At the outset of the pandemic, the biopharmaceutical industry committed to playing the greatest possible role in the global response to COVID-19, building on decades of investment and R&D. This enabled:

- Candidate vaccines were underway within a few days, and the first regulatory approvals came 326 days later.
- Historical collaborations, resulted in 381 voluntary partnerships for vaccines production, including in Africa, of which 88% included technology transfer.
- An unprecedented 11 billion vaccine doses were produced by the end of 2021.

**As of December 2021, whilst there is sufficient supply, COVID-19 vaccines are still not equitably reaching all priority populations worldwide**

**Several factors hinder an increase in vaccination rates in Africa**

**A. Vaccines took longer to reach the continent due to trade barriers**

In 2021, just as vaccine production was ramping up, trade restrictions severely impeded the flow of both raw materials and commodities, as well as drug samples and finished products. For example, the US invoked the Defense Production Act, which prioritizes US crisis response. In the midst of its first COVID-19 wave in the Spring of 2021, India imposed a ban on vaccine exports, sharply curtailing supply to COVAX, and ending immunization plans for 91 low-and lower-middle-income countries, including a significant share of African countries. When the US and India export resumed, monthly deliveries to Africa increased by 184% and 47% respectively just in the following month.

**B. Capacity of many local healthcare systems is limited, hindering quick rollout of vaccinations**

In Africa, doses administered are significantly lower than what is delivered.

**C. Vaccine hesitancy impacts vaccination rates**

It is important to invest in making healthcare systems more resilient, building the necessary infrastructure to support countries’ ability to deliver vaccines, and expanding Universal Health Coverage to boost absorption. Underfunded and understaffed healthcare systems at the front line of tackling infectious diseases pose a challenge to tackling the pandemic.

The Africa CDC will ask that all COVID-19 vaccine donations be paused until the third or fourth quarter of this year (2022), the director of the agency told POLITICO. John Nkengasong, director of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said the primary challenge for vaccinating the continent is no longer supply shortages but logistics challenges and vaccine hesitancy — leading the agency and the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust to seek the delay.

In most African countries, over a third of the population wouldn’t take the vaccine even if available.
To urgently increase access to COVID-19 vaccines on the continent, innovative biopharmaceutical companies will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders on the following three overarching priorities and supporting activities:

**1. Continue to drive innovation**

The biopharmaceutical industry is demonstrating a commitment to regional manufacturing by growing partnerships in African Countries. These partnerships are bolstering manufacturing capacity, facilitating technology and knowledge transfer, and driving rapid R&D.

**2. Step up support for country readiness to roll out COVID-19 vaccine doses**

We are committed to supporting regional diversification of manufacturing capacity.

**3. Contribute to equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccine doses**

To ensure diversified geographical production in Africa, we need policies that focus on:

- **Stable business environment** that respects business ethics, incentivizes innovation through IP protection, and develops and retains local skilled workforces.
- **Sustainable financing mechanisms** with access to low-interest capital and appropriate incentives to encourage private investments.
- **Fostering growing demand for reliable local markets** for healthcare products, including locally produced essential medicines and APIs.
- **Ensuring timely product registration through regulatory system strengthening, harmonization, and reliance practices** - including support for the African Medicines Agency and regional regulatory initiatives.
- **Enabling and facilitating trade**, including the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), eliminate Non-Trade Barriers, and foster international supply chain security.
- **Facilitating and actively encourage voluntary** and mutually agreed upon technology transfer and joint ventures.
- **Creating trust in science**
- **Health system strengthening**
- **Political commitment**
- **Building the business environment**
- **Sustainable financing mechanisms** with access to low-interest capital and appropriate incentives to encourage private investments.
- **Stable business environment** that respects business ethics, incentivizes innovation through IP protection, and develops and retains local skilled workforces.

**4. The industry is also continuing to drive innovation by developing vaccines that are easier to transport, store, and administer.** We are developing new vaccines to counter possible COVID-19 variants, as well as combination vaccines against COVID-19 and other viruses in a single dose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 1-2</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 2-3</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4*</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

* AstraZeneca (University of Oxford) and Covishield (Serum Institute of India) are counted as one candidate, as well as Novavax and Covovax (Serum Institute of India).

**5. Ensuring equitable access to vaccines for current and future pandemics requires:**

For access to more detailed data and information, please visit: [www.ifpma.org/covid19](http://www.ifpma.org/covid19)