



PROGRESS OF AFRICA CDC
**TRUSTED TRAVEL PLATFORM
AND UNVEILING** OF THE
TRUSTED HEALTH PARADIGM
WITHIN THE AFRICAN UNION'S 4D AGENDA

REPORT ON THE VIRTUAL JOINT MEETING OF AFRICAN
MINISTERS OF HEALTH, ICT AND TRANSPORT

28 OCTOBER 2021

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic in Africa continues to occur in waves with some countries already experiencing third and fourth waves. Whilst a recovery of sorts is underway, it requires concerted regional efforts to be sustained. The continued socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic vindicate the decision by the African Union Commission through the Africa CDC to launch Africa against COVID-19 campaign: saving lives, economies and livelihoods Campaign in August 2020. This campaign has three main objectives: (1) minimize the spread of infections within and across the borders by creating a public health safe corridor for safe travel; (2) minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on Economies and Livelihoods, and (3) ensure safe re-opening of schools

To support the implementation of objectives of goal 1, The Africa CDC has worked closely in collaboration with other stakeholders such as the World Health Organization (WHO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the private sector to drive the harmonization, standardization, and coordination of entry and exit requirement among the African Union Member States, backed up by the application of technology and digital tools to improve efficiency and outputs. Furthermore, Africa CDC in collaboration with ECONET and PanaBIOS set up digital platforms that led to the establishment of the African Union Trusted Travel (TT) Initiative to assist in the creation of the public health safe corridor for travel. This Initiative has progressed considerably, with the support of the PanaBIOS Consortium, ECONET, and other technical partners, and has been embraced by at least 21 African countries either directly in partnership with the Africa CDC or through their Regional Economic Community (REC). 35 countries also responded favourably to the establishment of the African Union digital laboratory registries, and 49 countries supplied travel restrictions data that form the basis of the XChange mechanism through the Africa CDC Regional Collaborating Centers.

The African Union Commission through Africa CDC and Department of Infrastructure and energy organized a virtual meeting on 28th October 2021 to showcase the progress of Africa CDC Trusted Travel Platform and to unveil the Trusted Health paradigm within the African Union's 4D Agenda.

Overall Objective of the meeting

To showcase the progress of Africa CDC Trusted Travel Platform and to unveil the Trusted Health paradigm within the African Union's 4D Agenda.

Specific objectives

1. Review the progress of Trusted Travel, as well as Trusted Vaccines, to date, with an emphasis on emerging challenges and guiding lessons.
2. Introduce the African Union 4D-animated Trusted Health concept and outline prospects of collaboration, co-innovation, co-creation, and co-ownership.
3. Review and document best practices in the continent's deployment of innovations to counter the effects of the pandemic.

Meeting participants' attendance

The meeting was organized by Africa Union Commission through Africa CDC and the Department of Infrastructure and energy. It was chaired by H.E. Dr. Amani Abdou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC, and Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC. The meeting was attended by a total of (135) participants that include;

- Ministers in charge of Health, Transport, and ICT of African Union Member States
- Government Officials in the Transport, Health, Infrastructure, Science, Technology and ICT sectors in the various African Union Member States
- Department of Infrastructure and energy, AUC
- Africa CDC (HQ and RCCs)
- Technical partners (AFRAA, AFCAC, IATA, ICAO, Airport Council International (ACI)-Africa, and Panabios among others)
- Development partners (UNDP, European Commission – International Partnerships UNECA, African Development Bank)
- Health Innovation Start-ups
- Members of Taskforce on Trusted Travel and Safe re-opening of borders
- Director Generals of African Airlines
- Director Generals Civil Aviation Authority of AU member states

Welcome Speech by H.E. Dr. Amani Abdou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC

- The commissioner welcomed all the present participants, Honourable Ministers in charge of Health, Transport and ICT, Representatives from the respective Ministries of Health, Transport and ICT, Director General of AFCAC, AFRAA, IATA, ICAO, development partners, and all other organizations represented in the meeting.
- Appreciated the work of Africa CDC for the efforts and collaboration to convene this important meeting.
- Emphasised that this is yet another important meeting to keep the momentum of what we started last year, 2020, to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the continent, where the African Union launch a campaign on African Against Covid-19 "Saving Lives and Livelihoods.
- Goal one (1) of this campaign seeks to minimize the spread of infections within and across the borders by creating a public health safe corridor for safe travel.
- The campaign further makes a call for all African countries, and the private sector to work towards harmonization, standardization, and coordination of entry and exit health requirements among the African Union Member States to increase mutual recognition and cross border information exchange, and increased close collaboration between different sectors and stakeholders.
- This has been complemented by various efforts undertaken by different member states and the Regional Economic Communities, RECs.
- Acknowledged the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social development, and Africa CDC for the tremendous work ethic and the efforts made to safeguard Africa's health most particularly since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Following the launch of the African Against Covid-19 "Saving Lives and Livelihoods campaign, a task force was established composed of AUC, Africa CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), African Civil Aviation Commission(AFCAC), International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Airport Council International (ACI), and the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) to serve as an

advisory body for the campaign especially facilitate the harmonization of pre-entry and exit requirements backed up by digital and technology tools.

