

Navigating the unknown: Ensuring equitable TB vaccine access to maximize health impact

Rupali J. Limaye, PhD (JHU), Shaun Palmer (IAVI), Richard G White, PhD (LSHTM), Gitte Giersing, PhD (WHO), Jaymin Patel, PhD (CDC), Terri Hyde, MD (CDC), Jennifer Harris, PhD (CDC), Arman Majidulla, PhD (JHU), Andrew D. Kerkhoff, MD (UCSF)

The Dilemma

While several promising TB vaccine candidates are in the pipeline, numerous unknowns remain for these candidates in regard to vaccine characteristics, including safety and efficacy, vaccine effectiveness compared to and in conjunction with existing preventive measures, as well as robustness of pharmacovigilance data, and other aspects such as public confidence in the vaccines. Another major unknown is the size of the initial vaccine supply; however, it is expected to be limited. This necessitates the development of national and global TB vaccine limited supply framework to ensure equitable distribution and maximum impact upon availability.

Methods

A scoping literature review is underway to identify key principles and strategies from vaccine introduction strategies. The review focuses on vaccines utilized in routine and emergency contexts, including malaria, COVID-19, dengue, and meningococcal vaccines, among others.

Results

Thus far, several key principles for limited vaccine supply have emerged from the literature, such as from the Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine and the WHO Framework for the Allocation of Limited Malaria Vaccine Supply.

The Way Forward

Through iterative meetings and consultations, stakeholders will discuss principles from routine and emergency settings to inform key principles for limited TB vaccine supply distribution. Key considerations include prioritizing based on need, maximizing health impact, ensuring equity, access, and affordability. The goal is to create a transparent, evidence-based framework that informs national and global policy under conditions of limited supply, while market shaping and communication efforts work toward meeting global demand.

ILLUSTRATIVE SHARED LIMITED VACCINE SUPPLY PRINCIPLES



Prioritize protecting public health by reducing severe illness and death, especially for high-risk groups and essential workers. **Balance individual and societal needs** for maximum societal impact.



Ensure **transparent, inclusive, data-driven decisions** based on ethical principles, with input from affected groups and ongoing public engagement to promote legitimacy and acceptance.



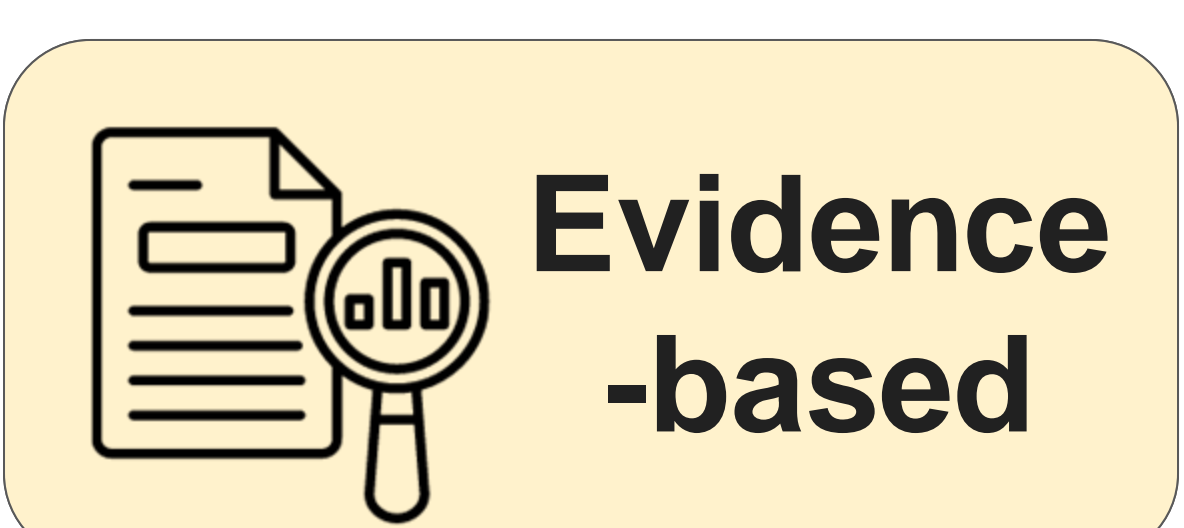
Focus on **areas with the highest disease burden** where vaccination programs can have the greatest impact. Maximize lives saved by targeting regions with the highest need.



Communicate vaccine allocation criteria clearly, including their ethical basis, to **build public trust and ensure accountability** in the vaccination process.



Treat all individuals with equal dignity and ensure non-discriminatory vaccine distribution. Use impartial criteria and, if necessary, random or weighted selection to ensure fairness.



Use the **best available scientific evidence** to guide vaccine phases, adapting as knowledge about disease risk and vaccine effectiveness evolves.



Give some **priority to countries involved in vaccine development**, but prioritize areas with the highest health impact. In cases of equal need, contributing countries may be given preference.

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