

Progress in sharing know-how, licensing and intellectual property has been slow. In May 2020, WHO set up the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP) to pool knowledge, intellectual property and data⁽⁵⁷⁾. Supported in principle by 41 high-, middle- and low-income countries, it has received no contributions so far. A recent push by South Africa and India at the World Trade Organization to waive intellectual property rules and allow generic manufacturers to make COVID-19 vaccines continues to run into opposition. India – potentially among the world's largest vaccine-makers – is itself lagging in vaccine production and delivery, and surges in cases there have constrained its vaccine exports⁽⁵⁸⁾.

The Panel notes that COVID-19 has been a pandemic of inequalities and inequities⁽⁵⁹⁾. Those with less social protection were more likely to have pre-existing health conditions that made them more vulnerable to COVID-19, and they were often also more exposed to the virus owing to the nature of their work and their living conditions. When exposed to COVID-19, a lack of social protection prevented vulnerable and sick people from staying at home because of the risk of a loss of income.

Inequality has been the determining factor explaining why the COVID-19 pandemic has had such differential impacts on peoples' lives and livelihoods.



For the Panel it is clear that the combination of poor strategic choices, unwillingness to tackle inequalities, and an uncoordinated system created a toxic cocktail which allowed the pandemic to turn into a catastrophic human crisis.