

Beat: News

## **SOUTH SUDAN RECEIVES 1ST BATCH OF COVID-19 VACCINES UNCEF SAID THROUGH THE COVAX FACILITY**

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**USPA NEWS** - Through the COVAX Facility, 732,000 doses of vaccines are expected to be deployed to South Sudan in the first six months of 2021. Today 132,000 doses of the Astra Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine arrived at the Juba International Airport. This is the first of several vaccine shipments scheduled to arrive over the coming months to South Sudan through the support of the COVAX Facility. The COVAX Facility is a global partnership comprised of Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF and WHO established to ensure all countries can equitably access COVID-19 vaccines. The first COVAX supported shipment of vaccines will target health care workers as well as persons aged 65 years and older, given their increased risk of severe disease and death due to a potential COVID-19 infection. The health care workers include doctors, nurses, community-based health workers and social mobilisers, amongst others.

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The COVID-19 vaccination campaign in South Sudan will start soon. Plans for implementing vaccine activities throughout the country in all 80 counties are being developed. Health care workers are being trained prior to vaccine deployment.

Over the next several months, through to the end of 2022, South Sudan is planning to vaccinate 40 per cent of its population, as outlined in the country's COVID-19 National Deployment and Vaccination Plan. "The arrival of the vaccines is the first step towards a normal life which is an important step for children and their future, as we know they have been hit the hardest by all the COVID-19 restrictions," said Ms. Hamida Lasseko, UNICEF South Sudan Representative. "We are delighted the hard work over the last weeks has paid off and we will have no rest until vaccines are brought to those most in need across the country and the vaccination campaign starts."

A person being vaccinated with the Astra Zeneca vaccine requires two doses to ensure optimal immune response against the COVID-19 virus. The COVID-19 vaccination in South Sudan will be provided on a voluntary basis and free of charge. All people receiving the vaccine will be asked to consent prior to being vaccinated. "We are thrilled that we received the vaccine," said Dr Fabian Ndenzako, WHO Representative a.i. for South Sudan. "The vaccine complement, and not replace, proven public health measures such as wearing masks, physical distancing, ventilation and hand hygiene alongside robust programmes to test, trace, isolate and treat. WHO appeals to the general public to adhere to preventive public health measures by wearing masks, keeping a distance, and frequently washing hands." While COVID-19 vaccination is important to protect the most vulnerable and exposed people from getting infected and reduce morbidity and mortality, a continued adherence to preventive measures to avoid the spread of the virus by wearing facial masks and respecting social distancing remains crucial. Source: UNICEF South Sudan.

**Article online:**

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-18475/south-sudan-receives-1st-batch-of-covid-19-vaccines-uncef-said.html>

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