

Headline: Billie Eilish, Ed Sheeran join global climate, vaccine concerts

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Billie Eilish (left) and Ed Sheeran. Images: AFP/Getty Images/Matt Winkelmeyer, AFP/John Macdougall

Billie Eilish (left) and Ed Sheeran. Images: AFP/Getty Images/Matt Winkelmeyer, AFP/John Macdougall

Coldplay, Billie Eilish and Ed Sheeran are among the stars announced Tuesday for a day of concerts across multiple cities on Sept. 25 to raise awareness about climate change, poverty and vaccine distribution.

New York, Paris and Lagos are the first cities to be announced for Global Citizen Live, which will run for 24 hours and be screened around the world via television stations and social media.

Joining Eilish and Coldplay in New York's Central Park are Jennifer Lopez, Camila Cabello, Shawn Mendes and Burna Boy, among others.

Sheeran headlines the French gig, with Doja Cat, HER and Black Eyed Peas supporting, while Fema Kuti will top the bill in Nigeria.

More locations and artists are due to be announced in the coming weeks.

"Across six continents, artists will help rally citizens in demanding that governments, major corporations, and philanthropists work together to defend the planet and defeat poverty," the nonprofit organization Global Citizen said in a statement.

It said it was focusing "on the most urgent, interrelated threats hitting those in poverty the hardest — climate change, vaccine equity, and famine."

A slew of other artists — including BTS, Lorde, Metallica and The Weeknd — are also lending their star power, either through live or filmed performances.

The event is designed to coincide with the United Nations General Assembly in September, and push for action at the G20 the following month and COP26 climate meeting in November.

Global Citizen said it urgently wants one billion trees planted, one billion vaccines delivered to the poorest countries and meals for the 41 million on the brink of famine.

World Health Organization director-general Tedros Ghebreyesus lent his support to the campaign, saying in a statement: "We now face a two-track pandemic of haves and have-nots. Over 75% of the more than 4 billion doses administered to date have occurred in just 10 countries.

"We cannot disregard this gross inequity or become complacent." IB

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