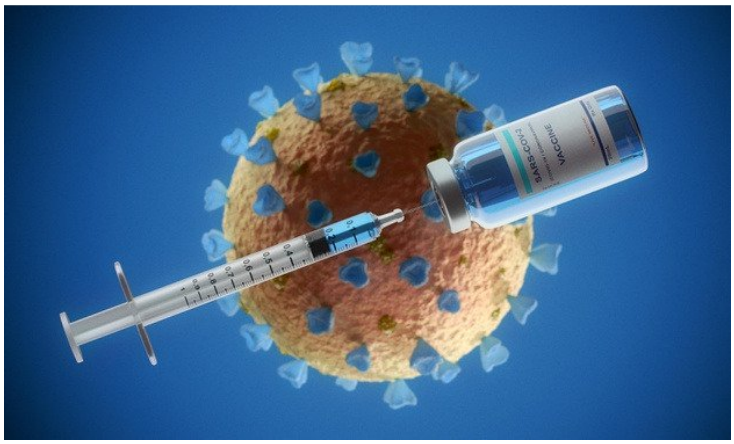
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Gavi board approves COVAX buffer for high-risk groups in humanitarian settings

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5% of the total number of available doses procured through the COVAX Facility will be allocated to the COVAX Buffer



The Board of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance on March 23, 2021, has approved the COVAX Buffer to ensure access to COVID-19 vaccines for high-risk populations in humanitarian settings and enable an emergency release of doses for severe outbreaks. The volume of the COVAX Buffer will be up to 5% of doses procured through the COVAX Facility, thus making up to 100 million vaccine doses available by end of 2021.

COVAX Buffer will be available for use where there are unavoidable gaps in vaccination coverage, for example in instances of state failure and conflict, and in areas controlled by non-state armed groups inaccessible to governments.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) – a forum of UN and non-UN organisations working to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected populations – estimates that 167 million people are at risk of exclusion from COVID-19 vaccination. Over two-thirds are in economies eligible for support through the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), many in non-government-controlled areas and therefore out of reach of national vaccination campaigns.

COVAX Buffer will also provide a contingency for severe outbreaks of COVID-19 by enabling the emergency release of doses where regular vaccine allocation timelines may not be sufficient. This surge of doses, aimed at addressing acute outbreaks, is only going to be considered once all COVAX Facility participants have been allocated a base amount of vaccine doses. All COVAX Facility participants, both self-financing and AMC-eligible economies, as well as national and international humanitarian agencies will have access to doses through the COVAX Buffer.

The COVAX Buffer will be funded through the Gavi COVAX AMC for humanitarian situations in AMC-eligible economies as well as on a case-by-case basis in self-financing economies aiming to cover populations originating from AMC-eligible economies. Self-financing participants will also be able to access the Buffer doses, which will be self-funded. In addition, 5% of the US$ 150 million delivery support approved by the Gavi Board in December 2020 will be made available for exceptional delivery assistance.

Gavi supports high-risk populations in humanitarian settings with routine immunization and outbreak response programs through its Fragility, Emergencies, Refugees (FER) policy and four emergency vaccine stockpiles – for Ebola, cholera, meningococcal and yellow fever vaccines.