



African and European Mayors' statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Equity

The discovery of the Covid-19 Omicron/ B1.1.529 variant - first identified in South Africa but now rapidly spreading in Europe and beyond - is a wake-up call for governments everywhere that no one is safe until everyone is safe.

That only [7% of the population in African countries is fully vaccinated](#) is endangering the health of billions as well as hampering the economic and social recovery.

As mayors of African and European cities we are leading the frontline response to the Covid-19 pandemic. With fellow global mayors [we have called for equal access to vaccines](#) as a key element of a green and just recovery. We have also repeatedly offered our support to governments and intergovernmental institutions.

We can make a real difference to minimise the impact of Covid-19 in our cities, **but only if and when all urban residents in Africa and Europe have equal access to vaccines.**

We need a coordinated and global response to ensure vaccines can get to people faster. Building on what so many are calling for around the world, we ask global leaders to take urgent action to improve access to vaccines for all and specifically to accelerate vaccination in Africa, [where rates are the lowest in the world.](#)

We specifically call on global leaders to:

- accelerate **sharing of vaccines** between European and African countries
- support local distribution of vaccines and **delivery capabilities** in African countries, especially where existing health systems are struggling under the additional pressures posed by the pandemic
- **support and engage mayors and local leaders** to facilitate the vaccination process for swift and effective delivery to urban residents
- help **expand manufacturing capacity** in Africa by facilitating technology and knowledge transfer, supporting a temporary intellectual property waiver, licensing, public-private cooperation, and investments
- commit to the World Health Organisation's target of **vaccinating 70% of all country income groups by September 2022**
- commit to their **fair share of the global financial investment** – the International Monetary Fund estimates that [vaccinating the world will cost \\$50 billion but will also yield an economic benefit of \\$9 trillion.](#)

This is a global pandemic that requires a global response: collaboration between Africa and Europe as strategic neighbours is essential, and we as city mayors are ready to play our part to ensure rapid uptake of the vaccine in all our cities.

Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr - Freetown, Sierra Leone

Mayor Giuseppe Sala - Milan, Italy

All African and European city mayors are warmly encouraged to join this call. Please contact mayorsdialogue@odi.org.uk to add your name.

[The Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue](#) is a platform of African and European mayors who aspire to an equal model of cooperation between Africa and Europe, focusing on the needs of all urban residents and their contribution to economies and societies.