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PFIZER TO BOOST PRICE OF COVID-19 VACCINE

According to a Reuters report, Pfizer official Angela Lukin says that the company will sell the COVID-19 vaccine through normal commercial channels, in a single-dose vial, and it will be priced at US\$110 – US\$130 per dose for adults.

Pfizer began selling the vaccine to the US government at US\$19.50 per dose in 5-dose vials, under a contract for 100 million doses. The price increased to US\$30.50 per dose in the latest contract in mid-2022. Lukin said that the company is waiting for US government contracts to expire and existing US supplies to run out. Unless the Biden Administration obtains further funding from Congress, government stocks of the vaccine will run out by early 2023. Republicans are blocking the new funding for now.

Pfizer argues that citizens will still get the vaccine for free, but that instead of the

taxpayer paying for it, it will be paid for by health insurance companies and employers. But about 30 million US residents are uninsured, and the Biden Administration will be challenged to ensure that they have access to future boosters, treatments and vaccines. Huge numbers will not have access to COVID-19 vaccines as cases again spike in the coming winter.

Pfizer may try to impose any price it achieves in the USA on the rest of the world. [In May](#), Pfizer said it expected its COVID-19 vaccines to bring in about \$32 billion in sales for 2022 and reported a 61 per cent increase in profits.

Source: Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) Trade Bulletin, November 2022. www.aftinet.org.au Edited by Alison Healey.

COVID-19 - OUR UNVACCINATED WORLD

In an [article](#) for *Pandemic*, [Philip Schellekens](#), a Senior Advisor at World Bank Group, reports there are 2.5 billion unvaccinated people in October 2022. They have not had their first shot. A staggering 90 per cent live in the developing world and 71 per cent in the poorer half of the world. Sub-Saharan Africa makes up 34 per cent of the world's unvaccinated and

South Asia 21 per cent. Tracking the COVID-19 unvaccinated across countries, rich and poor, highlights the regressive outcome of the global vaccination campaign so far.

This information sometimes attracts the reaction of ‘so what?’ often accompanied by assertions that Schellekens debunks as substantially false:

- People don’t want to get vaccinated.
- Developing countries don’t need vaccines because infection fatality risk is low thanks to their young demographics.
- It is too late as developing country populations are already mostly infected and have built their own immune defences.
- Developing countries have other pressing health needs that need to take priority.

But the pandemic is not over, despite wishful thinking and aspirational declarations to the contrary. The virus is still widely circulating and provoking outbursts that present large risks to vulnerable populations, including the unvaccinated and under-vaccinated. Vaccination remains an important instrument to protect individuals from the risk of severe COVID.

Schellekens asserts that this situation is not only regressive but also dishonourable, because all people deserve care. We know that there are extensive areas of our world without clinical and public health care and so easily preventable deaths. But with desire and effort, it is possible to overcome the selfish neglect so shockingly demonstrated in the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic so far.

Source: Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) Trade Bulletin, November 2022. www.aftinet.org.au Edited by Alison Healey.

THE ECONOMY OF FRANCESCO A VIEW FROM THE PHILIPPINES

The cry of nature is also the cry of the poor. Extreme events – typhoons, flooding, drought, food and water shortages, health crises, displacement of indigenous people, and killings – threaten people most especially the poor and vulnerable ones. Women, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and other marginalized groups bear the brunt of inequality issues that are deeply rooted in the impacts of climate change.

The Philippines is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. According to the World Risk Index (WRI) 2022,¹ the Philippines ranks first with a WRI equivalent of 46.82. The WRI is a tool used to assess and estimate the disaster risk of a country from earthquakes, hurricanes/typhoons, floods, drought, sea-level rise, tsunamis and conflicts.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), in 2021, the total family income of the upper 10 per cent income group was 7.02 times as much as that of the bottom 10 per cent

¹ World Risk Report 2022 is available at https://weltrisikobericht.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/WorldRiskReport-2022_Online.pdf.

income group. (There has been a slight improvement in income inequality in the period 2018 – 2021 from 0.4267 to 0.4119.²)

Many of the climate change impacts are disproportionately suffered by the poorest groups in society. The agriculture sector is especially vulnerable to severe diminishment of agricultural productivity. Most of the population depends on the agriculture sector. The poor and marginalised call for appropriate actions toward climate change impacts. The 21st-century challenge is to address climate change which is not only an environmental crisis but also a social crisis compelling ambitious actions to address inequalities between wealthy and poor economies, between rich and poor families within countries, between genders and generations. Without prompt and effective adaptation and mitigation measures, climate change is likely to intensify income and social inequality and slacken poverty alleviation.

