

9th Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator Facilitation Council

Co-chairs' Outcome Statement

An evolving virus still poses a high risk to the world.

In the past few months, we have seen unprecedented levels of disease transmission across the world due to the Omicron variant. Unfortunately, despite the fact that the number of hospitalizations and the level of fatal outcomes are declining, victory over COVID-19 is being prematurely declared, because inequity in access to COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments is still rampant and prolonging the pandemic.

As we heard at the 9th Facilitation Council meeting, local, national and regional leaders must take ownership of reaching the global vaccination, testing and treatment targets. We are continuing to witness the power of vaccines to protect vulnerable people, the need for access to oxygen and treatment to save lives, the importance of testing to control transmission and inform effective response, and the necessity of PPE to protect our health care workers and health systems. This is why we need to strengthen our commitments to reach the global targets and end the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We appreciate that the Council's Tracking and Accelerating Progress Working Group has conducted their first meeting. We look forward to staying updated on state-of-play and latest efforts from Council members to accelerate the uptake of COVID-19 tools. A firm focus on the targets we are all aiming for is vital as we work together to end this pandemic.

The last time we met, more than 40 countries were yet to reach 10% vaccine coverage, this number has now come down to 23. While progress is being made towards increasing vaccination coverage, more needs to be done. 73 countries are yet to achieve 40% coverage and many more are projected to miss the 70% target by middle of this year. We are also not meeting the global daily testing target, with large disparities between low-income and high-income countries. This mix of low testing and low vaccination rates is dangerous and increases the risk for new variants.

It is now a year since COVAX made its first delivery to Africa, when doses arrived in Ghana. Today, more than 1.2 billion doses have been shipped across the world by COVAX. Similarly, more than 156 million tests procured, more than USD 200 million worth of oxygen supplies and USD 510 million worth of PPE have been delivered to low- and middle-income countries through all the ACT-Accelerator pillars.

We were pleased to hear from Rwanda, Kenya during the Facilitation Council meeting, who outlined how they have achieved substantial success in vaccination and testing, respectively. These in-country perspectives, including that of Pakistan, are crucial to the work of the ACT-Accelerator, as we push for all tools to reach those who need them most.

Yet, notable as all the efforts being made are, we must do more. All partners must endeavour to push ahead towards the targets. We appreciated the strong support shown at the meeting by representatives from the G20 and G7 Presidencies as well as the US to ensure that expanding access to COVID-19 tools is a substantive agenda point in their meetings. We particularly welcome Germany's announcement that it will meet its 'fair share' ask, which was formally confirmed as a contribution of US\$1.22 billion by Finance Minister Christian Lindner on Tuesday 1 March at the G7 Finance Ministers' meeting, the day after our Council meeting.

Fully financing the ACT-Accelerator is the best investment the global community can do to end the pandemic. We heard from Indonesia, Germany and the USA on their commitments to making this a reality through their platforms and upcoming summit. We call on all countries to pay their fair share and fund the US\$ 16 billion¹ that is still required in grant funding for 2022. We call on all governments to contribute to controlling the pandemic together.

¹ This figure does not take into account an anticipated commitment of US\$ 1.22 bn from Germany based on their pledge made March 1, 2022. The [Commitment Tracker](#) will reflect this contribution when it is formally reported by recipient ACT- Accelerator agencies.