ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

Case for Private Sector Support

How and why to support the ACT-Accelerator
A guide for private sector donors

March 2021

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Case for Private Sector Support

How to support the ACT Accelerator: A guide for private sector donors

COVID-19 Has Brought the World to its Knees

The global pandemic poses an unprecedented threat, extending beyond a global public health emergency to an economic, humanitarian, security and human rights crisis. As of mid-March 2021, COVID-19 has tragically claimed more than 2.6 million lives and infected over 120 million people worldwide. Emerging variants of the virus are heightening tension and underscoring the need for a global response.

As the economic and social costs of the pandemic escalate, the case for global collaboration could not be stronger:

- The International Monetary Fund estimates the pandemic will cost the global economy US$ 28 trillion in lost output by 2025.
- The World Bank estimates that if infections continue to rise and the roll-out of a vaccine is delayed, global economic expansion could be limited to just 1.6% in 2021. Whereas, an upside scenario that sees successful pandemic control and a faster vaccination process could cause global growth to accelerate to nearly 5%.
- A powerful report commissioned by the International Chamber of Commerce shows that the global economy stands to lose as much as US$ 9.2 trillion by 2025 if governments fail to ensure developing economy access to COVID-19 vaccines.

More than US$ 12 trillion has already been spent by G20 countries to deal with the consequences of the pandemic.[1] These devastating economic consequences are causing major setbacks to human capital development.

But there is hope.

Vaccines are rolling out worldwide, low-cost high-performing antigen rapid diagnostic tests (Ag-RDTs) can now detect transmission anywhere, affordable treatment (e.g. corticosteroids) for severe disease can save lives in any setting, and health systems are supported in the roll out of these tools. Clinical practice has advanced understanding of how oxygen, personal protective equipment (PPE), and overall health system capabilities can be best used to improve a patient's chances of recovery. We also have a globally agreed Equitable Access Framework for COVID-19.

The Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator has contributed to all of these achievements.

But while the development and rollout of new tools have been rapidly accelerated, broad and equitable access is severely lacking, due in part to a shortage of funding.

Only a fundamental change in funding and approach will turn that new hope into an effective weapon against the virus. The ACT-Accelerator is pivotal to realizing that hope. But a substantial injection of financial support for the work of the ACT-Accelerator is urgently needed – from governments and private funders – to reverse the increasing risk of access gaps and disparities between high-income countries, low-income countries (LICs) and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs), and to prevent a prolonging of the human and economic devastation caused by this crisis.

The ACT-Accelerator is the Pandemic Exit Strategy

The ACT-Accelerator is a ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. Launched in April 2020, the ACT-Accelerator brings together governments, scientists, businesses,

[1] https://reliefweb.int/report/world/oxfam-over-third-population-without-safety-net-cope-covid-19-economic-crisis

civil society, philanthropists and global health organizations (the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations** (CEPI), the **Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics** (FIND), **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, the **Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria**, **Unitaid**, **Wellcome Trust**, the **World Health Organization** (WHO), and the **World Bank**). **UNICEF** is the leading cross-cutting partner of the ACT-Accelerator, providing programmatic support and procurement of supplies for countries across all Pillars.

FACILITATION COUNCIL

ACT-ACCELERATOR HUB

Diagnostics

FIND – Because diagnosis matters; The Global Fund

Workstream leads:

1. **R&D of tests & digital tools:** BMGF and Praesens
2. **Market readiness:** Unitaid and FIND
3. **Supply:** WHO and the Global Fund
4. **Country preparedness:** Africa CDC and PAHO
5. **Data foundation & modelling:** World Bank and Imperial College London
6. **Strategic private sector engagement:** WEF, BMGF, Mayo Clinic Labs, and Water Street
7. **Advocacy/community engagement:** Global Fund Advocates Network

Therapeutics

Wellcome; Unitaid

Workstream leads:

1. **Rapid evidence assessment:** BMGF and Wellcome Trust
2. **Market preparedness:** Unitaid
3. **Procurement & deployment:** The Global Fund and WHO

Vaccines

Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance; World Health Organization; CEPI

Workstream leads:

1. **Development & manufacturing:** CEPI
2. **Policy & allocation:** WHO
3. **Procurement & delivery at scale:** WHO, UNICEF and Gavi

PRINCIPALS GROUP
including Pillar co-conveners, leads, unicef, Bill & Melinda Gates foundation and industry associations

