



**Accelerating the end of the COVID-19 pandemic:
*taking new solutions to scale and making them equitably accessible, to save lives, protect health systems and restart the global economy***

Concept: high-level side event on the ACT-Accelerator at the 75th session of UNGA

30 September, 8:30-10:00am EST

Objectives

The overarching objectives of this event are to:

- build stronger political consensus for a coordinated global response to COVID-19 and champion the importance and urgency of equitable access to new tools, especially effective vaccines
- catalyze a *step-change* in support for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), and its mechanisms like the COVAX Vaccines Facility, the most promising multilateral solutions for global equitable access to the tools needed to accelerate the end of the pandemic

Context

The UN has from the outset of the pandemic been calling for global solidarity to combat COVID-19. The already overwhelming burden on health systems, and social and economic consequences, could deteriorate further with subsequent waves of the disease that could prove especially challenging for vulnerable countries and populations.

To reopen societies and economies much more quickly, the world must rapidly suppress COVID-19 transmission and severe disease over the coming 6 months by massively expanding and ensuring equitable access to the tools we have now, including new rapid diagnostics and new treatments like dexamethasone. Looking forward, it is important to recognize the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public good for health in preventing, containing and stopping transmission in order to bring the pandemic to an end, once new safe and efficacious vaccines are available.

Civil society, communities and citizens themselves are powerful stakeholders for intensifying the global discourse on the urgent need for unity and equitable access to COVID-19 tools. Hundreds of global leaders and experts have already made urgent calls to make new COVID-19 vaccines truly available and affordable to all. Achieving a world free of COVID-19 will take the biggest public health effort in history, with a common global vision, determination, solidarity and unity.

We have a global solution to achieve this goal, in the groundbreaking collaboration that is the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A). ACT-A was launched on 24 April 2020, with the vision of creating an end-to-end global solution to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Uniquely, the ACT-Accelerator combines public and private sector expertise and institutions from around the world to fast-track the development and equitable distribution of COVID-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines.

Within just 4 months of its launch, the ACT-Accelerator has harnessed the international public health ecosystem in a nimble structure that is already delivering concrete results, accelerating the testing of vaccine candidates, evaluating dozens of new diagnostics, scaling up a new therapeutic, and establishing consensus on the international allocation of these products. It has also established the COVID-19 Vaccine Facility (COVAX Facility), launched at the UK hosted Global Vaccine Summit, which pools global resources to expedite the development and manufacture of vaccines to ensure equitable access. Over 170 economies are now engaged in discussions on the Facility.

On 10 September, the ACT-A Facilitation Council convened its first meeting under the co-chairs Norway and South Africa, concurring: that the key to stopping the acute phase of the pandemic and its health, societal and economic consequences is to reduce the risk of severe COVID-19 disease as rapidly as possible; that this requires a unique global solution like ACT-A that reduces risk everywhere at the same time; and that the full financing of ACT-A's US\$35 billion budget would be fully paid back within 36 hours once international trade and mobility are restored. The Council concluded that ACT-Accelerator must now move quickly out of its start-up phase to leverage this impressive early progress for impact at scale.

UNGA at a Pivotal Moment for ACT-A

UNGA provides a key opportunity to reaffirm global commitment to the vision pursued through the ACT Accelerator – to scale up solutions and make them equitably accessible – and kick-off a series of high-level events through December 2020 that will ensure it is fit and fully resourced to deliver the tools the world needs to bring an end to this global crisis. It also comes at a critical time for the COVAX Facility, with binding commitments expected by the 18 September.