

From: Nicola Fozzard [mailto:Nicola.Fozzard@gatesfoundation.org]
Sent: Friday, 12 June 2020 8:47 PM
To: WHITE, Daniel (PHM)
Subject: RE: Meeting with Andrew Mace to discuss Prime Minister Ardern call

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From: Andrew Mace [mailto:Andrew.Mace@gatesfoundation.org]
Sent: Thursday, 16 July 2020 7:16 PM
To: Simone.Gordon@parliament.govt.nz
Cc: WHITE, Daniel (PHM)
Subject: Letter from Melinda Gates

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Melinda Gates, Co-Chair, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



Melinda Gates sets the overall direction for the Gates Foundation. It has provided US\$50.1 billion in grants since it was founded in 2000 focusing on extreme poverty and poor health in developing countries. It has played an influential role in global health over the last two decades. This includes playing a role in the founding of CEPI (the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) and Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance), which lead global efforts to develop and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine.

You met Melinda Gates in 2019 when you spoke at the Gates Foundation's UN General Assembly side event "Goalkeepers" (on the Sustainable Development Goals). This teleconference is at the request of Gates to discuss:

- The global response to COVID-19, in particular research on, and distribution of, diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics; and
- The impact of COVID-19 on women (Gates is preparing a paper on this topic to create international awareness, and may seek your public support for her efforts).

Objectives

- Underline New Zealand's interest in working with the Gates Foundation to advocate globally for the equitable distribution of a future COVID-19 vaccine.
- Register with a key global health player the unique challenges COVID-19 poses for Pacific Island Countries, including Pacific women and girls.

Talking Points

- Commend the Gates Foundation for its **leadership on global health** over the last two decades including financial support for the WHO (it is the second largest donor). The key role it played in founding CEPI and Gavi has proved prescient and ensured there is an international platform to respond to COVID-19.
- Register that New Zealand has announced it will support both these organisations as part of our **\$37 million contribution** to the ACT Accelerator. This includes expertise from our high performing research, science and innovation sector to global efforts to develop a vaccine.
- Seek Gates's view on the prospects for the successful **development of a COVID-19** vaccine. Her insight would be valuable to better understand the challenges and opportunities. How can a small country like New Zealand best make a difference?
- Underline the importance New Zealand attaches to **equitable distribution** of a COVID-19 vaccine. New Zealand sees a COVID-19 vaccine as a global public health good. New Zealand therefore strongly supports the WHO's efforts to develop a set of global access principles, a global allocation framework and an allocation mechanism.
- Note early signs of countries pursuing **individual or bloc purchasing** agreements. Seek Gates's views on the likelihood of a global pooled mechanism such as the COVAX Facility succeeding, s9(2)(g)(i)

- Suggest that **further discussions** take place between the Gates Foundation and New Zealand officials to explore how we might work together to advance our shared interest in equitable access to a COVID-19 vaccine. New Zealand and the Gates Foundation have complementary levers.
- Register our concern about **access to a vaccine for Pacific Island Countries** and welcome Gates' view on this issue. While COVID-19 is not widespread in the region, it faces real challenges that include:
 - Vulnerable populations due to high-rates of relevant underlying conditions and limited access to healthcare because of their geographic isolation and small populations;
 - s6(a)
 - Some of the highest economic impacts due to their reliance on tourism and remittances from seasonal workers.
- Note that New Zealand is worried about the **secondary impacts of the COVID-19** crisis, including the economic, social and educational impact on women and girls. New Zealand is "pivoting" our Aid Programme to respond to COVID-19. How the Gates Foundation will respond is of interest.
- Note **Pacific women are disproportionately and differentially impacted** by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pacific countries are reporting increases in the rates of violence against women and girls, shrinking access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, and unequal harm to women and girls' livelihoods.
- [If required] **Domestically** we provided \$12 million for family violence social service providers so they could continue to operate to provide housing, food and shelter during lockdown restrictions. The Government also established a \$1 million community fund to support organisations that support women and girls.

Background

Global Efforts towards a COVID-19 Vaccine

A COVID-19 vaccine will provide the fastest avenue to global public health and economic recovery. Global efforts to develop a vaccine are moving at pace. In May the ACT Accelerator was formed to bring together donors and other actors to accelerate the development, production and distribution of new COVID-19 technologies. The vaccine workstream is being led by:

- CEPI, a partnership between public, private, philanthropic, and civil organisations to accelerate the development of vaccines as global public goods; and
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, a public-private partnership that increases access to vaccines in low income countries.

2 These efforts have been well-supported. An EU-led pledging event for organisations partaking in the ACT Accelerator raised €9.8 billion, while a UK-hosted "Vaccine Summit" seeking pledges for Gavi raised US\$8.8 billion. Both outcomes were significantly above target. Many leaders, including you, spoke at these events about the importance of equitable access to a COVID-19 vaccine as a global good. This is reflected in World Health Assembly (WHA) and UN General Assembly resolutions.

Equitable Access and Distribution

4 Despite global collaboration the market for an eventual vaccine is likely to be highly competitive. It is likely that vaccine manufacturers will not, at least initially, be able to produce at a scale to meet global demand, s6(a)

In this environment, gaining access may be challenging both for New Zealand and for Pacific Island Countries. In this context, the WHO is aiming to develop overarching global access principles, a global allocation framework and mechanism to determine allocation. All three remain works in progress, and it is as yet unclear what the process will be for ensuring buy-in of the WHO's member states.

