

Enough Covid vaccines to cover global population: industry

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There will be enough COVID-19 vaccine doses produced by the end of this year to cover the global population, industry heavyweights said Tuesday.

There is a yawning gap in vaccination rates between rich and poor countries, but the threshold of 7.5 billion vaccine doses will be reached in September, Thomas Cueni, the head of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) told a news conference in Geneva.

Up to 70 percent of adults have received two vaccine doses in richer nations while in Africa the figure is a mere six percent.

About 1.5 billion doses are being manufactured every month, according to Airfinity, a scientific data analysis firm.

The global production of coronavirus vaccine doses is projected to reach 12 billion by the end of 2021.

This means that even if [rich countries](#) want to vaccinate everyone aged 12 and over, there will be at least 1.2 billion doses available for redistribution to [poor countries](#), Airfinity said.

"It also means that governments still holding back doses stocks in case of shortages no longer need to do so," Cueni said.

IFPMA said that the production of [vaccine doses](#) would reach 24 billion by the middle of next year—a figure it said was greater than [global demand](#).

Albert Bourla, head of US pharmaceuticals giant Pfizer, which makes a [vaccine](#) in collaboration with Germany's BioNTech, said the cost of the jab was not an issue.

He said his company priced the doses according to the economic strength of the country where it was being sold.

Paul Stoffels, the scientific director of US drug maker Johnson & Johnson, said lifting patents, as demanded by some non-governmental organisations, was also not an issue currently.

"At the moment it's all about optimising existing manufacturing capacity of vaccines by those people who know how to produce," he said.

"If it takes us 18 months to get to upscaling manufacturing in existing plants... it will take different companies so much longer and so it doesn't help."

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