

21.03.02

13 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence of the Minister for International Development regarding the actions taken to help people in developing countries to gain access to Covid-19 vaccines (OQ.45/2021):

What actions, if any, is the Minister taking to help people in developing countries gain access to COVID-19 vaccines?

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (The Minister for International Development):

We are incredibly fortunate that Jersey is in such a promising and positive position with our own vaccination programme. During an unprecedented global health emergency, it is vital that Jersey extends its assistance to countries most in need, distributing the COVID vaccine. We recognise that no one is safe until everyone is safe. Jersey Overseas Aid is currently in touch with the main participants in the Covax scheme, which aims to distribute at least 1.3 billion vaccine doses to vulnerable populations worldwide, and commission it for reviewing the most effective way of giving Jersey's support to such vaccine-sharing schemes. This will be in addition to the £1.5 million COVID-related humanitarian assistance we have already provided to some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people in the world.

3.13.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I thank the Minister for her response. Could the Minister confirm that from her answer it sounded as though no action has yet been taken to assist with the Covax vaccine? Also, the W.H.O. (World Health Organization) recently - in fact, yesterday - said that Covax is correcting the glaring inequity which has been an unfortunate hallmark of the global vaccine rollout to date. Would the Minister agree with that statement and can she confirm whether or not we have started helping the Covax rollout?

The Deputy of Grouville:

We are currently in negotiation with Covax and we are seeing which is the best and most effective way for Jersey to give its aid, whether it is directly with the D.E.C. (Disasters Emergency Committee) or whether it is through one of our agencies like U.N.I.C.E.F. (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) that we use and we can get stuff on the ground sometimes incredibly quickly. So, we are currently researching that, but it is our intention to very much help in that regard.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Just quickly, the second part of my question was: does she agree about the glaring inequity of the vaccine rollout, as the W.H.O. said yesterday?

The Deputy of Grouville:

I have not researched that particular issue. All we can do is to ensure that we have monies and we are putting them in the most effective places. As I say, we made a decision last week in a commissioners' meeting that we need to help and research what Covax are doing and the best way that Jersey Overseas Aid can assist.