



## The World Bank Has Created \$1 Billion Fund For Vaccine Passports

### Description

**As the World Health Organization (WHO) and global governments move forward with plans for an updated or new pandemic treaty, other organizations are moving forward with vaccine passport technologies and partnerships.**

In July the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), composed of many of the world's industrialized nations, announced it would be promoting the unification of the different vaccine passport systems currently being used around the world.

The Defender reports: Thirty-six countries and international organizations participated in a July meeting with the goal of "creating a multilateral framework for establishing a global vaccine passport regime," according to Nick Corbishley of Naked Capitalism.

The development is a continuation of efforts involving the WHO to harmonize global vaccine passport regimes.

In February, the WHO selected Germany's T-Systems as an "industry partner to develop the vaccination validation service," which would enable "vaccination certificates to be checked across national borders."

T-Systems, an arm of Deutsche Telekom, was previously instrumental in developing the interoperability of vaccine passport systems in Europe.

Also in July, 21 African governments "quietly embraced" a vaccine passport system, which in turn would also be interlinked with other such systems globally.

On July 8, which is also Africa Integration Day, the African Union and the Africa Centers for Disease Control launched a digital vaccine passport valid throughout the African Union, describing it as "the e-health backbone" of Africa's "new health order."

This follows the development in 2021, of the Trusted Travel platform, now required by several African

countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Togo and Zimbabwe, and air carriers such as EgyptAir, Ethiopian Airlines and Kenya Airways, for both inbound and outbound travel.

Beyond Africa, Indonesia, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the G20, is conducting “pilot projects” that would bring about the interoperability of the various digital vaccine passport systems currently in use globally. The project is expected to be completed by November, in time for the G20 Leaders’ Summit.

Naked Capitalism highlighted the role of South African company Cassava Fintech in the efforts to develop an interoperable vaccine passport for all of Africa.

A subsidiary of African telecommunication company Econet, Cassava initially developed the “Sasail” app, which the company described as Africa’s first “global super app” that combines “social payments” with the ability to send and receive money and pay bills, chat with others and play games.

Cassava and Econet entered into a strategic partnership with Mastercard, “to advance digital inclusion across Africa and collaborate on a range of initiatives, including expansion of the Africa CDC TravelPass.”

As previously reported by The Defender, Mastercard supports the Good Health Pass vaccine passport initiative that is also backed by the [ID2020 alliance](#) and endorsed by [embattled](#) former U.K. prime minister Tony Blair.

Mastercard has also promoted technology that can be embedded into the DO Card, a credit/debit card that keeps track of one’s “personal carbon allowance.”

ID2020, founded in 2016, claims to support “ethical, privacy-protecting approaches to digital ID.” Its founding partners include Microsoft, the Rockefeller Foundation, Accenture, GAVI-The Vaccine Alliance (itself a core partner of the WHO), UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank.

Mastercard’s top two stockholders are Vanguard and BlackRock, which hold significant stakes in dozens of companies that supported the development of vaccine passports or implemented vaccine mandates for their employees. The two investment firms also hold large stakes in vaccine manufacturers, including Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson.

Mastercard provides funding for the World Bank’s Identity for Development (ID4D) Program, which “focuses on promoting digital identification systems to improve development outcomes while maintaining trust and privacy.”

The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at the New York School of Law recently described the ID4D program, which touts its alignment with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) , as one which could pave the way to a “digital road to hell.”

According to the center, this would occur through the prioritization of “economic identity” and the use of an infrastructure that has “been linked to severe and large-scale human rights violations” in several countries.

Mastercard is also active in Africa through its joint initiative with another fintech (financial technology)

company, Paycode, to “increase access to financial services and government assistance for remote communities across Africa” via a biometric identity system containing the data of 30 million individuals.

### **World Bank, WHO promote ‘pandemic preparedness’ and vaccine passports**

The World Bank in late June announced the creation of a fund that will “finance investments in strengthening the fight against pandemics” and “support prevention, preparedness and response ... with a focus on low- and middle-income countries.”

The fund was developed under the lead of the U.S., Italy and current G20 president Indonesia, “with broad support from the G20,” and will be active later this year.

It will provide more than \$1 billion in funding for areas such as “disease surveillance” and “support against the current as well as future pandemics.”

The WHO is also a “stakeholder” in the project and will provide “technical expertise,” according to WHO’s director-general.

The agreement follows a 2019 strategic partnership between the UN and the World Economic Forum, to “accelerate” the implementation of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

Although the agreement has recently circulated on social media, it was announced in June 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. It encompasses six areas of focus, including “health” and “digital cooperation.”

In terms of health, the agreement purports that it will “support countries [sic] achieve good health and well-being for all, within the context of the 2030 Agenda, focusing on key emerging global health threats that require stronger multistakeholder partnership and action.”

In turn, the “digital cooperation” promoted by the agreement will purportedly “meet the needs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution while seeking to advance global analysis, dialogue and standards for digital governance and digital inclusiveness.”

by Niamh Harris

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