

statement

COVAX launches Marketplace to match buyers and sellers of critical manufacturing suppliers and speed up global access to COVID-19 vaccines through COVAX

15 July 2021 - IFPMA welcomes the launch of an innovative '[marketplace](#)'. The new Marketplace aims to accelerate the global production of COVID-19 vaccine doses for COVAX by matching suppliers of critical inputs with vaccine manufacturers who urgently need them to produce vaccines for fair and equitable distribution through COVAX. This [initiative spearheaded by Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations \(CEPI\)](#) is a key deliverable of the [COVAX Manufacturing Task Force](#), which is co-led by COVAX and industry partners¹.

In the past year unprecedented efforts by vaccine manufacturers and suppliers of vaccine components have aimed to triple previous annual vaccine output, scaling up to produce an estimated 11 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine by the end of 2021². As a result of this historic scaling up, bottlenecks are affecting the global supply chain leading to acute shortages of vital supplies which are preventing COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers from operating at full capacity. This is delaying vaccine production and contributing to inequity.

The new COVAX Marketplace announced today is designed to address short-term bottlenecks by facilitating access to supplies needed to produce COVID-19 vaccines intended for distribution through COVAX. It will provide a secure platform for vaccine manufacturers and suppliers of critical inputs to confidentially indicate their needs or available supplies to CEPI, in its role as facilitator. CEPI will identify matching offers and requests and connect potential matches, prioritising based on objective criteria including whether the manufacturer has a COVAX advance purchase agreement and WHO EUL in place, as well as dose volumes and delivery timings. Future versions of the Marketplace may include supplies required to manufacture other lifesaving therapies and vaccines which are also being affected by current global supply shortages.

The Marketplace is expected to improve the free flow of critical COVID-19 vaccine supplies by:

- **Providing suppliers with a platform** to allocate and reallocate unused materials.
- **Mobilizing idle stock** from vaccines and candidates that fail prior to gaining regulatory approval – as well as from those that might scale down their production in the future.
- **Mobilizing potential surplus stock** from manufacturers with non-vaccine activities.

Vaccine manufacturing processes are highly complex and expanding manufacturing capacity requires managing intricate cross-border supply chains frequently involving more than 100 components. Participants will be able to offer and request any materials required for vaccine production through the COVAX Marketplace, but it will initially focus on six categories of supplies which have been identified as critical: bioreactor bags, single use assemblies, cell culture media, filters, lipids, vials and stoppers.

Thomas Cueni, Director General of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers (IFPMA), said:

¹ The COVAX Manufacturing Taskforce is spearheaded by the co-leads of COVAX – CEPI, Gavi, UNICEF and WHO – working in partnership with International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations ([IFPMA](#)), Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers' Network ([DCVMN](#)), and Biotechnology Innovation Organization ([BIO](#)), together with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

² [Towards Vaccinating the World: Landscape of current COVID-19 supply chain and manufacturing capacity, potential challenges, initial responses, and possible 'solution space' – a discussion paper](#), 9 March 2021 & IFPMA [Five steps to urgently advance COVID-19 vaccine equity](#), 19 May

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"Today, over 3 billion doses of effective and safe vaccines have been made and administered. But to vaccinate the world's adult population by the end of the year, we must achieve the estimated production of 11 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines³. To do this, it is essential to optimize production, as well urgently increase dose sharing and remove trade barriers. A delay in the delivery of a bioreactor plastic bag can halt a whole production line and delay a batch of thousands of litres for weeks, if not months.

To alert the international community to the challenges associated with this historic scaling up of vaccine production, in March 2021 we joined the Chatham House Summit on COVID-19 Vaccine Manufacturing Supply Chain⁴. One of the recommendations, strongly endorsed by industrialised, developing world vaccine manufacturers and biotech companies, was to find a practical solution to removing the inevitable bottlenecks for raw materials and components.

We are delighted to have been able to contribute to the creation of this platform to facilitate matching supplies with buyers, thereby ensuring manufacturing supplies for COVID-19 vaccines. Speed is of the essence to achieve vaccine equity. This marketplace will hopefully make an important contribution towards the global endeavour of achieving the 11 billion doses target this year".

About COVAX

COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-convened by CEPI, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance Gavi) and the World Health Organization (WHO) – working in partnership with UNICEF as key implementing partner, developed and developing country vaccine manufacturers, the World Bank, and others. It is the only global initiative that is working with governments and manufacturers to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are available worldwide to both higher-income and lower-income countries.

About the COVAX Manufacturing Task Force

The [COVAX Manufacturing Task Force](#) has been established to identify and resolve issues impeding equitable access to vaccines through COVAX. The Task Force will leverage the capabilities of the global vaccine community—from vaccine R&D stakeholders through to those working in the clinical development, manufacturing, and regulatory sectors—to address short-term, medium-term, and long-term COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing challenges and bottlenecks.

The Task Force aims to urgently address shortages of raw materials and single-use materials (potentially ramping-up supply capacity) and expedite cross-border transit of these materials, vaccine components, and finished products. It will also seek to match up manufacturers who are experiencing specific shortages with those who might have the necessary supplies. The longer-term aim will be to help strengthen regional health security for the future.

The work of the Task Force is supported by the [ACT Accelerator Vaccine Manufacturing Working Group](#), co-led by South Africa and Germany, which is focused on the actions needed to enhance supply of vaccines through COVAX.

³ Airfinity - COVID-19 Vaccine Production and surplus doses: https://www.ifpma.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/airfinity_production_19.05.2021.pdf

⁴ Meeting discusses COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing bottlenecks that must be urgently tackled for C19 vaccine output to reach its full potential, 9 March 2021 <https://www.ifpma.org/resource-centre/meeting-discusses-covid-19-vaccine-manufacturing-bottlenecks-that-must-be-urgently-tackled-for-c19-vaccine-output-to-reach-its-full-potential/>