



AHBS 1st Webinar series
Partnerships for COVID-19 in Africa

High level VIP roundtable report

Protecting Africa: Lives and Economies During COVID-19

15th July 2020



This roundtable is brought to you by Africa Health Business (AHB)

AHB is a pan-African advisory, consulting and investment firm that focuses on innovative partnerships to transform health in Africa. AHB promotes the growth of the private health sector in Africa to generate affordable, accessible, and quality healthcare for all.



Moderator

Amit N. Thakker

Executive Chairman, Africa Health Business

AHB is proud to have converted their annual in-person event that fosters public-private partnerships (PPP) into a webinar format. The intention is to create strong partnerships to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. There are so many variables, and it's difficult to predict outcomes, but protecting lives and mitigating negative impacts on the continent is a priority for every government, ministries of health, global health leaders, and health institutions. At this roundtable session we are proud to host partners from both public and private sectors to provide information on how we can be united in combatting our common enemy, COVID-19.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Saving Lives



John Nkengasong

Director, Africa CDC

Humanity is faced with an unprecedented health crisis and that requires unprecedented solutions as well as unprecedented solidarity. As an overview of where we are as a continent, we currently have over 620,000 cases of COVID-19 recorded, and numbers are increasing steadily across Africa's five geographic

regions, including 14,000 new cases as of July 14, 2020.

However, almost half of the continent's numbers are coming from South Africa. If you analyse all AU member states:

- 37 countries are still recording less than 5,000 cases
- 7 countries have infection rates that range from about 5,000 to 10,000 cases
- 10 countries have more than 10,000 cases

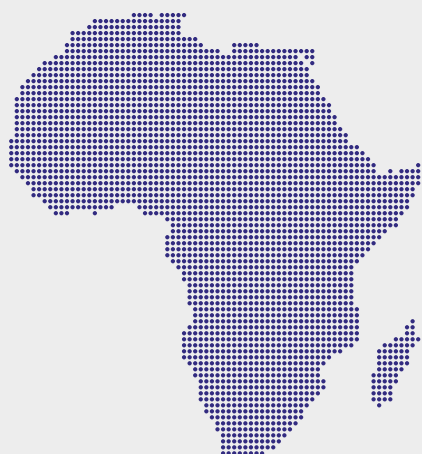
We still have a unique opportunity to save lives. If we do the right things urgently, boldly, and aggressively, we can blunt the spread of this virus. The continent is not doomed, but the window of opportunity will narrow.

As of today, 6.2 million tests have been conducted across the continent, with a test per case ratio of 10 and a positivity rate of 10.1%. This is not enough testing, but shows significant progress. We should aim to conduct 10-12 million tests based on the continent's population.

Leaders know we are living through a 'VUCA' moment - volatile, uncertain, confusing, ambiguous. No one knows all the answers regarding this very new virus, but we do know that we must do the following:

- Increase our testing as much as possible (test)
- Back that up with contact tracing (trace)
- Make provisions for case management (treat)

Until we have a vaccine, the test-trace-treat strategy is the best tool we have. Additionally, we cannot be spectators when it comes to the search for vaccines. We should be active in the process so that the development, access, distribution, and uptake efforts are comprehensive and start now. With this in mind, the AU has launched the Consortium for COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Trial (CONCVACT).



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Event Partners



PHARMACCESSGROUP



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Mitigating COVID-19 Impact

Peter Sands,

*Executive Director, Global Fund to Fight AIDS,
Tuberculosis and Malaria*



We face a huge challenge that requires all elements of society to mobilize in response, not just the health-related agencies and ministries, but civil society, private sector, and beyond.

To have any possibility of containing the pandemic, the first step is understanding who has been affected, which means we need to do as much testing as possible. Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 will require implementing a containment strategy based on a massive scale-up of testing across the continent.

Success, however, cannot be measured solely in terms of mitigating the number of deaths per positive cases. The knock-on impact of COVID-19 on other aspects of health (including TB, AIDS, and malaria, as well as maternal health, immunization rates, and so on) could result in the progress and gains of the past decade being washed away, potentially surpassing the direct negative impact of the COVID-19 virus itself.

Key to keeping this from happening is protecting health systems, especially our health workers. If Africa starts losing more of its health workers

(and there are too few already), then the system will struggle to serve the population and will have an impact on all areas of health. There is a great need for training and PPE (ensuring it is distributed, deployed, and disposed of effectively).

