ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

Embargoed until 00:01 CEST, Friday 23 April 2021

ACT-Accelerator Impact Report: Summary

One year since the WHO, European Commission, France and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation co-hosted an event bringing together heads of government, leading health organisations and other key stakeholders, to launch the ACT-Accelerator – unprecedented collaboration, remarkable and rapid R&D, and mobilisation of resources have shown what can be achieved. Its goal to develop and deliver tests, treatments, and vaccines the world needs to fight COVID-19 has never been more urgent. COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc. It has killed more than 3 million people worldwide, a third wave is threatening many countries, and inequitable distribution of tools to fight the disease is allowing the virus to accelerate.

Today's challenges are different from a year ago

- A year ago, the world was in a very different place. Our collective understanding of COVID-19 was limited, and while we had PCR testing that could be done using laboratories, there were no vaccines, and little was known about effective treatments.
- Today, the world has rapid diagnostic tests, repurposed treatments, and vaccines, but faces an accelerating virus that is mutating into more transmissible and more harmful variants – risking the efficacy of our current tools to fight the disease.
- Left to rage anywhere, the virus is a threat everywhere. The only way out is to tackle COVID-19 everywhere. A strengthened globally coordinated effort to ensure all countries can access the tools they need is essential to help bring this virus under control.

The context remains extremely challenging

- Vaccinating at this scale and in this timeframe has never been done before; there are significant challenges in manufacturing and delivering on such a scale. Bilateral deals, export controls, vaccine diplomacy and manufacturing and supply chain bottlenecks are all contributing to serious global supply constraints.
- Without testing, the spread of the virus cannot be tracked or contained, nor the emergence of variants detected. There is an urgent need to scale up testing and ensure immediate, equitable access to diagnostic tools in every country. 'Test and treat' approaches are also vital to the response, preventing the spread of COVID-19 and reducing the number of severe infections and hospitalisations. However, funding is lacking.
- Sharing tools so frontline health workers and vulnerable populations everywhere are protected is critical. COVAX continues to hold discussions with manufacturers and countries at all income levels about how to ramp up production and solve bottlenecks. New options are being explored for technology transfer, to ensure the most rapid and efficient expansion of manufacturing capacity.

The needs

- As of 23 April, partners of the ACT-Accelerator need US$ 19 billion this year to develop and deliver the tests, treatments and vaccines needed to bring COVID-19 under control. But despite a grave economic and health imperative – a delay in funding will cost more lives and even greater economic harm. An unprecedented mobilisation of public, private and multilateral funders has galvanised US$ 14.1 billion in commitments.
- IMF estimates the pandemic will cost the global economy US$ 28 trillion in lost output by 2025, and the International Chamber of Commerce estimates that the global economy stands to lose as much as US$ 9.2 trillion if governments fail to ensure developing economy access to COVID-19 vaccines.
- Fully financing the ACT-Accelerator for 2021 would cost less than 1% of what governments are spending on stimulus packages to treat the consequences of COVID-19.
- At the one-year anniversary of the launch of the ACT Accelerator, world leaders face a choice: invest in saving lives by treating the cause of the pandemic everywhere, now, or continue to spend trillions on the consequences with no end in sight. The time to ACT is now. We call on all nations to come together in global solidarity. It isn't just the right thing to do, it is also the fastest and most effective way to save lives, protect health systems and restore economies.

Progress made by the ACT Accelerator partnership

Diagnostics Pillar is co-convened by FIND and The Global Fund

- Testing enables chains of transmission to be broken and data-led policy decisions to be made. Every country in the world needs to be able to implement "test, trace and isolate" strategies while vaccines are rolled out – and to monitor the virus in vaccinated populations.

Progress made

- Reliable antigen rapid diagnostic tests (Ag RDTs) that can be conducted outside of laboratory facilities were developed and ready for procurement within 8 months – this took 5 years to achieve for HIV.
- Over 60 Ag RDTs have been independently assessed and benchmarked to inform government procurement of COVID-19 tests.
- Access to 120 million affordable, high-quality Ag-RDTs has been guaranteed for LMICs.
- Over 65 million COVID-19 tests (32.3 million molecular [PCR] tests and 32.8 million Ag RDTs) have been procured for LMICs.
- Over 23,000 healthcare workers in almost 200 countries have had access to training to effectively implement the tests.
- Technology transfer, scale-up and automation of manufacturing capacity is driving down prices to less than US$ 2.50 per test.

2021 aims

- The ACT-Accelerator is positioned to procure 900 million tests by the end of 2021. Its priorities are also to stimulate rapid and effective uptake of appropriate and quality-assured diagnostics in LMICs, and drive development and at-scale availability of affordable, transformative, digitally integrated tests.

<u>Therapeutics Pillar is co-convened by Wellcome Trust and Unitaid</u>

- Treatments are critical in all stages of COVID-19 disease. They can prevent infection and stop its spread, suppress, or treat symptoms, offer life-saving therapy for severe illness, and speed up recovery.
- Medical oxygen is a vital component to treating hospitalised patients with COVID-19, but a lack of supply in many countries is resulting in unnecessary deaths.

