

# Africa

## Trust in Vaccines

### Key findings

Wellcome Global Monitor shows Africa has greater trust in vaccines than any other continent, with a number of countries having among the highest confidence worldwide.

- 75% of the African population strongly agrees that vaccines are safe, 12% somewhat agree, 4% neither agree nor disagree, 4% somewhat disagree and 2% strongly disagree. 3% said they don't know or refused to comment. People in Eastern Africa are most likely to strongly agree that vaccines are safe (81%).
- 74% of people in Africa strongly agree that vaccines are effective, 12% somewhat agree, 4% neither agree nor disagree, 4% somewhat disagree, 3% strongly disagree. 3% said they don't know or refused to comment. People in Eastern Africa are most likely to strongly agree that vaccines are effective (79%).
- 88% of the African population strongly agrees that vaccines are important for children to have, 8% somewhat agree, 1% neither agree nor disagree, 1% somewhat disagree and 1% strongly disagree. 1% say they don't know or refused to comment. People in Eastern Africa are most likely to strongly agree that vaccines are important for children to have (92%).
- 95% of parents in Africa say that their children have received a vaccine to prevent childhood diseases – 4% say their children hadn't. 1% said they don't know or refused to comment. Parents in Northern Africa are most likely to say that their children have received a vaccine to prevent childhood diseases (99%), while parents in Southern Africa were the least likely (90%).

Still only 75% of the population strongly agree that vaccines are safe. What other factors might be affecting doubt in the other quarter?

## The role of institutions and community in public trust

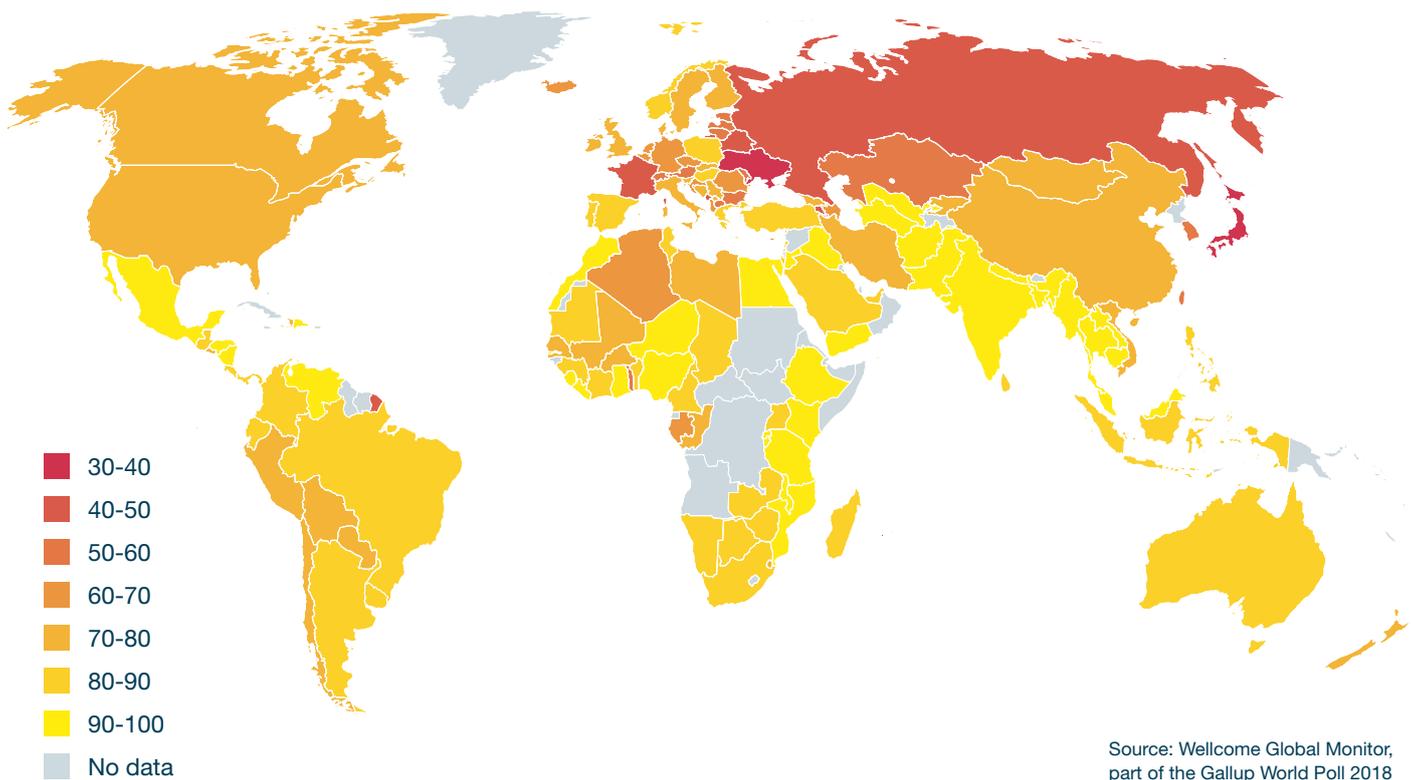
The Wellcome Global Monitor shows that trust in the institutions that deliver vaccines, such as hospitals, governments and scientists, and how much people feel they benefit from science provided, have a major impact on how much people trust vaccines.

### Key findings:

- Less than one in five (17%) have high trust in scientists, under a half (45%) have medium trust and a fifth (20%) have low trust. 18% said they don't know or refused to comment. Southern and Central Africa had lower levels of 'high trust' in scientists (13% and 12% respectively).
- Over a quarter (27%) of people in Africa have no confidence in hospitals and health clinics.
- 16 of the 20 countries where trust in doctors and nurses is weakest are in Africa.
- More than half the population (55%) say they know little or nothing about science.
- People who trust their nation's government a lot are more likely to strongly agree vaccines are safe (85%) compared to those who don't trust them at all (63%)

Full dataset and advice on how to use the findings at [wellcome.ac.uk/monitorafrica](https://wellcome.ac.uk/monitorafrica)

## Share of people who believe vaccines are safe (%)



- Two thirds (64%) believe the work scientists do benefits people like them and 25% said it doesn't. 11% said they don't know or refused to comment. People in Western Africa are most likely to believe the work scientists do benefits people like them (70%).
- A third (33%) think the work scientists do benefits most people in the country, 34% said some and 21% said very few. 13% said they don't know or refused to comment. People in Western Africa (38%) are most likely to think the work scientists do benefits most people in the country

### The role of community in public trust

Nigeria and Rwanda have among the highest confidence in vaccines in the world, as the majority of their populations agrees that vaccines are safe (91%, 94% respectively) and important for children to have (97%, 99% respectively). Nigerians and Rwandans are also most likely to express trust in the hospitals and health clinics in their country (80%, 97% respectively).

While this survey does not provide all the answers, Nigeria and Rwanda's high confidence levels likely reflect years of effective engagement at the grassroots level.

### Grassroots work in Nigeria:

In 2003, at the height of the boycott of polio immunisation, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative Partners engaged with faith leaders and communities in northern Nigeria. By learning about the production of the polio vaccine, faith leaders – highly trusted people in the community – could see that it is safe.

### Grassroots work in Rwanda:

Following the brutal genocide of 1994, Rwanda was left with a failed state and traumatised population with little trust in local or international institutions. The Rwandan government decided to work with Merck to distribute the HPV vaccine. They commissioned healthworkers to canvas in villages and teachers in schools to communicate about the programme to parents. Today's high trust levels are testament to those efforts; the country now has 95% immunisation coverage and will likely be the first African country to wipe out cervical cancer.

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