5 The COVAX Facility was recently launched by Gavi with the intent of pooling global demand and resources to support procurement of COVID-19 vaccines. It is intended to provide a mechanism by which all countries can share risk by contributing funding to support the development of a basket of vaccines, hedging against the possibility that any one vaccine candidate will fail. New Zealand is interested both as a mechanism for our own procurement and to help supply the Pacific, s6(a)

6 s6(a)

New Zealand Contribution

7 An All-of-Government National Vaccine Strategy was approved by Cabinet with the objective of ensuring access to a safe and effective vaccine for New Zealand and Pacific Island Countries at the earliest possible time. As part of this strategy \$30 million will support the development of a vaccine. \$15m of this will be provided directly to CEPI, with a further \$15m to support aligned domestic research and development and support for manufacturing. A further \$7 million was pledged to Gavi to support the distribution of an eventual vaccine to developing countries. You announced these contributions as New Zealand's overall contribution to the ACT Accelerator in video conferences.

Gates Foundation Relevance to New Zealand's Vaccine Strategy

8 s6(a)

Of note is that the Gates Foundation sits on the Gavi Board and the CEPI Investor Council. We would be particularly interested in investigating whether cooperation with the Gates Foundation could advance our mutual interests on equitable access to and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine.

New Zealand Response the Impact of COVID-19 on Women

9 Government agencies continue to assess the impact of Covid-19 on women in New Zealand and work towards gender mainstreaming in all aspects of COVID-19 response and recovery. At this stage, three key risks have been identified for New Zealand: an increased risk of family violence; women's unpaid labour burdens are likely to increase; and women are more exposed to labour market downturns.

10 New Zealand continues to advocate for governments to adopt a gender inclusive approach to Covid-19 response and recovery. For example, in April 2020, New Zealand alongside ^{s6(a)} coordinated a joint-statement welcoming the UN Secretary-General's call to member states to address the rise in gender-based and domestic violence alongside the spread of COVID-19 and committed States to ensuring prevention and redress a part of the national and global responses to COVID-19. 145 Member States have signed onto the statement.

11 In late May, women leaders from across the Pacific met virtually to discuss the differential and disproportionate impact the COVID-19 pandemic was having on Pacific women and girls. Attendees were concerned about the risk and higher health burden on women of COVID-19 given the high number of Pacific women involved in frontline health and family care. New Zealand is continuing to support sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services in the Pacific, and addressing gender-based violence in the region, and is working with Pacific governments and development partners to encourage measures that target income support and job creation to be responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups, including women and girls.

*Partnerships, Humanitarian and Multilateral
Covid Policy and Coordination Division
June 2020*

Meeting between the Prime Minister and Melinda Gates, Co-Chair Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

8:05am Wednesday 17 June

Context

This teleconference was at the request of Gates to discuss:

- The global response to COVID-19, in particular research on, and distribution of, diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics; and
- The impact of COVID-19 on women (Gates is preparing a paper on this topic to create international awareness).

Summary

The key message from Gates was that this issue is difficult; we need you to speak up in support of a collective approach to vaccines. PM Ardern said she'd be happy to assist.

Report

- Gates said the US, and the world, saw New Zealand's response and PM Ardern's leadership as "an exemplar"
- PM Ardern said the key challenge – particularly after New Zealand's news yesterday [in reference to two new cases] – was that this was going to be a long journey.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Against that background, new treatments or vaccines were going to be essential to getting back to normal life. New Zealand saw itself as a gateway to the Pacific, and treatments or vaccines would be essential to them as well.

- Gates welcomed NZ's [\$7m] contribution to GAVI – it was an important sign of leadership s6(b)
- PM Ardern agreed, saying that as a small country with even smaller countries as neighbours, NZ understood the challenges in situations where it became a competition s6(a)
- PM Ardern noted that Pacific Island Countries were particularly focussed on tourism, but were vulnerable from a health perspective (here she cited Samoa's measles epidemic as a key example) – hence NZ was very interested in the COVAX pooled facility s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
- Gates said COVAX had taken \$2b of the GAVI replenishment pledged on 4 June – but they would need more. s6(b)

• s6(b)

• s6(b)

s6(b)

- PM Ardern offered the view that everyone would be better off if there was technology transfer and a pooled facility. The PM noted that it would just make it a different conversation: instead of a country asking a company "how much can you make", COVAX would be asking on behalf of all countries "how can we all manufacture this vaccine so we can spread it far and wide"?
- s6(b)

- PM Ardern asked whether a 12-18 month timeframe to a vaccine was optimistic.
- Gates confirmed that it was: the candidates would be into phase 3 trials maybe by the end of this year; if they went into manufacturing "super quick" then maybe in Q1 of next year there might be some vaccines available [NB: it was unclear whether Gates meant for full distribution, or further human trials]. s6(b)

- PM Ardern noted that even last night's news of a potential new treatment [regarding the UK trials of dexamethasone] was not that positive, since it was for patients already ill enough to be on a ventilator.

s6(b), s9(2)(ba)