Global Fund has responded to this crisis by opening up funding to help governments address the pandemic. But what has already been done from governments and health organization is still not nearly enough. Together everyone needs to raise their game, and at pace. Global Fund just published a report stating that \$28.5 billion is required in the next 6 months for medical and clinical responses, and estimated that less than half of that has been mobilised thus far.

The broader business community needs to be involved both in advocacy and speed of action. We are not going to solve this by responding only to the economic and social consequences. We have to solve the underlying health problems.

Open Forum 1

Githinji Gitahi

Amref Health Kenya

Imagine if any government waited until there was a war before they start training soldiers and buying armor. This is the challenge that the health sector in Africa has faced — we waited for the pandemic to come, now we are building around it. For us to overcome this challenge, we need to build resilient health systems that leverage on all assets.

What has been lacking most throughout this pandemic is trust capital — it's free, but we have failed to build it. Trust capital is built on networks and mutuality, and creates an atmosphere of teamwork and transparency. In order to succeed in building trust capital, we need the reliability of all partners and trustworthiness of government.



Marie-Ange Yao

GAVI

It is said that if you want peace, you prepare for war. It is essential that Africa begins to build vaccine development capacity. GAVI, alongside partners, are working to incentivise and accelerate the development of vaccines. They are hoping for 1 billion doses for low- and middle-income countries by the end of 2021. This is an extraordinary, unprecedented effort that needs to be tackled in partnership. Seeking a vaccine for COVID-19 will not only address the pandemic itself, but will also accelerate the ability to develop vaccines for many other diseases. GAVI is implementing innovative financing mechanisms to incentivise manufacturing and reserve doses of the vaccine for the continent.

Manthabiseng Phohleli

Government of Lesotho

Lesotho has conducted 6,000 tests and has had 256 positive cases. The biggest challenge has been PPE for health providers. The government has established a command center for a multinational approach so that others can bring in expertise, funding, and so on. The economy has been hit hard, with significant job losses.



Siddarth Chatterjee

United Nations

"When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied."

— Herophilus, Greek philosopher

This is the motivation that inspires the UN country team in Kenya to respond not just to the pandemic, but to look at the entire post-COVID horizon. In March, the UN country team redeployed around \$45 million as a public health response in support of the government. By April, Kenya was the first country in Africa to launch a program that addressed both health and social protections. They have also developed a socio-economic recovery plan with the Government of Kenya.

Clearly, the new landscape of health will be PPP and multilateralism where health is premium.

Hon. Wilhelmina Jallah

Minister of Health Liberia

Liberia has conducted around 10,300 tests and has about 1,056 active cases. It has been very challenging because a balance between the economic situation and the health situation is required. After a lockdown, the government was forced to lift it for economic reasons, as most people have to go out daily in order to support their families.

Education is necessary, as there are still people who don't believe that the virus exists, while others are finding it difficult to wear masks due to accessibility, although the government of Liberia is working to supply everyone with masks. If people follow health protocols, going out and working will be less damaging.

The government is working with community structures, and local mechanisms for communication to encourage people to follow health protocols. They are also working with health workers to prepare them for the work they're continuing to do. As the continent looks forward to getting a vaccine, in the mean time we need to learn how to live with this virus

Francisco Songane

Africa Public Health Foundation

The APHF was created last year at the World Economic Forum, Africa chapter, with the purpose of raising resources for the activities of the Africa CDC. They've set short-term strategic objectives related to the health emergency prevention, planning and response, human resources for health, and the national public health institutes. Their role is to mobilize resources and forge partnerships to fund the programs of Africa CDC.

This is done within the context of reinforcing health systems, and working with partners already in the field. As they carry out their work, they are aware that attention cannot only be focusing on COVID-19, as other diseases still need to be addressed. Flexible and speed in mobilizing resources is necessary.



Ademola Olajide

United Nations Population Fund

The health impact of the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated existing inequalities, as different demographics have been affected differently and national responses have paid less attention to more vulnerable groups. Along with direct impacts from the virus, shadow pandemics have emerged, with increases in gender-based violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation, and so on. A health crisis can easily morph into a socio-economic crisis, then into a security crisis, and can affect every sector. Therefore, we cannot continue to manage health in a vertical manner where only ministers of health care about health systems. We must democratize the process of responding to health, with every individual and every sector taking responsibility.

