

A Pragmatic Approach to Facilitate Worldwide Access to Covid-19 Vaccines

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The covid-19 outbreak has shown that world leaders are not well prepared to handle such a global pandemic that has crippled global public health and economy due to an efficient transport system and mobility in less than a year. The world is slow to manufacture and equitably distribute highly effective vaccines from patent holders in certain advanced countries to the rest of the world, particularly low-income countries (LIC). This short paper proposes a pragmatic approach to resolve such manufacturing and logistic supply issues. This paper suggests that vaccine manufacturers waive patent rights for a reasonable compensation in this extraordinary time to help World Health Organization (WHO) secure exclusive rights for the multiple-patent pool rather than forcing individual nations to pursue a slow and inefficient advance procurement commitment agreement. Once WHO obtained a patent pool, regional vaccine manufacturing centers can be quickly set up to immunize the world community and restore crippled public health and economic systems. Together with regional leaders, WHO can work together to formulate goals and legal framework for these newly established regional vaccine centers to ensure effective supervision systems, sustainable public health, and production and equitable distribution of quality vaccines to member states, particularly LIC. To resolve present (and future) slow production and equitable distribution of high-quality vaccines, there is an urgent need to call upon WHO to provide world leadership to leverage global human and capital resources to resolve the pandemic efficiently for the benefit of all nations.

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