

VACCINES FOR ALL INITIATIVE

SPANISH NON-PAPER

Production and access to COVID-19 vaccines must increase exponentially and urgently. We need around 11 billion doses of vaccines to immunize 70% of the world's population, assuming two doses per person. According to some estimates, global annual vaccine manufacturing capacity ranges between 6,500 and 8,500 million doses per year. More pessimistic assessments consider there will not be enough vaccines for the entire world population until 2023 or 2024.

Unequal access to vaccines between developed and developing countries is not only at the core of a feeling of injustice, but also poses a health risk for the world. No one will be safe until everyone is safe. We can only succeed through international cooperation and multilateral organizations.

Many challenges must be addressed simultaneously and in a coordinated fashion. We need to maximize global vaccine production capacity, ensure the proper functioning of supply chains, remove trade barriers and logistical hurdles, and ensure sufficient transportation, warehousing and distribution capacities.

This initiative aims to coordinate immediate international action to address the problems and bottlenecks currently hindering the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. It is based on 3 pillars that aim to share knowledge, ensure full use of existing production capacity while removing trade obstacles, and accelerate vaccine distribution.

1. SHARE KNOWLEDGE

- Intellectual property cannot be an obstacle to ending COVID-19 and to ensuring equitable and universal access to vaccines. Consensus should therefore be urgently found on the proposal for a temporary waiver of certain obligations under the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in response to COVID-19 within the World Trade Organization (WTO). In the meantime, all necessary mechanisms to promote and incentivize voluntary licensing agreements must be activated and operationalized.
- The COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP) platform, established one year ago within the World Health Organization (WHO) and aimed at promoting the voluntary transfer of intellectual property rights and the pooling of all forms of knowledge related to the virus, should be boosted. The upcoming World Health Assembly should be used to express our joint commitment to C-TAP to encourage industry to facilitate the necessary transfer of know-how to effectively enable production capacity.
- In preparation for future health emergencies, a working group should be created within the WTO, in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the WHO, to propose the adaptation of global rules on intellectual property rights, in particular the TRIPS flexibilities, to the needs of fighting global pandemics.

2. SCALE UP PRODUCTION

- A Platform on Manufacturing & Supply and Demand Matchmaking should be created to provide oversight on the facilities that exist to manufacture vaccines, and to guarantee the adequate match between idle capacity and production demand. Besides ensuring adequate standards, this platform would closely monitor the production capacity of facilities at all times, and in each region, to avoid the existence of underutilized resources. Such mechanism could also ensure the quick identification of both excesses and shortages of vaccine components throughout facilities, helping optimize the distribution of supplies among them. Synergies and complementarities with the COVAX Manufacturing Taskforce should be fully exploited in this regard.
- Specific measures are needed to facilitate trade. All countries should commit to ease or remove all obstacles to trade, including import duties and export bans, along the manufacturing value chain covering both vaccines and the components necessary to produce them. The WTO could be mandated to regularly report on trade restrictive measures applied by countries on vaccines and their components.

3. ACCELERATE DISTRIBUTION

- Financial and non-financial contributions to COVAX must increase to ensure that it can operate in a timely and efficient manner.
- A public-private alliance could be established between airlines, states, international organizations such as WHO / PAHO and UNICEF, and other relevant stakeholders such as GAVI to promote the distribution of vaccines and supplies. This initiative would take into account the relative lack of activity in the air transport sector due to COVID-19 and the positive role that engaging in global vaccine distribution efforts could play in its reactivation.
- The Health Systems connector pillar of the ACT-Accelerator should be reinforced to build the necessary processing, storage, distribution and administering capacities worldwide, especially in fragile settings.

MONITORING: A monitoring mechanism should be immediately established in the WHO, involving the relevant agencies and in collaboration with the WTO, to track progress and ensure a swift implementation of all 3 pillars of the initiative.