Muhammad Gad

Ministry of Health, Egypt

Egypt has recorded 83,930 cases, with around 929 cases per day. At the peak, there were around 1,600 cases per day, so the curve is now declining. They have a program for screening all contacts of positive cases and have a regional approach for isolation and ambulatory services. More than 30 percent of all infected cases have recovered as of this week, which is a positive sign. They have worked to use their resources efficiently to address both the core challenge of the pandemic as well as related challenges.



Danny Thomas Louange

Ministry of Health, Seychelles

Seychelles is a very small country of around 96,000 people and our main economic pillar is tourism, which is high risk right now. We have taken the pandemic very seriously, collaborating closely with WHO to protect our population, especially the most vulnerable. We have had 100 confirmed cases, and currently have only 60 active cases. The last new positive case was about 10 days ago. We are also focusing on risk communication, community engagement, and continuity of care. We still have a lot to do, but strong collaboration between the government and WHO has worked for us.



Zola Mtshiya

Africa Healthcare Federation

The public and private sectors need to collaborate to sustain the industry. The impact has been huge and hospitals have been struggling with the decline in occupancy, but currently private patients are finding it difficult to gain access to hospital beds. COVID has exposed cracks that already existed — now is the time to repair those cracks.

Anna Gerrard

The Palladium Group

A response that involves the whole of society is needed to overcome this pandemic. The private sector can complement the government-led responses. This does not always directly relate to health services, but can be done through efforts such as shoring up value chains. Governments that had previously prioritized private sector engagement were set up well to coordinate effectively and quickly in this crisis. Liberia is a good example of this.



Alexander Abban

Ministry of Health, Ghana

Ghana's focus has been to protect lives and protect livelihoods. During lockdown, the poorest of the population were being killed by hunger, so a balance between the two is necessary. 35,000 have tested positive and the numbers keep rising. This pandemic has exposed the weaknesses in health facilities' capacities and capabilities. On the global level, different countries are going in different directions. We need the WHO to lead the way, give decisive instructions, and all should follow those instructions.

Event Partners



Anne Katherine Wales

*Senior Philanthropy Portfolio Lead,
Medtronic Foundation*

Medtronic Foundation works to improve health for underserved populations, supporting health workers, and strengthening health systems. In this current context, they are interested in seeing how they can stay connected and learn together how to adapt delivery models with inclusive digital technologies, as well as continue to address other health crises that could easily be overlooked during this time.



Marc Mathews

*Business Development Director Africa,
LumiraDx*

lumiraDX provides a critical technology enabler when it comes to scaling up testing, especially to increase access and reduce turnaround times. They are developing a test that can go into remote environments and has a turnaround time of 10 minutes. They have also developed an antigen test and antibody test. All of this, together with connectivity, can then compile valuable data to inform health strategy and decision making.



Ada Mwangola

*Ag Director General & Director, Social Pillars
Kenya Vision 2030*

Kenya Vision 2020 is a government institution coordinating and spearheading Kenya's development blueprint. When it was crafted in 2008, they envisioned that 70% of its implementation would come from the private sector, so partnership with private sector is essential to achieving Kenya's goals. In the health sector, the goal is to provide quality affordable healthcare to the whole population. They are also partnering with the private sector to make Kenya the preferred healthcare destination for East Africa.

Ernest Darkoh

*Founding Partner
BroadReach*

Over the past 17 years, BroadReach has developed a technology app supporting HIV and TB work. This has now been adapted to support COVID-19 for community health workers to use. The app is on a mobile device and can help identify who needs to be tested, track those tests, and then track potential clusters in real time. It also assesses facility readiness for those located near possible or confirmed clusters of positive cases. The app also monitors the wellbeing of health workers, asking them questions each morning and tracking how they're doing and if they need support.

Currently, community health workers are able to conduct screenings, but not conduct the actual test. This is an example of a policy obstacle that is hindering the process. Procurement processes are also taking too long and need to be improved.





Karim Bendhaou
Head of Africa Bureau
 Merck

As we look for a vaccine, we need to address two main issues: (1) equal access to the vaccine when it is ready and (2) improvement of supply chains. COVID-19 restrictions have highlighted previously existing problems with supply chain (for example, cargo being shipped only on passenger planes).



Nireesh Bechan
General Manager
 LenMed

South Africa has reached close to 300,000 cases and hospitals have been overwhelmed with the increased need for space, equipment, etc. The key to success is effective planning. LenMed is a group of private hospitals in South Africa, Mozambique, and Botswana with close to 2,000 beds. They took a proactive approach, making tough decisions around resources, patient care, and mental health.

“Tomorrow belongs to those who prepare today.”

