



**Vaccine access:** Global recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic has been hampered by disparities in the access to vaccine doses.

# FIGHTING INEQUALITY

More and more people are affected by an increase in inequality, but there are ways out of the downward spiral. The Pathfinders' program published a report showing how it is possible.

**T**he global coronavirus pandemic has become a showcase of global inequality on many levels. For example, the gap between rich and poor has widened since the onset of the pandemic. Some 75 million people lost their jobs and incomes as a result of the global pandemic this year. Over the same

period, the combined fortunes of the world's billionaires has grown from €8 trillion to €13 trillion.

Furthermore, the possibilities for alleviating the consequences of the global pandemic are distributed differently around the world. Industrialized nations have secured such enormous quantities of vaccine doses that supply

exceeds demand, whereas only 3 percent of all Africans have been vaccinated in the 18 months since effective vaccines have been available.

Experts believe that this trend will have long-term consequences. "The greater the inequality, the higher the incidence of violence and Covid-19-related deaths, the greater the political instability, and the lower the social mobility and economic growth. In addition, inequality makes it harder to fight climate change. It hurts us all," says Faiza Shaheen, program lead of the Pathfinders' Grand Challenge on Inequality and Exclusion. Romina Boarini, director of the OECD Center for Well-being, Inclusion, Sustainability, and Equal Opportunity (WISE) adds that, as inequality increases, so does the sense of insecurity. "In the long term, inequalities shape social

## International Covid-19 survey

**64% say:**

The pandemic has shown how wide the gap is between rich and poor and that something needs to be done to more evenly spread wealth and prosperity.

**67% say:**

People with lower levels of education, less money, and fewer resources are unfairly burdened as they are the ones who suffer the most, run the risk of disease, and are forced to make sacrifices due to the global pandemic.

Source: Edelman, 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer

attitudes. Concerns related to social attitudes have grown the most in countries where inequality has grown the most."

But how can we break this cycle of inequality? The Pathfinders' program has

developed three key points to counter inequality. First, approaches that make a difference in the lives of many people are required. This can be achieved through an adequate minimum wage or a basic pension, for example. Second, these strategies should strengthen solidarity between different social groups rather than it being seen as a competition. Third, the measures should specifically strengthen the credibility of the political system – by fighting corruption, for example.

"Inequalities in terms of income, wealth, and political participation are among the greatest challenges we face in the 21st century, especially against the backdrop of the climate crisis," explains Ellen Ehmke, senior expert on the Inequality Team at the Robert Bosch Stiftung "The Stiftung became a partner of the Pathfinders' program because it pools the knowledge of governments, civil society, and research. It is the only way that we can develop effective and widely accepted strategies to combat inequality."

▣ Sabine Fischer

## The Pathfinders

**How can we break down inequalities? The Pathfinders' program published a report with answers to this question. The Pathfinders is a group of 39 U.N. member states, international organizations, global partnerships, civil society, and the private sector – and the Robert Bosch Stiftung is a partner. The Pathfinders evaluated the policies of numerous countries for their report. [www.bosch-stiftung.de/en/pathfinders](http://www.bosch-stiftung.de/en/pathfinders)**

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, ROBERT BOSCH STIFTUNG



## Focusing on the major topics of our times

*The Robert Bosch Stiftung released a film with its new alignment.*

Robert Bosch would have turned 160 years old this year. His legacy sets the pace for the work carried out by the Robert Bosch Stiftung. This includes constantly putting its own actions to the test. The Stiftung has realigned itself over the past two years in order to further propagate Robert Bosch's commitment in a manner fitting to the times and to respond to complex global challenges. It is now focusing on new topics within the framework of three funding categories: **health, education, and global issues**. Its aim is to delve more deeply into the content of its topics and, in particular, to take into account interdependencies – for example, between climate change and

migration or between education and inequality. The foundation recently released a short film providing more detailed insights. See for yourself.

