ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

Co-Chairs' Summary of the 3rd Meeting of the Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator Facilitation Council

Held on 14 December 2020 and co-Chaired by Dr Zweli Mkhize, Minister of Health of South Africa and Mr Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development, Norway, the 3rd meeting of the ACT Accelerator Facilitation Council had the following three objectives:

- To understand evolving **Pillar priorities, plans and timelines** in the era of COVID-19 vaccines
- To provide input on a draft **financing framework** to address the ACT Accelerator funding gaps
- To consider next steps for building the necessary **political support** for the financing framework

Evolving ACT Accelerator Priorities and Timelines in the New 'Era of COVID-19 Vaccines'

- The Facilitation Council was provided with an update on the status and current strategic priorities of the Vaccines, Diagnostics and Therapeutics Pillars and the Health Systems Connector (HSC).
- The Council stressed that even with effective vaccines, it will remain critical to maintain a holistic approach (Therapeutics, Diagnostics & HSC) to end the pandemic.
- All Pillars report that substantial resource constraints are becoming severe obstacles to further progress. The Council noted, with grave concern, the current funding gap of US$ 28.2 billion, of which US$ 4.3 billion is required immediately, which will impede global equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatments and ultimately delay the end of the crisis everywhere.
- With the evolving priorities of all Pillars and the Connector, across the value chain, it was concluded that the ACT-Accelerator will need a refreshed strategy and integrated priorities for 2021 along with a prioritized budget.

Developing a Comprehensive Financing Framework for the ACT Accelerator

- The Co-Chairs note that since the last Council meeting held in November 2020, where a clear macroeconomic case for urgently investing in the ACT Accelerator was laid out, there is even more evidence to suggest that ACT-Accelerator financing can give a solid 'return on investment'.[1]
- ACT-Accelerator investments complement the overall COVID-19 response by increasing the speed and equity of the development and delivery of essential tools.
- A draft Financing Framework to fill the 2021 ACT Accelerator funding gap was presented and discussed at the meeting. The Framework was developed by a working group of Council members and it looked at a range of possible funding mechanisms, that were classified along

[1] Global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines estimated to generate economic benefits of at least US$ 153 billion in 2020–21, and US$ 466 billion by 2025, in 10 major economies, according to new report by the Eurasia Group, published 3 December 2020, https://www.who.int/news/item/03-12-2020-global-access-to-covid-19-vaccines-estimated-to-generate-economic-benefits-of-at-least-153-billion-in-2020-21

four dimensions: speed of funding, ability to direct funds to ACT-Accelerator (whether direct, semi-direct or indirect), potential size, and whether the mechanism is used of Low Income Countries (LICs), High income countries (HICs) or both.

- Council members supported broadening the financing base, including to the private sector and non-traditional donors. However, even with a mix of financing sources, there still needs to be a substantial increase in direct grants from High Income Countries /Upper Middle-Income Countries to fully finance ACT-Accelerator as well as domestic investment by Low Income Countries/ Low Middle Income Countries to roll out the new tools.

Outcomes & Next Steps

- The Council asked that the ACT Accelerator Strategy be refreshed for 2021 and that the Budget be refined and prioritized to reflect the evolving context and epidemiology. In parallel, the ACT-Accelerator Financing Framework will be refined and shared with key constituencies. These documents will be shared at the 4th Facilitation Council meeting.
- The 4th ACT-Accelerator Facilitation Council meeting is scheduled to take place on 9 February 2021 with intersessional meetings – potentially including one on financing – held in the weeks prior.

Summary of the programme – 3rd Council Meeting, 14 December 2020

Co-Chairs: Dr Zweli Mkhize, Minister of Health, South Africa & Mr Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development, Norway

Participation: 178 delegates & invitees online

Opening

Evolving ACT Accelerator Priorities and Timelines in the New 'Era of COVID-19 Vaccines'

- **Chair:** Dr Mkhize, Minister of Health, South Africa
- **Presenter:** Dr Anban Pillay, Deputy Director General, Department of Health, South Africa
- **Interventions (in speaking order):** India, Japan, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Wellcome Trust, Civil Society Organization, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Unitaid, European Commission and International Chamber of Commerce

Developing a Comprehensive Financing Framework for the ACT Accelerator

- **Chair:** Mr Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development, Norway

- **Presenter:** John-Arne Røttingen, Ambassador for Global Health, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Interventions (in speaking order):** Nepal, Germany, Japan, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Civil Society Organization, World Bank, National Academy of Medicine, France, Indonesia, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Closing summary remarks and next steps

- **Intervention:** France (ACT-A Charter)
- **Co-Chairs:** Closing remarks