- The task force was also mandated to outline frameworks for effective harmonization and standardization of the digital travel platforms for travelers' health credentials across borders on the continent to facilitate mobility across the continent and other parts of the world. The guiding norms for such harmonisation and standardisation were the standards and principles established through the African Union Trusted Travel mechanism. It was emphatically agreed that the African Union Trusted Travel program shall establish standards and norms to guide member states on this matter.
- In addition to the African Union Trusted Travel platform, specialised digital health credentialing systems have proliferated worldwide, including many used at member state level. The East African Community has created the EACPass. The West Africa Health Organisation has instituted the BIOMARS platform. Member States like Togo and Kenya have deployed TogoSafe and Chanjo, respectively. Private sector organisations like IATA, IBM and many others have also created passes. The growing proliferation of these systems further reinforced the need for the African Union to provide leadership through the Trusted Travel program for the continent in coming up with clear norms and principles about the whole area of health credentials standardisation and certification.
- The task force also worked on ensuring that health credentialing and certification systems deployed in member states and by a large and growing number of local, regional and international organisations and parties should conform to the Trusted Travel standards for efficient interoperability and seamless travel within and outside Africa.
- The mandate of the Task Force was successfully completed on 10th October 2021, and the Director of Africa CDC expressed the strong appreciation of the African Union to all members for their diligent work.
- Unless we in Africa harmonize our procedures in the continent, we cannot successfully claim proper recovery from the effects of the pandemic and allow the economy to come back to normal
- Also, initiatives such as continental free trade cannot be realized without such harmonization and uniformization of requirements under the aegis of the African Union. The role of the African Union is to provide strong and compelling leadership in such areas.
- The rapid progress in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines offers hope of an end to the worst of the damage caused by the pandemic, as we are still having many challenges to achieve the target of 60% vaccination rate of the African population by end of the year 2022
- The economic and social impacts caused by the pandemic on the continent become more severe and waiting for full vaccination roll out in the continent is not a sustainable option.
- It is important that African countries and RECs, work together to reduce the cost of the PCR testing for travelers to support the recovery of international travel.
- The task force also recommends that AU Member States should consider alternative testing protocol for travel that uses the rapid diagnostic antigen test in situations where PCR testing is not readily available or where result turnaround time is long.
- The African Union Commission urges the Member States to continue to provide timely and accurate updates on health protocols and requirements to continue using the Trusted Travel platform to provide Authentic digital test certificates to facilitate smooth travel across borders
- The AUC further argues the Member States to work towards harmonization of pre-entry and exit requirements to allow mutual recognition and trust in the information shared among the Member States about travelers and close collaboration among the different sectors and stakeholders.
- We have noticed excellent collaboration among the AU Member States to ensure that no one is left behind in the recovery process and we wish this to continue.
- Once again, we have a platform under the AU Trusted Travel that we urge that Member States to effectively and efficiently use and update the travel requirements regularly on this platform.

- The Commissioner thanked all the partners and the Member States for the collaboration and coordination among the different sectors of Health, Transport, and ICT to ensure safe opening borders and the economy.

Speech by H.E. Dr. Moustafa Mijiyiwa, Minister of Health, Republic of Togo and Africa CDC Governing Board Chair

- The Honorable Minister welcomed the participants and appreciated the efforts and leadership of the African Union Commission and the Africa CDC in the control of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- He acknowledged the role of the African Union Trusted Travel in the facilitation of the safe opening of borders across the continent and beyond.
- In Togo with the support of PanaBIOS, we are using this digital platform (Trusted travel) to fast track digitisation of COVID-19 PCR test certificates as well as to enhance the Vaccination rollout and issuance of vaccine certificates in the country.
- The digitalisation of test certificates and vaccination certificates facilitates easy movement within the continent and with other parts of the world.
- We need to balance between the economies and saving livelihoods, hence a need to support the use of digital innovations on the continent which facilitates the safe opening of borders.
- He urged other countries which have not embraced the AU Trusted Travel platform to do so for safe re-opening of borders and economies across the continent.

