

BACKGROUND

It is now two years since COVID-19 hit the world - disrupting the lives of people in every country, claiming millions of lives and causing economic havoc. And - as Omicron has shown - this pandemic still isn't over for any of us. And until it is, we are all stuck in an endless loop of pandemic restrictions, quarantine, struggling businesses, closed schools...

Leaders have promised that 2022 will be the year we finally end this crisis everywhere. But this can only be achieved if they match words with real action and put an end to the vaccine apartheid that defined the global response to the pandemic in 2021.

Governments must face the truth that the only effective national plan to end the pandemic is a global plan to end the pandemic.

ONE's Pandemic Report Cards track how the world's most developed economies are delivering on their promises to end the pandemic and help economies recover based on the following metrics:

- Fund the global response
- Dismantle barriers to global supply
- Share SDRs

WHAT WE'RE SEEING THIS MONTH

The following trends emerging from ONE's [Pandemic Report Cards](#) show which world leaders are rising to the challenge and which are conceding the fight against COVID-19.

1. **EU-AU Summit**, where leaders from the European Union and African Union gathered for the sixth EU-AU summit in Brussels on 17 and 18 February 2022 is a mixed bag. On one hand, the EU committed €100m to support the African Medicines Agency over 5 years and €500 million from the European Investment Bank to strengthen health systems. The EU reiterated their commitment to provide at least 450 million doses to Africa, in coordination with AVATT, by mid 2022, and announced that they will mobilize [€425 million](#) (€225 million from the European Commission) to increase the pace of vaccination and coordinate with Africa CDC to support efficient distribution of doses, training of medical staff, and capacity of analysis and sequencing.

Ahead of the Summit, African leaders were clear on the need for advanced economies to meet their promise to recycle \$100 billion in SDRs to support economic recovery on the continent but the Summit saw no new commitments announced.

The [Africa-Europe Investment Package](#), part of the EU's €300 billion Global Gateway, was also announced during the Summit. The Investment Package of investments worth at least €150 billion will support the AU Agenda 2063 and aims to help build more diversified, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient economies alongside specific packages to support health and education systems.

On the other hand, the [EU ignores African leaders' calls to action and dodges difficult decisions](#) on waiving vaccine IP patents. Ahead of the Summit, African leaders were also clear on the need for advanced economies to meet their promise to recycle \$100 billion in SDRs to support economic recovery on the continent but the Summit saw no new commitments announced.

2. The [ACT-A Financing Framework](#) was released on 9 February with an overall grant financing ask from donors of US \$16.8 billion. COVAX AMC, a key part of the Vaccines pillar of ACT-A, also released their [investment opportunity](#) for 2022, calling for approximately \$5.2 billion as part of the \$16.8 billion for ACT-A to help procure vaccinations for participating countries. These figures only account for a portion of the financing needed to fund the global response to the pandemic. At least \$52 billion is needed to fund the global response to the pandemic.

Grant financing by donor countries accounts for at least US \$27.7 billion, or 53%, of this \$52 billion. An additional US \$24 billion in complementary financing, including bilateral grants and support from IFIs and MDBs, is needed alongside donor contribution. Country shares are determined based on the ACT-Accelerator Financing Framework, with an additional US \$6.8 billion included to help deliver essential COVID-19 tools such as vaccines. Governments must act quickly to fill the gap. G20 countries have committed US \$0.56 billion to date.

