C-19 Conversations' VACCINE EQUITY AND ACCESS

14 Jan 2021

The People's Vaccine

- Everyone, everywhere, who needs it, must get a safe and effective vaccine
- COVID-19 diagnostic tools, treatments, and vaccines must be available to everyone *everywhere*, free point-of-delivery

- Peoples Vaccine - **http://peoplesvaccine.org/**
- UAEM – Free the Vaccine **https://freethevaccine.org/**

South Africa – impact locally

- 4 vaccine clinical trials
  - **AstraZeneca/Oxford Group; Johnson and Johnson; Novavax; Pfizer/BioNtech**
- The South African government has spent public funds on vaccine clinical research (approximately R10-million) and has committed to "sign up" to COVAX with a ZAR 250 million contribution from the Solidarity Fund
- MSF reports that vaccine candidates are benefiting from more than $4.4-billion of public and philanthropic funding:
  - nearly $1-billion from the US Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) to just two companies, Johnson & Johnson and Moderna
  - BioNTech received $445-million from the German government
  - Moderna was also given $1-million by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)
  - The AstraZeneca-Oxford Group- Oxford University vaccine research has been reported to have received more than £1-billion (about $1.3-billion) of public funding
- **2 possible SA based 'manufacturing agreements' – 'unclear and secret talks**'
  - Biovac Institute SA – CEPI has identified Biovac as a potential drug product manufacturer but has not signed an agreement yet, unclear for which vaccine – pricing and geography conditions unclear
  - Aspen SA – Johnson and Johnson Vaccine - details unclear, pricing and geography terms or restrictions / conditions also unclear

Civil Society - Responses & Realities

- Access cannot hinge on benevolence and charity OR no transparency (LICENSING, DEALS, PRICES, SUPPLIES QTY)
- Billions in public investment including for vaccine research for Covid-19
  - *See Public Citizen, KEI online, Peoples Vaccine Alliance, UAEM, MSF Access Campaign*
- Voluntary licenses are limited, even if helpful – segments markets – who has ultimate control and right? (to IP)
- COVAX has several limitations
- Rich countries have pre-bought supplies in advanced purchase agreements, bi-laterally
- TRIPS flexibilities are difficult to use in practice
- Domestic – fix the patent laws
- Safe manufacturing can be ramped up with proper investment and data sharing

Calls

- ‘A People’s Vaccine’ / ‘Free the Vaccine’
- **An Equitable Plan for Access and Allocation in South Africa** (HJI correspondence) that deals with 2-tiered health system, equity in allocation and access - #1COuntry1Plan – no detailed response yet
- Geography – everyone, everywhere
- Opposing the waiver (US, EU, UK, Canada, Brazil, Australia, etc.)
- Price at cost, not at profit, for a longer period
- Transparency - Require drug companies, corporations as well as university research institutions to open their books and show the public all research & development and production costs
- Companies cannot unilaterally decide supplies, pricing and when pandemic ends
- Community involvement – to encourage democratic participation, build community trust and avoid vaccine hesitancy as well as growing anti-vaccine movement
- Share technology and treat as ‘global public good’

Reading and Materials

- **SA Government Submission to the WTO - July 2020**

https://www.keionline.org/33551

- **SA Government Statement on TRIPS / WTO Negotiations ('TRIPS Waiver') and Submissions**

https://www.keionline.org/34061

- **MSF TRIPS Waiver Briefing Document; MSF Report on Patents and Vaccines**

https://msfaccess.org/fair-shot-vaccine-affordability

- **'Whoever Finds the Vaccine Must Share It - Strengthening Human Rights and Transparency Around Covid-19 Vaccines' – HRW**

https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/10/29/whoever-finds-vaccine-must-share-it/strengthening-human-rights-and-transparency

- **'9 out of 10 people in poor countries are set to miss out on COVID-19 vaccine next year' –Amnesty International, Oxfam +**

https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/campaigners-warn-that-9-out-of-10-people-in-poor-countries-are-set-to-miss-out-on-covid-19-vaccine-next-year/

- **The Great COVID-19 Vaccine Heist**

https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-12-06-the-great-covid-19-vaccine-heist/

- **Politics, power and patents: 'Desperate diseases require desperate measures'**

https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-09-06-politics-power-and-patents-desperate-diseases-require-desperate-measures/

Contact and questions

Fatima Hassan

HJI Head

+27 76 611 0405

fatima@healthjusticeinitiative.org.za

www.healthjusticeinitiative.org.za

@HealthJusticeIn