Update on SLL & Trusted Travel

- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC, gave the update on Saving Lives & Livelihoods (SLL) and the journey of the Trusted Travel so far.
- In the quest to safely opening of borders for international travelers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa as a continent was faced with challenges that included; counterfeit PCR results, countries not having forensic and intelligence databases to check the background of laboratories, and neither the airlines.
- Some of the travelers could fake the PCR test results without a digital platform to verify authentic test certificates.
- The 3rd Wave of COVID-19 had clearly shown how connected we are and how a situation can change so quickly giving an example of India.
- It should also be noted that about 48 the AU Member States had already experienced the 3rd wave while about 8 of the AU Member States are currently experiencing the 3rd wave.
- No single country on the continent can do this alone, we all need to work together as the continent in managing the pandemic and develop digital technology and innovations to support and minimise the spread of the pandemic.
- There is a need to digitise our processes, for example, the European Union is using the digital green pass with the readable QR codes which verify the authenticity of travel requirements.
- Therefore, the digitalisation of our systems will enable us to connect with the rest of the world.
- The AU exists to coordinate the efforts for the establishment of an Integrated Solution based on Inter-State Trust, a continental solution with room for everyone, including RECs

connecting all stakeholders to one common platform with a unified interface. This is what the Trusted Travel platform is indeed all about.

- The African Union Trusted Travel and Trusted Vaccines platforms can be adopted through an inclusive consultative process with different stakeholders and partners as well as the private sector. The African Union commends technical partners like PanaBIOS and Econet of availing the intergovernmental body with their expertise and resources.
- Africa is ready to connect with the rest of the world on a non-discriminatory basis.
- The African Union Trusted Travel has been designed to facilitate this interconnectivity with global systems on a non-discriminatory basis.
- We want to be sure that we can use vaccination data to empower rather than discriminate.
- Some important milestones on the Trusted Travel since last year October 2020 include: Exit/ entry restrictions from 49 African countries have been programmed, Laboratory registries from 35 African countries have been digitalized, and end to end deployment is ongoing in 14 African countries, with 21 countries in total currently working on interoperability in order to join the Trusted Travel program. In addition, 10 major airline integrations have been successfully completed, with major carriers like Ethiopian Airlines, Kenya Airlines, Rwanda Air and Emirates successfully interconnecting their systems. As of this meeting, more than two million African beneficiaries have used the system already.
- We have to get organized around a common set of recovery objectives as a continent because there is strength in unity and the AUC stands to work with all the stakeholders on the continent as we fight this pandemic.

Ministerial Remarks

H.E. Dr. Lia Tadesse, Minister of Health, Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

- The Honorable Minister welcomed all the present ministers in charge of Health, Transport and ICT present as well as all other participants.
- On behalf of the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, she thanked the AU and Africa CDC for the continental efforts in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Re-affirmed the support of the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the AU innovation agenda to ensure the safe re-opening of borders during this pandemic while safeguarding the health of our citizens.
- Ethiopia is one of the pioneer countries that have already onboarded onto the AU Trusted Travel platform.
- So far, 23 laboratories in Ethiopia are accredited to carry out the COVID-19 PCR test and are also registered on the Trusted Travel platform.
- This has aided efforts to ensure that travelers from the country have authentic PCR test results, hence reducing the risk of counterfeit PCR test results being used to travel.
- The digitisation of test data has also reduced the inconvenience that comes with traveling with hard copies of the PCR test certificates.
- As a country, we are also in the final stages of the digitalisation of the vaccination registry through the AU Trusted Vaccines platform.
- We have seen the advantages of having a digital platform that can be trusted by countries on the continent and beyond.
- We are hoping that both the PCR testing and vaccination registry shall all be smoothly integrated through the facility of the AU Trusted Travel and Trusted Vaccines platforms.
- Her Excellency called upon all other countries which have not yet onboarded on the Trusted Travel platform or digitalized their COVID-19 PCR test certificates to embrace the technology.

H.E. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu, Minister of Health, Republic of Ghana

- The Honorable Minister welcomed all the present ministers in charge of Health, Transport and ICT present as well as all other participants.
- He showcased the efforts Ghana has made so far in respect of technology and innovation, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic with the support of AU and Africa CDC.
- The Republic of Ghana as a country was committed in the strongest terms to the path of technological innovations in the health sector.
- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Republic of Ghana had implemented electronic medical platforms across all levels of the Health Ministry which has quickened the process of data dissemination across the different levels.
- Ghana has further worked with Africa CDC and the PanaBIOS consortium for further digitalization of COVID-19 data.
- The country was also able to partner with the PanaBIOS consortium to digitalize voters' registrations ahead of the National Elections in December 2020. This facilitated a smooth election, with enough social distancing while minimizing the transmission of COVID-19 throughout the election period.
- In March 2021, Ghana onboarded the AU Trusted Travel platform and the ECOWAS BIOMARS platforms to enable cross-border verification of travel documents for pre-entry and exit requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done in collaboration with Africa CDC, PanaBIOS, and Ghana Health Service.
- To date, many thousands of travelers coming and leaving Ghana have used this platform while traveling.
- The Republic of Ghana already had advanced digital solutions at the points of entry/ border points which were integrated/ interoperated with the Trusted Travel system.
- Interoperability between Trusted Travel and already existing national platforms is the best approach to ensuring the safe opening of borders for travelers as well as to sustaining trust in the integrity of cross-border screening.
- Currently, Ghana was in the process of digitalizing its vaccination data/registry on the AU Trusted Travel platform.
- Unity is power, so to remain both connected and relevant as a continent, African Union Member States need to embrace digital innovations in line with the Africa Union 4D agenda, especially in safeguarding the health of our population.