Health Systems Connector

The Global Fund; World Health Organization; WORLD BANK GROUP

Workstream leads:

1. **Health financing:** The World Bank and WHO
2. **Community-led responses:** The Global Fund and UNICEF
3. **Integrated data management:** WHO
4. **Protecting front-line health workers:** The Global Fund and UNICEF
5. **Private sector:** The World Bank
6. **Clinical care:** WHO, The Global Fund
7. **Supply chain:** Gavi, UNICEF, and The Global Fund

Access & Allocation

World Health Organization

WORKING WITH:
GOVERNMENTS, CIVIL SOCIETY, INDUSTRY

These global health organizations, working across five workstreams – vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, health systems and access & allocation – have joined forces to speed up an end to the pandemic by supporting the development and equitable distribution of more than 2 billion vaccine doses to the world by the end of 2021, up to 100 million courses of treatment and 900 million diagnostic tests to LICS and LMICs in 2021.

The ACT-Accelerator proof of concept is clear from the results achieved so far, including:

Diagnostics

- 60 million polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and antigen rapid diagnostic (Ag-RDTs) tests have been made available to enhance testing in LMICs.
- Technology transfer, scale up and automation of manufacturing capacity is driving down prices to less than US$ 2.50 per test.
- New rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) have been developed and affordable price guarantees secured for 120 million tests for LMICs, with plans in place for an additional 900 million tests in 2021.

Therapeutics

- ACT-Accelerator has tracked over 300 actionable trials across product categories and supported two large randomized controlled platform trials which led to the identification of the first life-saving therapy, dexamethasone.
- Therapeutics Pillar partners have secured up to 2.9 million courses of dexamethasone to treat severe COVID-19 cases in LMICs through an advance purchase agreement.
- The COVID-19 Oxygen Emergency Taskforce has been launched to assess and address COVID-19 surges in oxygen demand and to reduce preventable deaths by ensuring patients in low- and middle-income countries can benefit from the advances in clinical care and the combination treatment of dexamethasone and oxygen. Unitaid and Wellcome will make an immediate contribution of up to US$ 20 million to this effort.

Vaccines

- US$ 1.2 billion has been invested in the development of new vaccines.
- A broad and dynamic portfolio of 11 key vaccine candidates across 4 technology platforms has been established.
- 190 countries and economies have signed up to the COVAX Facility to benefit from pooled procurement of vaccines from a broad portfolio.
- Manufacturing capacities for at least 2 billion vaccine doses are secured, at least 1.3 billion of these for LICs and LMICs.

Heath Systems Connector:

- US$ 500 million worth of PPE has been procured for LMICs.

Access and Allocation:

- A globally-agreed Equitable Access Framework for COVID-19 Tools and a specific allocation mechanism for COVAX Facility vaccines has been developed.

A sharpening of 2021 priorities and their urgent financing requirements are presented in the ACT-Accelerator Prioritized Strategy & Budget for 2021.

Flexible Funding at Scale Must be Secured Quickly to Deliver on the Promise of the ACT-Accelerator

Funding will enable the ACT-Accelerator to achieve near-term goals, across four strategic priorities:

1. **Rapidly scale up the delivery of more than 2 billion doses of vaccines through COVAX the ACT-Accelerator's Vaccine Pillar, to the most high-risk and highly-exposed populations globally.**

   To end the pandemic, people everywhere, particularly the most vulnerable populations, must have urgent access to vaccines. This is critical for equity, achieving global health security, and getting our economies back on track. COVAX is making significant strides towards addressing vaccine inequities.

2. **Bolster the R&D agenda, product evaluation, and regulatory pathways for new and modified tests, treatments, and vaccines to respond to emerging variants and programmatic needs.**

   The emergence of new viral variants requires that both ACT-Accelerator and the world are prepared for a scenario where some existing or pipeline tools may no longer be fully adequate. As a result, tools may need to be modified or new ones may need to be developed to combat these variants. Additionally, the world faces considerable programmatic challenges (e.g. need for ultra-cold chain, multiple doses for vaccines) in the delivery of some COVID-19 tools, which may be overcome in the future through product optimization.

3. **Stimulate rapid and effective uptake and use of COVID-19 tests, treatments, and PPE in LMICs.**

   New innovations in technologies have not been fully translated into appropriate uptake. Availability of financing has been a significant limiting factor. Other factors include clarity around use cases and limited countries' readiness of implementation of the existing tools (e.g. Ag-RDTs, PPE, medical oxygen, dexamethasone).

