-01454-y>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.afro.who.int/news/learning-botswanas-covid-19-vaccine-rollout>

<sup>13</sup> <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.news24.com/citypress/news/botswana-citizens-flock-to-sa-to-get-the-jab-20210905>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/08/04/press-briefing-by-press-secretary-jen-psaki-august-4-2021/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20210804.101816/full/>