
COVID-19 Coronavirus: Dutch Network of Catholic Social Organizations (VKMO), “14% of the world’s population owns 51% of vaccines”

14% of the world’s population owns 51% of COVID-19 vaccines. “While the rich West is launching large-scale vaccination campaigns, vaccination is currently out of reach for the rest of the world, and solutions are scarce”. The complaint comes from the Dutch Network of Catholic Social Organisations (VKMO) that has today drawn attention to some facts: although “there have been no major COVID outbreaks in many developing countries, the impact on public health is nonetheless significant”. In those hospitals and clinics that are difficult to reach due to travel restrictions, for example, millions of children will lack life-saving vaccines. Malaria outbreaks may increase due to a shortage of drugs because the factories that produce antimalarials are located near Wuhan and have long been closed. The production and distribution of HIV drugs is also under pressure and more infections and deaths are expected over the next five years. There are, then, the devastating “side effects” of the pandemic in terms of economic, social and educational poverty, as denounced by Oxfam and UNICEF in recent months. “If COVID has taught us one thing, it is that we are all connected and dependent on each other”, but if we “turn our backs to each other, then we will pay the price for that”. Hence a call to politicians in the Netherlands and in Europe “to care for our brothers and sisters who are most affected by the consequences of the pandemic”. Most of them live in Africa, Asia and South and Central America: “They deserve our support and attention. They have the same right to vaccination and health as we do”.

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