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News release

Vaccine hesitancy high as most Namibians still unprotected against COVID-19, Afrobarometer study shows

More than seven in 10 adult Namibians have not been vaccinated against COVID-19, and a majority of the unvaccinated say they are likely to stay that way, a recent Afrobarometer survey indicates.

About one in four adult citizens (27%) report having received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, according to the survey in late 2021. Another 27% say they are at least “somewhat likely” to get vaccinated, while 43% say they are unlikely to do so.

Among those who say they probably will not get vaccinated, distrust of regulatory agencies and the vaccine itself is by far the most commonly cited reason.

Vaccine hesitancy may have important implications for the country’s vulnerability to future waves of infections as well as its economic recovery, especially in the international tourism sector.

Key findings

- As of October-November 2021, only about one-quarter (27%) of adult Namibians say they have received one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine (Figure 1).
 - Another 27% say they are “somewhat likely” or “very likely” to try to get the vaccine.
 - More than four in 10 (43%) say they are “somewhat unlikely” or “very unlikely” to try to get vaccinated.
- Among those who don't see themselves getting the jab, by far the most common reason (cited by 55% of respondents) is that they do not trust that the vaccine is safe and effective (Figure 2).
 - One in 10 (10%) believe popular misconceptions about the vaccine causing infertility or COVID-19 or being used to track recipients. A further 10% are skeptical about the real extent of the risks associated with contracting COVID-19.
- To date, uptake of COVID-19 vaccinations is particularly low among the youngest adults (17% of 18- to 25-year-olds). Fewer women than men (23% vs. 31%) have received the jab. Namibians with a tertiary education (40%) have nearly double the vaccine uptake of the rest of the nation (Figure 3).

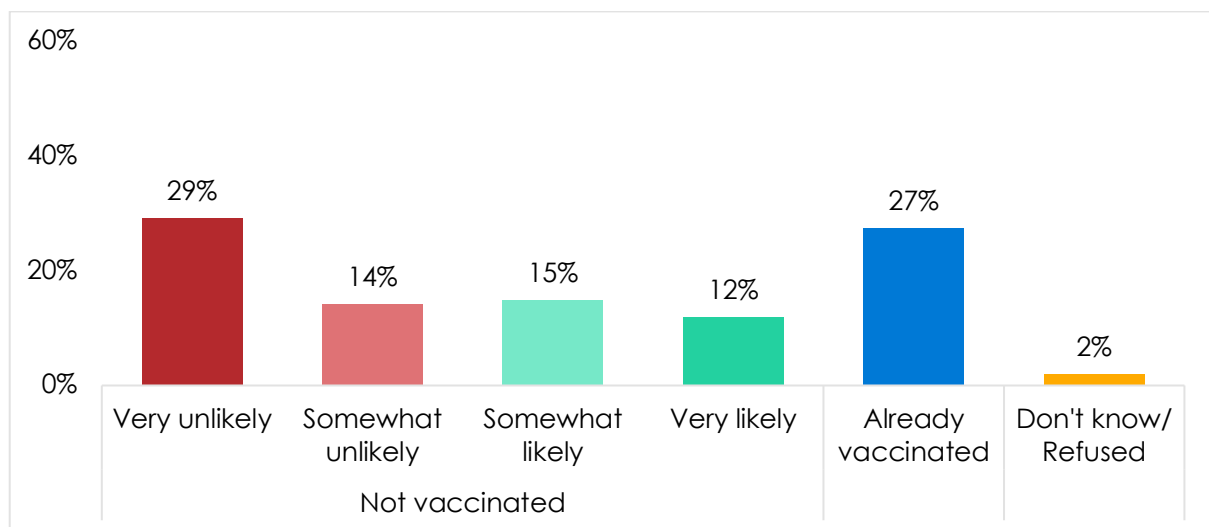
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Namibia, led by national partner Survey Warehouse, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Namibians in October and November 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Namibia in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019.