-African proverb



Jyoti Tewari
Senior Human Development Adviser
 UNFPA

In many settings, we are already experiencing significant disruption in essential health services, including family planning, maternal health, and gender-based violence services. All the early estimates are saying that if financing and delivery of essential health services are not ensured, maternal mortality in South Africa will increase by 8% this year alone, which will be a reverse of three years of progress. The private sector working with public sector could play an important role in ensuring the continuity of essential health services.

We are experiencing significant equity concerns when it comes to the availability of testing and treatment. This might worsen when the vaccine becomes available. Should testing, treatment, and vaccine be available to only those who can pay? We need to come together and begin a discussion around this issue and to make testing, treatment, and the vaccine available to all.



Monique Dolfing-Vogelenzang
 CEO
 PharmAccess Group

PharmAccess has had a two-pronged approach: (1) direct response to COVID-19 and (2) making sure essential health services are preserved. They have provided emergency loan and cashflow support to private providers while they see less patients, and helped clinics prepare and establish a digital health assessment tool. Africa also needs to start preparing for the next pandemic. There is a huge opportunity to build data-driven, resilient systems based on mobile technology and telecommunications.

“Tomorrow belongs to those who prepare today.”

-African proverb



Elena Konzourova-Graeff

Business Development Manager, AXA

COVID-19 underlines the need to strengthen health systems. The desire for UHC is strong, but implementation is a challenge. PPP can bring efficiency and raise capacity. AXA is cooperating with several governments as an insurer and re-insurer, participating throughout the entire value chain to structure healthcare to make it affordable for the most vulnerable. AXA hopes that COVID-19 won't be an additional impediment to further public investment in health.



Mervyn George

Innovation Strategy Lead for Africa, SAP

SAP is a global tech business with 47 years of experience in enterprise systems, helping organizations build an intelligent enterprise strategy and work smarter, more efficiently, while leveraging technology in a positive way. In the healthcare context, this means having fast response times, better access to healthcare, improved patient experience, centralizing demand and supply, staff wellbeing, etc. During the pandemic they have been helping businesses become more resilient, profitable, and sustainable. This will help address the current crisis, but also form a strong base for future growth.



Furhat Peerun

Territory Manager, Sub-Saharan Africa, Public Sector, Amazon Web Services

Amazon Web Services is a technology enabler. During this pandemic, they have partnered with the Government of Kenya to set up contact tracing and self-reporting technology that will help reduce infection rates. In the private sector, they are partnering with healthcare providers on a telemedicine platform and a learning platform to provide virtual learning to nursing staff. This provides what both patients and health workers need, while minimizing the need for physical contact.



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Open Forum 2

David Clarke

WHO

The tragedy of COVID-19 represents an important opportunity to strengthen PPP. The pandemic has highlighted gaps, so the WHO has been working on a structure for engaging with the private sector as part of efforts toward UHC, as well as addressing COVID-19. Africa cannot just rely on the public system. The WHO is trying to understand the lessons that we can learn and what needs to be done for long-term strengthening.



Thokozile Ruzvidzo

UNECA

While COVID-19 has exposed health vulnerabilities, the AfCTA offers opportunities for the implementation of a single medical market with localized production, pulled procurement, and quality assurance. Africa needs to produce internally, and the private sector is critical to this. The continent imports over 95% of its demand for pharmaceuticals. The capacity exists for Africa to produce for itself, there are only issues regarding intellectual property rights.

The digital revolution has provided monitoring and delivery tools. The Africa Communication and Information Platform (ACIP) is a PPP that has been developed for health and economic action to service communication between citizens and government, bringing together major mobile network operators and the AU to support each country's COVID-19 task force. This provides live data that can inform decision making.



Bernard Haufiku

Advisor to the President of Namibia

Partnership, preparedness, and protection of lives and livelihoods are the three most important factors during this pandemic. We need to strengthen African public health institutions. Without them, the next pandemic will find us unprepared. Trust capital is essential to build up in this process. We have experienced terrible things because some people have lost trust, which can have more devastating results than anything else. Whatever we do, we need to include people at the community level.

Toda Takao

Vice President, JICA (via video clip)

Another pandemic will surely come in the near future and no one knows exactly what will be. The best ways to address unknown enemies is (1) resilient health systems and (2) knowledge-based preventive approaches. This is versatile and effective against any diseases and can be carried out in the poorest contexts. It's only a question of willingness. Japan is committed to supporting Africa to work toward protecting the next generation.

"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

-African proverb



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