

**EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>**

**TIME: 3.15PM EAT, 8.15AM ET, 2.15PM CAT, 1.15PM WAT**

## **MASTERCARD FOUNDATION TO DEPLOY \$1.3 BILLION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA CDC TO SAVE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – June 8, 2021** – The Mastercard Foundation has announced that it will deploy \$1.3 billion over the next three years in partnership with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) to save the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in Africa and hasten the economic recovery of the continent.

The *Saving Lives and Livelihoods* initiative will acquire vaccines for at least 50 million people, support the delivery of vaccinations to millions more across the continent, lay the groundwork for vaccine manufacturing in Africa through a focus on human capital development, and strengthen the Africa CDC.

“Ensuring equitable access and delivery of vaccines across Africa is urgent. This initiative is about valuing all lives and accelerating the economic recovery of the continent,” said Reeta Roy, President and CEO of the Mastercard Foundation. “In the process, this initiative will catalyze work opportunities in the health sector and beyond as part of our Young Africa Works strategy,” she added.

The African Union’s goal as set out in the African COVID-19 Vaccine Development and Access Strategy is to vaccinate at least 60 percent of its population – approximately 750 million people or the entire adult population of the continent – by the end of 2022. To date, less than two percent of Africans have received at least one vaccine dose.

The new partnership builds on the efforts of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access facility (COVAX), the COVID-19 African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT), and the global community to expand access to vaccines across Africa. The number of vaccines available to Africa represents a small portion of the global supply and the financial costs to purchase, deliver, and administer vaccines remain significant. The Africa CDC is calling on governments, global funders, the private sector, and others to help meet this goal.

“Ensuring inclusivity in vaccine access, and building Africa’s capacity to manufacture its own vaccines, is not just good for the continent, it’s the only sustainable path out of the pandemic and into a health-secure future,” said Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of the Africa CDC. “This partnership with the Mastercard Foundation is a bold step towards establishing a New Public Health Order for Africa, and we welcome other actors to join this historic journey.”



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In 2020, Africa faced its first economic recession in 25 years due to the pandemic. The African Development Bank has warned that COVID-19 could reverse hard-won gains in poverty reduction over the past two decades and drive 39 million people into extreme poverty in 2021. Widespread vaccination is recognized as being critical to the economic recovery of African countries. The initiative builds on an earlier collaboration between the Mastercard Foundation and the Africa CDC to expand access to testing kits and enhance surveillance capacity in Africa. Through the Foundation's support, the Africa CDC's Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT) deployed nearly two million COVID-19 tests and more than 12,000 trained health care workers and rapid responders across Africa. In total, the PACT has enabled over 47 million COVID-19 tests across the continent.

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### **About the Mastercard Foundation**

The Mastercard Foundation is a Canadian foundation and one of the largest in the world with more than \$39 billion in assets. The Foundation was created in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company. Since its inception, the Foundation has operated independently of the company. The Foundation's policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by its Board. For more information on the Foundation, please visit: [www.mastercardfdn.org](http://www.mastercardfdn.org)

### **About Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)**

Africa CDC is a specialized technical institution of the African Union that strengthens the capacity and capability of Africa's public health institutions as well as partnerships to detect and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats and outbreaks, based on data-driven interventions and programs. For more information, please visit: <http://www.africacdc.org>