3. Over the last month, some progress has been made towards increasing regional manufacturing capacity of COVID-19 vaccines in Africa. African manufacturers, entrepreneurs and regional as well as multilateral institutions have worked together, yielding some notable achievements, such as:

- **Own mRNA vaccine.** South Africa's Afrigen Biologics' announced in early February that it had [successfully made its own version of Moderna's mRNA COVID-19](#) vaccine using the publicly available sequence of the vaccine. It is now the first mRNA vaccine to be designed, developed, and produced at lab scale in Africa. Afrigen, a member of the WHO tech transfer hub, expects the vaccine could be tested in humans before the end of this year.
- **End-to-end manufacturing.** South African-born, US biotech billionaire Patrick Soon-Shiong announced in late January the launch of NantSA, which opened its first vaccine manufacturing campus in South Africa. It is the [first facility](#) to provide end-to-end manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines on the continent.
- **Adequate ecosystem through legitimate institutions.** The AU and CDC Africa continue efforts to bolster the legitimacy of bodies such as the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA), the Africa Medical Supply Platform (AMSP) and the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) to ensure that regulatory, logistical, and procurement-related barriers are overcome, enabling feasible and sustained scaling up of vaccine and medicine manufacturing.
- **Brought together relevant stakeholders.** The Ports to Arms Initiative in Abuja between 22nd and 24th February is currently bringing together African heads of states, health and finance ministers, manufacturers, CSOs, directors from the WHO, World Bank and the GFF and potentially pharmaceutical representatives. The two-day session seeks to address equity, delivery and manufacturing, relating to not just vaccines, but also therapeutics, and diagnostics. It aims to look at the pandemic's aftershocks, affecting vulnerable populations, including women. Bringing together these broad range of stakeholders to address the whole landscape of the pandemic shows the Continent's understanding that this global pandemic needs a global solution that incorporates public, private and civic society across the local, regional and international spectrum.

These developments reinforce Dr John Ngengasong's point that Africa can solve its own problems, if enabled. To be enabled, it calls for support from the G7 and EU for tech transfer, knowledge sharing and TRIPS waiver. It further requests more support for the operationalization of its agencies, such as the AMA, AMSP and AVATT. While the announcements at the EU-AU Summit show positive signs that Europeans are listening to African leaders demands, some barriers still exist:

- **Unnecessary filing of patents.** Afrigen has already agreed to help train companies in Argentina and Brazil on its own version of Moderna's mRNA vaccine shot. Meanwhile, Moderna, which has previously stated that it would not enforce patents on its vaccine for the duration of the pandemic, has reneged on this promise. It says the company can decide when it views the pandemic as 'over,' and is not bound to wait for WHO to declare that COVID-19 has become endemic before enforcing patents. The company [has recently filed several patents](#) with broad claims in South Africa, prompting concern over the future of vaccine manufacturing in Africa.
- **Mobile units not enough?** Much hope was placed in BioNTech's planned manufacturing projects in Senegal, Rwanda and Ghana. Before the official announcement, several sources hinted at potential fill-and-finish capacity alongside plans to build full production sites in parallel. BioNTech's COO, Sierk Poetting seemed to suggest as much [during a panel discussion](#). Instead, on 16 February, BioNTech unveiled their [mobile vaccine production units](#). The factories, housed in shipping containers, are intended to be deployed for use across Africa and other regions with limited access to supplies. The first units are intended to be used in Senegal and Rwanda and are expected to produce 50 million doses a year. The factories will not be shipped [until the second half of 2022](#), and then, will undergo a process of testing and regulatory authorization that could take more than a year. The initiative is also [under criticism](#) as it could undermine the WHO tech transfer hub's efforts to help produce mRNA vaccines in Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The EU should ensure it follows through on its financial and technical commitments made at the EU-AU Summit to ensure that the necessary investment and transfer of know-how helps accelerate local production of vaccines and essential medicines.
2. The economic crisis is deepening, particularly for many countries in Africa, and the time for action is now - countries need to make commitments now to recycle their unused SDRs, meeting at least the \$100 billion target they set themselves.
3. Governments must act quickly to fund the global response to the pandemic in the first quarter of 2022 to help procure and provide essential COVID-19 tools and services.
4. All G7 countries should support temporary waiver of COVID-19 intellectual property, with specific limitations on scope, applicability and duration. This would help accelerate scaling up manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines and tools; improve affordability through increased generic production of therapeutics; and allow for a global solution through cross-country collaboration

See how each country stacks up & detailed analysis at [ONE's Pandemic Response Report Cards](#)