

The inequality shown by COVID 19

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By María Josefina Arce

The WHO, World Health Organization, decided to maintain the global health emergency due to COVID 19, a virus that has meant a challenge for health systems around the planet, but also for the commitment to equality and human dignity.

The three years of disease incidence caused by the new coronavirus exposed not only the deep social gaps in different countries, but also those existing worldwide between rich and poor nations.

The pandemic has caused setbacks in development and has been a brake on global efforts to end extreme poverty, which has increased sharply in the last 36 months.

The Nobel Prize winner in Economics, Joseph Stiglitz, pointed out that the virus has had a devastating effect on the most disadvantaged parts of society, while the richest have fared very well.

ECLAC, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, has stated that in the region COVID 19 led to a social crisis, with increased poverty among vulnerable sectors such as women, children and indigenous communities.

But the virus also showed another unfortunate reality. Antiviral vaccines did not reach all parts of the world in the same way. Rich countries hoarded the antigens, buying enough doses to vaccinate their populations several times over.

At the other extreme, the less developed states, with scarce resources to acquire the necessary immunogens. Experts have pointed out that access to medicines is a fundamental human right, which has been violated by not providing equal or even any access to vaccines.

While in some nations booster doses have been applied, in others the population as a whole still does not have a complete immunization schedule. Africa has been one of the continents hardest hit by this imbalance.

According to the WHO, the African continent is still far from reaching the global goal of protecting 70% of the population, initially set for the end of last year.

Data provided by the World Health Organization revealed that by October 2022, only 24% of the population of the so-called black continent had completed their vaccination series.

COVID 19 has been described as the virus of inequalities, which has further exposed the great gaps existing in the world and the need for solidarity and cooperation, without conditions, to prevail in order to face common challenges.

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