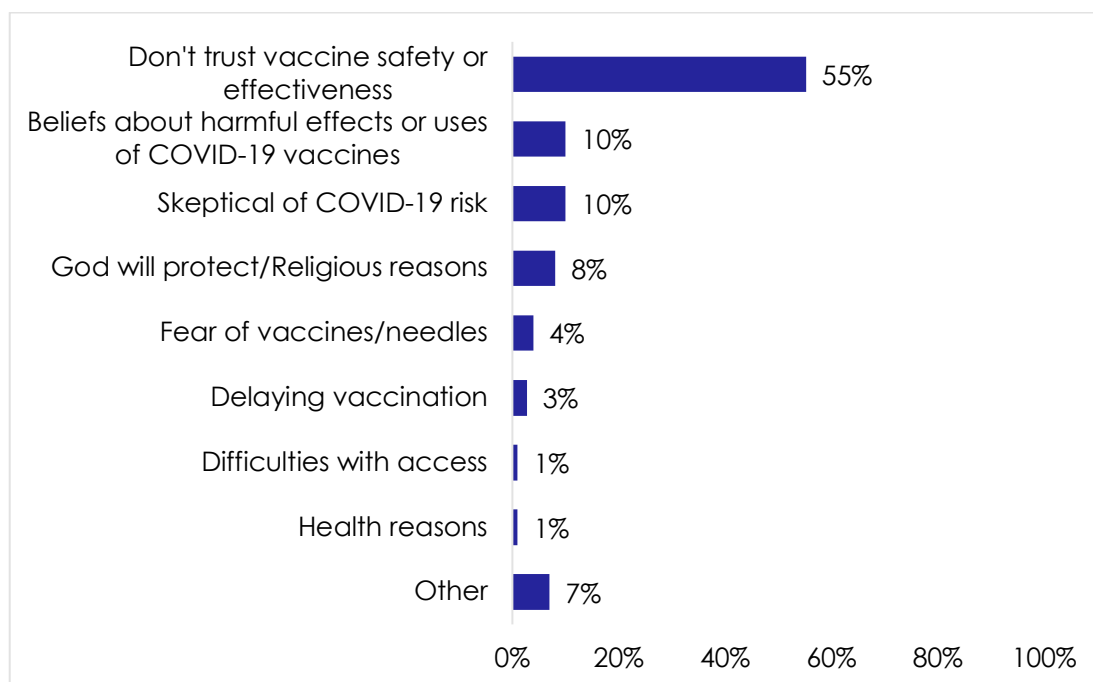
Charts

Figure 1: Vaccine hesitancy among adult Namibians | Namibia | 2021



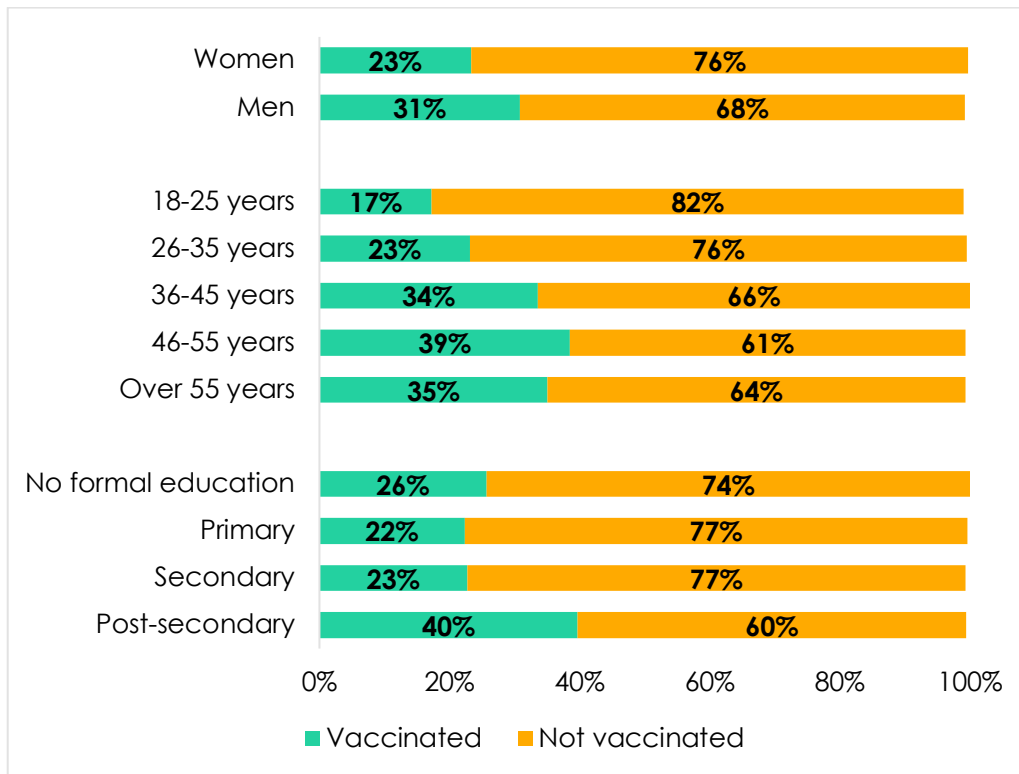
Respondents were asked: Have you received a vaccination against COVID-19, either one or two doses? [If no:] If a vaccine for COVID-19 is available, how likely are you to try to get vaccinated?

Figure 2: Reasons for vaccine hesitancy | Namibia | 2021



Respondents who said they are unlikely to try to get vaccinated were asked: What is the main reason that you would be unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Figure 3: COVID-19 vaccination status | by gender, age, and education | Namibia | 2021



Respondents were asked: Have you received a vaccination against COVID-19, either one or two doses?

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