4. **Ensure a robust supply pipeline of essential tests, treatments, and PPE to support broader access in LMICs and protect vital health infrastructure.**

   The initial target of supplying 500 million diagnostic tests in 2021 is being raised by 400 million tests, leading to a total of 900 million tests over a period of 12 months. Access will be assured to quality clinical management, including medical oxygen, corticosteroids such as dexamethasone, and other therapeutics. The target is to promote successful uptake of medical oxygen and corticosteroids for up to 12 million severe and critical patients and introduce new COVID-19 therapies for up to 100 million treatment courses across all use cases. A full package of quality PPE for health workers will be rolled-out in LMICs.

The Private Sector is Central to Ensuring a Fully-Funded ACT-Accelerator

Corporate and philanthropic funding is a critical element of ACT-Accelerator financing: as of 26 February 2021, dozens of private sector partners together accounted for 6% of all contributions to the ACT-Accelerator (US$ 630 million of US$ 11 billion). The value of private sector financing is measured not only by the volume of funding provided, but by the speed with which it can be made available and by its catalytic nature.

COVID-19 has shown that no-one is safe until everyone is safe and that the scale of the global challenge we face today can only be solved through solidarity and international cooperation.

How the Private Sector Can Support the ACT-Accelerator

The ACT-Accelerator is a time-limited collaboration designed to rapidly leverage existing global public health infrastructure and expertise, with each contributing organization being a key player in its respective domain: access to research and development (CEPI, FIND, Wellcome Trust), regulatory and standard-setting expertise (WHO), procurement experience (Unitaid, Global Fund, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance), as well as health systems and delivery (World Bank, WHO).

The work of these ACT-Accelerator partners is driven through three product Pillars (Vaccines, Therapeutics, Diagnostics), supported by the cross-cutting Health Systems Connector and guided by the Access & Allocation workstream, all of which are fully empowered to develop and implement workplans through their own structures and processes.

There are two options for contributing:

1. Donors are invited to contribute to individual ACT-Accelerator partner organizations directly as detailed below.

2. Donors also have the option to provide flexible funding to support the most urgent needs across ACT-Accelerator co-convening implementing agencies and pillars by donating to the *ACT Together Fund*.

The ACT Together Fund's primary host is the UN Foundation, which can receive funding from anywhere in the world; select donors can also explore tax benefits in close to two dozen additional countries via a partnership with the WHO Foundation. To find out more, or to make a contribution, please contact **acttogetherfund@unfoundation.org**.

The **Diagnostics Pillar** is co-convened by FIND and the Global Fund with WHO leading on key aspects. It aims to rapidly identify game-changing new diagnostics for the world, and to bring 500 million affordable, high quality rapid diagnostic tests to market by mid-2021 for populations in LICs and LMICs.

To support the work of Diagnostics Pillar, please be in touch with:

FIND actadiagnostics@finddx.org

Global Fund gf_acta@theglobalfund.org

The **Therapeutics Pillar** is co-convened by Unitaid and the Wellcome Trust with WHO leading the policy, regulatory and related work. It seeks to develop and support scale-up of manufacturing for the world, and procure and distribute 165 million treatment courses for populations in LICs and LMICs within 12 months.

To support the work of the Therapeutics Pillar, please be in touch with:

Unitaid unitaid@who.int

Wellcome Trust* epidemics@wellcome.org

The **Vaccines Pillar** – also known as COVAX – is co-convened by CEPI, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and WHO. Its role is to ensure that vaccines are rapidly developed, manufactured at the right volumes without compromising on safety, and delivered to those that need them most. The Advance Market Commitment (AMC) is the financing instrument that will support the participation of 92 lower-middle and low-income economies. Its goal by early 2021 is to secure more than 2 billion doses through the COVAX Facility. All participating countries, regardless of income levels, will have equal access to these vaccines once developed.

