
Credit: Angela Ponce

The immediate issue is how to reach a political agreement for sharing and redistributing available doses of vaccine, and committed doses to come, based on what is best from a global public health perspective with equity at the centre. There is an agreement that covering only one's own population will not end the pandemic, but the failure to move from that rhetoric to an actual effective flow and allocation of vaccine doses as they become available is a severe threat to the fight against COVID-19.

There is no definitive information source on the state of facilities worldwide now ready and able to produce COVID-19 vaccine and in what quantities, nor of the raw materials required. Manufacturers in 2020 were having difficulty even predicting how much vaccine they could make for clinical trials, much less in bulk by the billions of doses. Raw materials in thin supply include syringes and glass vials [56].

Aligning technology transfer, intellectual property and manufacturing capacity could boost efforts to speed up vaccine rollout. Manufacturing capacity, an effective regulatory environment and equitable distribution are interdependent problems, all of which can be solved.