



European
Commission



© European Union, 2021 (photographer: Gaël Gellé)

FACTS & FIGURES

EU humanitarian support to COVID-19 vaccination rollout in Africa: **€100 million**, in two tracks.

Team Europe contribution to the COVAX Facility: over **€2.2 billion**.

Team Europe support to the emergency response to humanitarian needs in 2020: **€3.2 billion**.

Humanitarian Air Bridge: **67** flights to **20** countries.

Further EU and the Africa CDC cooperation: a **partnership initiative** to help scale up preparedness in Africa for health emergencies; the African Union Support Programme (AUSP) supports disease surveillance and the deployment of health care workers.

Last updated 19/04/2021

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

EU humanitarian initiative to support COVID-19 vaccination rollout in Africa

Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic is placing an unprecedented strain on the whole world. [According to the World Health Organization](#), there are currently more than 135 million cases and almost 3 million deaths reported worldwide (as of 11 April 2021). The European Union has been leading international efforts in response to the pandemic and is committed to ensuring that everyone who needs a vaccine gets it, anywhere in the world. As stated by European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, *"no one is safe until everyone is safe"*.

A race against time

The response to the coronavirus pandemic, including vaccination, is not a race between countries but a race against time. In this context, acting together now will help us protect more lives and relieve the burden on the already-stretched healthcare systems and workers. That is why, since the early days of COVID-19, the EU, its Member States and European financial institutions came together as Team Europe to provide support in the fight against the pandemic.

By 1 January 2021, [Team Europe](#) had already supported partner countries around the world with more than €26 billion. This funding:

- provides emergency response to humanitarian needs;
- strengthens health systems and crucial health services; and
- assists economic recovery and social support.

Team Europe is also one of the leading donors of the COVAX Facility, a global initiative aimed at ensuring equitable and fair access to COVID-19 vaccines to populations all over the world. In addition, in February 2021, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, announced that the EU would provide an additional €100 million in humanitarian assistance to support the rollout of vaccination campaigns in Africa, in cooperation with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

A two-track approach

Given its humanitarian nature, this additional funding will be managed by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), aiming to ensure that no one is left behind.

As stated by Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič, *“ensuring equitable access to vaccines for vulnerable people, including in conflict-affected or hard-to-access areas, is a moral duty”*. It will be implemented via two complementary tracks, in partnership with the Africa CDC:

- **The first track** (with an allocation of €25 million) will aim to support the rollout of the vaccination campaign in African countries. This will include support to build the capacity of the national health authorities and healthcare workers, and managing the information and coordination platform on vaccination. It will also address critical logistical gaps, including lack of equipment.

This implementation at country and continental level will ensure better and independent monitoring of the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination campaigns across Africa, supporting Africa CDC's ongoing work. From a long-term perspective, it would also seek to reinforce national health systems' resilience to address future epidemic outbreaks.

- **The second track** (with an allocation of €65 million) aims to support the rollout of vaccination campaigns in specific humanitarian settings, notably in conflict and hard-to-reach areas. It will be implemented through needs-specific activities, in close cooperation with various EU humanitarian partners.

An additional €10 million will be put in a reserve to make up for emergency needs that come up.

This strong EU partnership with Africa CDC, in close cooperation with African countries, with leading agencies, like the World Health Organization, UNICEF or the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and with humanitarian partners in the field, will:

- facilitate the prompt rollout of COVID-19 vaccination campaigns;
- ensure the necessary technical expertise; and
- increase capacity building and resilience for future health emergency responses.

Additional support may be made available via the [Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#). Member States and Participating States in the Mechanism will continue to show their solidarity and provide in-kind and technical assistance. In total, since the beginning of the pandemic, the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism has coordinated and co-financed the delivery of over 23 million items of personal protective and medical equipment to 31 countries to support their COVID-19 response.

Furthermore, the logistics and transport sectors continue to be significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Difficulties in the transport of vaccines and ancillary material can further delay the distribution of vaccines and the implementation of vaccination campaigns, putting at risk the established vaccination strategies.

If needed, the EU might reactivate its [Humanitarian Air Bridge](#) that supported over 20 countries in four continents throughout 2020. In addition, the well-established ECHO Flight, the EU's humanitarian air service, remains available to ensure that vaccines arrive in hard to reach and conflict areas.