To support the work of the Vaccines Pillar, please be in touch with:

CEPI ACTA@cepi.net

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance COVAX_PrivateSector@gavi.org

WHO covid19fund@who.foundation

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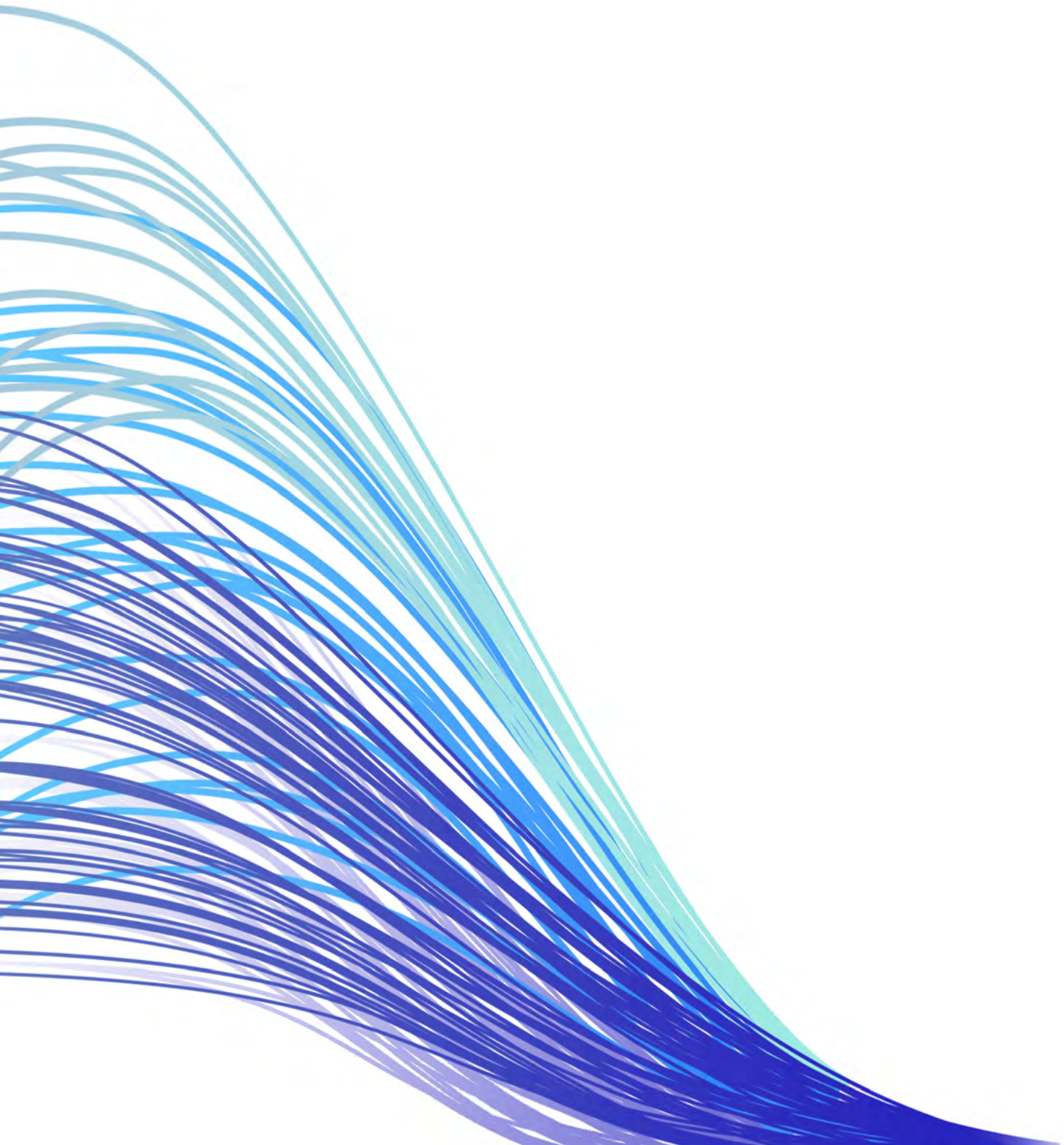
* Wellcome is not a direct recipient of funding but will channel to the Therapeutics Accelerator.

The **Health Systems Connector** works across the three product Pillars and is co-convened by the World Bank, Global Fund and WHO. It aims to assist countries with rapid assessment and country-led plans that strengthen key aspects of health systems and local community networks to unlock health system bottlenecks to optimize the delivery and implementation of new and expanded COVID-19 tools. It also aims to ensure sufficient supplies of essential PPE and medical oxygen in LMICs to protect front-line workers and to enhance the capacity of health systems to save lives.

To support the work of the Health Systems Connector, please be in touch with:

Global Fund gf_acta@theglobalfund.org

WHO covid19fund@who.foundation

UNICEF is the leading cross-cutting partner of the ACT-Accelerator, providing programmatic support and procurement of supplies for countries across all Pillars. To support UNICEF's contributions to the ACT-Accelerator, please be in touch with:

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