

G7/G20 ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (U.S.)

G7 HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

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We recommend that G7 countries take the following actions:

1. **Ensure the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerators (ACT-A) is fully funded and commit to investing in research and development for new technologies and scale-up of proven tools to prevent, test, and treat COVID-19.**
 - a. An estimated additional \$27.2 billion is required in 2021, of which \$14.2 billion is needed in the first half of this year. In order to respond to emerging variants and programmatic needs the ACT- Accelerator will need an additional \$1.8 billion to support the R&D agenda in 2021.
 - b. Support the necessity of building on ACT-A's response to COVID-19 to ensure robust and sustainable investment in global pandemic preparedness, including infection prevention and control (IPC) measures such as access to PPE and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in healthcare facilities; training for a broad range of health worker cadres; and access to existing technologies such as oxygen therapy for acute respiratory illness.

2. **Prioritize the equitable global distribution of vaccines by sharing COVID-19 vaccine doses in parallel to the vaccine roll-out in G7 countries, especially those stockpiling excess doses, as well as equitable access to testing, therapeutics, and other health technologies and services.**
 - a. 'Slot swaps' should be undertaken whereby high-income countries reallocate some of their existing orders immediately, ordering replacement vaccines to arrive later in the year, effectively giving their earlier 'slots' to COVAX to help provide vaccines in early 2021 for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to close the current acute gap in supply which is likely to last until at least mid-2021.

3. **Increase investments to build resilient health systems that provide quality primary health care and can withstand threats, including infectious disease outbreaks, climate change, and political unrest.**
 - a. Sustain investments, including for R&D and manufacturing, disease surveillance, workforce development, and other programmatic activities in the fight against major infectious epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases in order to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) and the SDGs by 2030.
 - b. Prioritize flexible financing and technical support to strengthen the capacity of national health, nutrition, and WASH systems and domestic resource mobilization efforts to increase the fiscal space for health, nutrition, and WASH.
 - c. Prioritize support to the most vulnerable countries, including those with weak health systems and those in fragile or conflict-affected settings, to enable preparedness, response and continued delivery of essential health and nutrition services, free at the point of use.
 - d. Work with partners to ensure additional support and compensation for frontline health workers, as needed, particularly for unpaid health workers, including on- or near-site temporary housing, childcare, hazard pay, meals, safe transportation that allows for social distancing, airtime for telemedicine visits, and funds for health-related expenses such as mental health services.
 - e. Prioritize support for water and sanitation utilities and providers to ensure and expand reliable access to WASH services in healthcare facilities, schools, and households to prevent the spread of disease and strengthen health systems.

4. **Leverage multilateral institutions in new ways to provide sustainable investment in innovation to combat global health challenges.**
 - a. Ensure R&D investments are eligible for financing from the World Bank and other international financial institutions to provide LMICs the necessary resources to strengthen research, laboratory, surveillance, and manufacturing capacities to respond to health emergencies, as recommended by the 2020 Global Preparedness and Monitoring Board report.
 - b. Invest in innovative financing mechanisms such as the proposed Pandemic Preparedness Fund, which can make global health financing truly sustainable and catalytic by leveraging additional resources beyond traditional ODA or humanitarian aid from novel sources such as the private sector, investment funds, social enterprises, and others..
 - c. WHO estimates 1.1 million health workers will be required to administer COVID-19 vaccination to just 20% of the population in the LMICs, at a cost of \$2.75 billion, even as

health workers are already in shortage in Africa and other regions, so G7 members should ensure World Bank lending in the context of COVID-19 addresses human resource challenges.

5. **Re-prioritize antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and invest in preventive measures, as well as new tools and technologies, to fight the rising threat of the silent pandemic, and develop and operationalize national action plans.**
 - a. Invest in quality-assured, new, and improved antimicrobials, novel compounds, diagnostics, vaccines, and other health technologies to fight AMR including, but not limited to, hospital-acquired infections. This includes new technologies that address the WHO Priority Pathogens List, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) and new tools to combat antimalarial and antiretroviral resistance as a part of the AMR response.
 - b. With MDR-TB the biggest of the AMR killers, G7 members should invest in full restoration of tuberculosis services, including active case funding, in order to diagnose, prevent and treat multidrug-resistant tuberculosis and put the fight against TB back on track, while integrating COVID-19 screening where appropriate.
 - c. Support preventive measures such as access WASH which are critical to IPC.

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown with devastating clarity that the current global health architecture is inadequate to effectively address pandemics. The multilateral community has been slow to build—and adequately resource—health systems, innovation, and the health workforce in LMICs to prevent and respond to outbreaks, while continuing to provide routine health services.

We support the UK's five-point plan, including calling on country leaders to prioritize health equity as a key factor in overcoming the current pandemic and ensuring funding for COVID-19 response does not derail decades of investment in other health areas. A robust integrated and cross-sectoral response is needed from the global health community to maintain health and nutrition services that are central to maternal and child survival and the effective prevention and control of malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases. G7 leaders must ensure that while the current crisis is being addressed, these other key global health priorities are not neglected. While COVID-19 has dominated global health programming and dialogues this past year, global leaders must recalibrate their efforts and underscore their commitment to advancing the fight against these challenges through increased investment in primary healthcare, research and development, and the health workforce to regain ground and ensure that Universal Health Coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved by 2030.

In addition, fully resourced coordinated international frameworks and mechanisms are needed to advance the development of and equitable access to health technologies and to strengthen the R&D capacity of LMICs for pandemic response. While we welcome the progress to date that has been made by the ACT-A, the G7 must step up quickly to ensure the mechanism is properly resourced so that all countries have access to diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines and other tools and resources, including human resources, needed to get COVID-19 under control.

The lessons learned from this pandemic present an opportunity to rethink the architecture for global health and develop the systems that will allow us to adequately tackle the major global health priorities of the 21st century. Now is the time for G7 leaders to take steps to make long-term investments in mechanisms that strengthen pandemic preparedness and health systems globally.

ABOUT INTERACTION

InterAction is a convener, thought leader, and voice for NGOs working to eliminate extreme poverty, strengthen human rights and citizen participation, safeguard a sustainable planet, promote peace, and ensure dignity for all people.