ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

Hosted by World Health Organization

Co-Chairs Outcome Statement from the 7th Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) Facilitation Council, 15 Oct 2021

A refreshed ACT-Accelerator to tackle a crisis of inequity

The pandemic has resulted in a devastating loss of lives and livelihoods in all countries, irrespective of geographic region or income level. The world is, however, now witnessing a two-track pandemic, ten months after the first vaccine doses were administered and even longer since rapid tests, oxygen and steroids were proven to save lives and help control disease. Countries with access to vaccines, tests, treatments, and PPE are going back to a semblance of normality with falling case-fatality rates, while countries with unprotected, untested and unvaccinated populations continue to suffer surges of disease and death. This is prolonging the pandemic and is putting all at risk.

Nearly 6.5 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered globally and 65% of the population in high-income countries have been fully vaccinated, while in low-income countries, coverage remains below 2%. The world is off track to meet the 40% vaccination coverage target in all countries by end of 2021. Similarly, of all the tests carried out in the world, only 0.4% have been performed in low-income countries. We will not be able to end the pandemic unless we meet the global vaccination, testing, treatment, and PPE targets set out by WHO and the ACT-Accelerator.

The Facilitation Council of the ACT-Accelerator met for the seventh time to take stock of its work, with a particular focus on its crucial role in addressing this dangerous inequity. Council members supported the findings of the Strategic Review carried out by Dalberg. Council members noted that it was important to balance agility with accountability.

Council members showed support for the new ACT-Accelerator Strategic Plan and Budget, its time-horizon through to September 2022, and particularly its plan for the revised Health Systems and Response Connector. Council members were invited to provide further written feedback by October 19th. The ACT-Accelerator Strategy and Budget will provide a costed, coordinated and credible path to ensure COVID-19 tools are equitably distributed to accelerate the end of the pandemic.

A refreshed ACT-Accelerator will also need a renewed Council, in line with the recommendations from the Strategic Review. The following perspectives were shared by various Council members:

- General agreement to extend the mandate of the Council until the transition or conclusion of the ACT-Accelerator, through to at least September 2022.
- Reaffirmation of the Council's Terms of Reference (ToR) and strengthening of its role in reviewing ACT-A investments and progress towards its goals and outcomes, in line with the ToR.

- Strong support to increase representation from low- and lower-middle income countries in the Council and its Working Groups, both at a political and technical level, and to promote better engagement of ACT-Accelerator pillars with these countries.
- Welcomed the revised Health Systems and Response Connector, with an emphasis on strengthening national response for roll out of COVID-19 tools.
- Enhance participation of civil society and community organizations in the ACT-Accelerator Pillars and the Council
- Council members intend to continue playing an active role in promoting the ACT-Accelerator as the collective, global end-to-end solution to ending the pandemic.
- Support downstream interventions and ensure donor coordination

Civil Society members of the Council raised important points on improved communication, increased transparency and accountability of the ACT-Accelerator and its work. Furthermore, they called for meaningful participation of the Civil Society and Community Organizations in ACT-Accelerator Pillars.

As concrete next steps, following the above recommendations and perspectives shared by the Strategic Review and by Council Members, we as Co-Chairs will, in dialogue with ACT-A co-hosts and special envoy, prepare a proposal for which we will seek Council members' feedback, containing the following points:

- Request ACT-Accelerator co-hosts to extend the mandate of the Council, and increase membership from low- and low-middle income countries in the Council.
- Refine the Council Working Groups in line with the changing context, including:
    (i) consolidating the Resource Mobilisation and Finance Working Groups into one Working Group
    (ii) following the implementation of the recommendations of the Vaccine Manufacturing Working Group and proposing next steps for this group
    (iii) establishing a Council Working Group to track investments and progress towards ACT-Accelerator goals and outcomes, supported by the reformed Health Systems and Response Connector and the IMF-WHO tracker, thereby creating a link to the Multilateral Leaders Taskforce on Scaling COVID-19 Tools.
- Enhance contact and communication between the Council and the ACT-Accelerator Principals/Pillars.