On 24th of September 2022, Pope Francis and young changemakers from all over the world sealed a covenant committed to a renewed economy – ‘one that brings life not death, one that is inclusive and not exclusive, humane and not dehumanising, one that cares for the environment and does not despoil it’. Tomorrow's economy gives importance to the poorest of the poor and a culture of communion based on fraternity and equality.

Pope Francis was sending a message to a global event held in Assisi, Italy, under the auspices of the ‘Economy of Francesco’ (EoF) movement, named after St Francis of Assisi, who became one with the poor. EoF brings together this example of the embracing of the poor with the prophetic writings of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*. While holding firm to sound conceptual and practical principles, it remains open to fresh ideas and perspectives. World-renowned scientists and economists shared their best insights and understandings in the world gathering in Assisi.

Kate Raworth's *Doughnut Economics* seeks to ensure that no human being falls short of life's essentials while protecting the Earth's life-supporting systems. The ‘donut’ of social and planetary boundaries acts as a compass for human progress in the 21st century.

Vandana Shiva emphasised that the term ‘economia’ should be defined as the art of living, of sharing, of the well-being of everyone, and of abundance. She further dwelt on the ‘economy of nature’ where natural resources will be converted into commodities in the market to derive ‘gross national happiness’. Lastly, she noted that ‘prosperity comes from giving, not in accumulating wealth’.

The entire human population is falling into ruin as millions of the poorest and the most vulnerable people bear the wrath of an overexploited nature. In 1206 St. Francis of Assisi, while praying in the Church of San Damiano, heard a voice saying ‘Francis, go and repair my house which, as you see, is falling into ruin’. This was Christ's call to Francis and His voice was heard. We are all invited to respond to this same call.

Source: Anna Eguerra, Grail Philippines, Justice and Trade Network.

² Highlights of the Preliminary Results of the 2021 Annual Family Income and Expenditure Survey, 15 August 2022, <https://psa.gov.ph/press-releases/id/167973>

FROM COMPASSION, SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE TO TRANSFORMATION

Mary has observed recently how the words in the title above are equated with one another: ‘*Solidarity is another name for social transformation*’, for example. Similarly, *solidarity* is sometimes equated with *justice*, *compassion* with *solidarity*, *compassion* with *justice*. Reflecting on this, Mary argues for allowing each word its own specific meaning and intention and value, rather than conflating them, one with another, and clouding what needs to be clear. **What do you think? We’d love to know your responses and have an exchange in future Bulletins.**

Here are a few of Mary’s preliminary thoughts:

‘I will use Canadian Mining to illustrate what I want to say, because it is an issue that we have been focusing on here in our Development and Peace group in Canada.

When Canadian Mining Companies go to Chile and other countries and take their copper and other natural resources, displacing communities, polluting their

land and water and giving them next to nothing for their materials, we need to recognize that this is the case. Compassion means literally ‘suffering with’. And when we feel compassion for – suffer with – others we want their situation to change. This is what we call Solidarity, the sense of responsibility we feel for others wherever they are, near or far, throughout the world. The two, Compassion and Solidarity, go together. And to act in Justice means to ask who this policy is hurting most? Is it hurting those in poverty? Yes? Well then, it’s an unjust policy. It needs to be changed in order to have Justice. Let’s get to work and bring this problem to our governments and those with power, to convince them to change these policies, to undo the injustice. This is action for Transformation of unjust structures that allow injustices to happen and be maintained. Of course, this requires that we learn all we can about the realities of the injustice – its origins and consequences, the perpetrators and their motives.’

Source: *Mary Boyd (Prince Edward Island, Canada).*

Christmas reminds us that a faith that does not trouble us is a troubled faith.

- A faith that does not make us grow is a faith that needs to grow
 - A faith that does not raise questions is a faith that has to be questioned.
 - A faith that does not rouse us is a faith that needs to be roused.
 - A faith that does not shake us is a faith that needs to be shaken.
 - Indeed, a faith which is only intellectual or lukewarm is only a notion of faith.
 - It can become real once it touches our heart, our spirit, our whole being.
- Once we let the star of Bethlehem guide us to the place where the Son of God lies, not among Kings and riches, but among the poor and humble.
- *Address of His Holiness **Pope Francis** to the Roman Curia December 21, 2017*

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