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COVID-19 vaccine acceptance in low- and middle-income countries and recommendations to increase uptake

In brief

- This study analyzes willingness to vaccinate against COVID-19 from surveys covering 10 low- and middle-income countries in Asia, Africa, and South America.
- Willingness to vaccinate is considerably higher in these low- and middle-income countries (91% of respondents) than in the United States (67%) and Russia (69%).
- The most apparent prioritization of vaccine distribution to low- and middle-income countries should pull high-income countries to promote global immunity to cover all countries. The vaccination cascade to these countries should lead to vaccination acceptance among low-income countries.
- Retaliation against COVID-19 in the main sources gives for vaccine acceptance in low- and middle-income countries (5% of respondents).
- Concerns about side effects (8%) is the most common concern among vaccine hesitancy.
- Health workers are the most trusted source of information about COVID-19 vaccine (88% of respondents).
- This brief recommends using health workers to deliver vaccine information, in service "test and verify" messaging, leveraging social media, and focusing messaging on vaccine effectiveness to increase vaccine uptake in low- and middle-income countries.

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COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance in Low-And Middle-Income Countries and Recommendations to Increase Uptake

In a collective effort bringing together 15 studies, researchers from over 30 institutions surveyed over 20,000 individuals between June 2020 and January 2021 on questions regarding respondents’ vaccine acceptance and hesitancy and their most trusted sources for vaccination advice. During some surveys, results from COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials had yet to be announced, and during later surveys, governments had started approving vaccines for use. The fast-moving nature of COVID-19 information may change people’s perceptions about vaccines by the time they are widely available in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Over the past six months, the body of evidence demonstrating the safety and efficacy of available COVID-19 vaccines, which have been given to millions of people, has become clearer. At the same time, severe, but rare, side effects may have undermined public confidence.

July 19, 2021