



New Vaccine Agreements for COVAX



COVAX, the global initiative to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines across the world, has announced new agreements for Pfizer/BioNTech and AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccines delivery, about 200 million doses in total.

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Specifically, COVAX reached an advance purchase agreement with Pfizer to receive up to 40 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine candidate. The vaccine has already been approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) for emergency use. The parties will now negotiate the conditions for delivery.

Another confirmed deal involves receiving the first 100 million doses of the AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine manufactured by Serum Institute of India, in line with the existing agreement with the latter. WHO Emergency Use Listing is pending for the vaccine, but once the authorisation is granted (the decision is expected by mid-February), the majority of these is to be delivered in the first quarter 2021. Earlier the vaccine was approved for restricted emergency use by the Drugs Controller General of India.

A parallel agreement with AstraZeneca sees the delivery of another 50 million doses of the vaccine to COVAX participants, also in the first quarter. Similarly, by mid-February WHO should have decided whether to approve the COVAX-specific manufacturing network for this batch.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which leads COVAX procurement and delivery, is providing about €123 million (\$150 million) to fund these deals.

WHO is also preparing to launch a 'Country Readiness Portal' later this month. The participating countries will be able to submit final national deployment and vaccination plans (NDVPs) through the

portal, which is a necessary step for planning the vaccine allocation. In turn, by the end of January COVAX should provide indicative plans for vaccine delivery to its 190 participating countries.

Overall, COVAX has already secured access to over 2 billion doses of several vaccine candidates, and it is hoped that by the end of the year 92 lower-income economies will receive at least 1.3 billion doses, with the aim is to inoculate at least 20% of the population in each participating country.

Source: WHO

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