

Misinformation and distrust: behind Bolivia's low Covid vaccination rates | The Guardian

By Thomas Graham

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In a vaccination centre in El Alto, Bolivia, the staff bagged up in protective gear far outnumbered the few people sitting in plastic chairs waiting for their injection. A young doctor reeled off a list of all the vaccines available: Sinopharm, Sputnik, Pfizer, Moderna. What's lacking is demand. They see 100 people on a good day.

South America, once the region most afflicted by the pandemic, is now the most vaccinated in the world. But this turnaround doesn't extend to Bolivia, where roughly half the population is yet to receive a single dose - even though the state has had all the vaccines it needs since October.

As it stands, 45% of the population has received two doses, and a further 12% have had a single dose. Less than 7% have received a booster dose.

Data leaked from the Ministry of Health before Christmas gave a more detailed snapshot, revealing huge variations between municipalities. In general, departmental capitals had high levels of vaccination. Smaller cities were doing less well. But in many rural municipalities, particularly in the altiplano, less than 30% of the adult population had received a dose.

[...]

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