Progress made

- Tracked 300+ actionable trials across products: monoclonal antibodies (mAbs), novel antivirals and repurposed therapeutics
- Supported research that identified dexamethasone as the first life-saving therapy for COVID-19; provided guidance on its use; procured via advance purchase 2.9 million doses of dexamethasone (the only WHO-approved treatment for COVID-19)
- Formed COVID-19 Oxygen Emergency Taskforce to confront surges in demand and cut preventable deaths. Identified US$ 90 million in immediate funding needs for medical O2 in up to 20 LMICs; contributed up to US$ 20 million to start oxygen emergency response
- Supported 15 clinical trials, investigating 21 therapies in 47 countries, with 85,000 patients enrolled
- ACT-Accelerator Therapeutics Pillar also analysed over 1,700 clinical trials to identify promising COVID-19 treatments that could be scaled up, and funded multiple large-scale global clinical trials

2021 aims

- Intensify research to expand the portfolio of effective treatments; help countries optimise clinical care and increase uptake of proven, available treatments like oxygen and dexamethasone within health systems
- Continue to secure treatment supply for LMICs – as and when treatments are approved.

<u>Vaccines Pillar, COVAX is co-led by CEPI, Gavi and WHO – working in partnership with UNICEF, the World Bank and others</u>

- COVID-19 vaccines are the quickest and safest way to get immunity, and reduce the severity of the illness. Combined with effective treatments, testing and preventive measures, the vaccine will enable the world to get back on its feet.
- In a supply-constrained world, addressing immediate and longer-term supply issues is vital to ensure that vaccines reach populations everywhere, starting with healthcare workers, the elderly and other vulnerable people who are most at risk of the virus.
- Tackling the virus requires rolling out vaccines across the world at the same time to lower the risk of new strains developing that may render current tools obsolete.

Progress made

- Invested in R&D portfolio of 12 vaccine candidates across 4 tech platforms, including 2 candidates targeting emerging variants

- Established COVAX Facility for procurement and equitable distribution of vaccines to over 191 economies (99 higher-income economies as self-financing members, 92 LMICs whose participation is supported by COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC)).
- Established a COVAX Manufacturing Task Force to optimise and prioritise the number of doses manufactured in the short term for COVAX, with a special emphasis on the AMC92 to ensure greater equity. This will kickstart the establishment of sustainable regional manufacturing of vaccines with a view to build long-term regional health security, mitigating the unintended impact on other vaccines and health products.
- COVAX is delivering doses of vaccine to countries around the world that are participating in the COVAX Facility [tracker].
    - Secured access to 2 billion+ doses of 5 different vaccines candidates through agreements with manufacturers
    - First international delivery of COVAX doses to an AMC participant (Ghana, Feb 2021) less than 3 months after first vaccine administered in a HIC
    - 40 million doses shipped to 118 economies thanks to COVAX
- Participation of lower income economies is supported by the COVAX AMC, a donor-funded financing instrument which ensures that LICs have access to vaccines
- Established the indemnification and liability and no-fault compensation programme for AMC economies.
- Supported the development of at least 100 National Development and Vaccination Plans.

2021 aims

- Provide vaccines to help countries to end the acute phase of the pandemic by reducing death and protecting those most at risk. These efforts should position countries to make further gains against the pandemic in 2022.
- Based on current projections, COVAX is aiming to supply at least 2 billion vaccine doses in 2021, of which at least 1.3 billion will be for AMC countries. COVAX is also laying the groundwork for an additional 500 million more doses to be secured through cost-sharing – to be distributed through an equitable and fair allocation mechanism. A Joint Allocation Taskforce and an Independent Allocation of Vaccine Group will ensure transparent governance of the allocation.
- Future vaccines: COVAX will support the most promising candidates in the R&D portfolio through late-stage clinical trials to licensure and production at scale. At the same time, COVAX will accelerate the development of next-generation COVID-19 vaccines including those targeting emerging variants of the virus.

Health Systems Connector (HSC) is co-led by the World Bank, WHO and The Global Fund working in partnership with Global Financing Facility, UNICEF and others

- Most health systems faced huge challenges fighting COVID-19 but countries with significant gaps in their health systems felt the impact of the virus more severely. Often characterised by inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained healthcare workers, interruption in supplies of essential medical commodities, lack of data systems to monitor and track progress—weak health systems result in high mortality and poor health, particularly among children, pregnant women and other vulnerable groups.

Progress made

- Procured personal protective equipment (PPE) with a total value over US$ 500 million
- Assessed country readiness for the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines in 140+ countries; captured country-specific insights on bottlenecks and ongoing health systems-related challenges and actions needed to scale up the deployment of COVID-19 tools.
- Documented disruptions to 90% of health systems and services through national pulse surveys of more than 100 countries
- Created a knowledge-sharing platform on health system strengthening for developing countries, to be available in mid-2021
- Developed global guidelines and training across multiple critical health system areas for developing countries.

2021 aims

- Countries face major challenges getting and using COVID-19 tools and require support to address the needs that have been identified in country response plans and readiness assessments, and to use available financing mechanisms to make available PPE and other tools for health workers. HSC responds to each country's needs, applying global knowledge to local problems.
- HSC will continue to support the integrated delivery of COVID-19 tools, rapidly address bottlenecks, and manage linkages and synergies with complementary activities for the delivery of essential health services and strengthening of health systems.