Trusted Health Partners Panel (Prospects for Innovation)

Africa Society of Laboratory Medicine (ASLM)

- The Chief Executive Officer of ASLM represented ASLM in this important meeting.
- Acknowledged the excellent collaboration that exists among ASLM, Africa CDC, and PanaBIOS to deepen and enrich the Africa Union Trusted Travel platform.
- ASLM is a not-for-profit organization that was launched to advance and strengthen laboratory networks on the continent to ensure quality assurance that meets the world standards.
- In April 2021, Africa CDC together with ASLM launched a COVID-19 laboratory testing certification program.
- This program was aimed at ensuring a high-quality international standard of Laboratories testing for COVID-19 program targeted at travelers on the African Continent.
- This COLTeP initiative should help reduce fake COVID-19 test certificates that were being

observed among the traveler population within the continent. Furthermore, digitalisation is critical in the quest to build trust and confidence in the integrity of the continent's overall laboratory testing regime.

- To date auditors within 43 African countries have been trained on the continent who are deployed to the different laboratories to ensure that there is quality assurance for COVID-19 PCR testing.
- About 110 auditors have been trained to provide rapid assurance services across the continent; 160 laboratories have also been enrolled in the continued quality surveillance program; and 50 laboratories have already been fully certified.
- ASLM will continue to provide technical assistance to the countries with regards to strengthening the COVID-19 Laboratory testing capacity in collaboration with Ministries of Health and Africa CDC.
- ASLM remains ready to scale up this program to all laboratories on the African Continent.

Ethiopian Airlines

- The Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines represented Ethiopian airlines in this important meeting.
- Ethiopian Airlines have for the last 75 years offered travel services across the continent and beyond, and we are grateful for the great partnership with the AU.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the travel industry worldwide and Ethiopian Airlines, the biggest airline on the African continent, has not been spared.
- For example, the airline's annual passenger traffic has reduced by nearly 50% due to international travel restrictions and lockdowns.
- Africa as a continent has continued to pioneer different innovations, policies, programs and strategies to ensure easy connectivity across borders such as African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), as well as the recently launched AU Trusted Travel initiative.
- As a continent, we have to keep on innovating to be able to compete with the rest of the world.
- Ethiopian Airlines is onboarding onto the Trusted Travel platform; however, this is an extensive and intensive process encompassing hundreds of airports around the world, requiring phase by phase rollout.
- All the certified laboratories in Ethiopia that test for COVID-19 for travelers are fully integrated into the Trusted Travel platform.
- As Ethiopian Airlines, we are also advocating for Trusted Travel to be adopted by all the Star Alliance airline members.
- Ethiopian Airlines requested that all the countries embrace digitalisation of COVID-19 test certificates with Trusted Travel to ensure safe travel across borders while minimizing the spread of COVID-19.

PanaBIOS

- PanaBIOS is a consortium of some of the strategic AU partners which include Afrochampions, African Tourism board, African Organisation for standardization, and Afreximbank.
- This consortium was set up to mobilize public and private sector resources in Africa to ensure that the AU's innovative strategy for the COVID-19 pandemic is actualized through digital technology innovation.
- PanaBIOS is a technical partner of the AU Trusted Travel, Trusted Vaccines and Trusted Health initiatives.
- Trusted Travel (TT) aims at digitalizing, simplifying, and improving the security of port and travel screening activities thus helping curb the spread of pandemics.
- It gives governments and organizations access to platforms for health credential issuance: border risk management, digital public health surveillance and laboratories, clinical and

vaccine registries.

- The Trusted Vaccine component is a bundle of interdependent packages that digitalizes, simplifies, and improves vaccine administration and distribution processes, and security of port and travel screening activities.
- The Trusted Travel platform in partnership with ASLM provides a certification module for ensuring a TT Quality Assurance Ecosystem.
- It also has PanaCode which is a secure means of carrying out rapid tests powered by PanaBIOS for land borders and mass diagnostics.
- There is also a component of 4D 4 Health: Deepening Global Haven, whereby Global Haven is providing governments and intergovernmental bodies and industries with the means to combine diagnostic data with other types of data to boost predictive capacity, response time, and insight generation.
- In conclusion, Trusted Vaccines, Trusted Travel, and Global Haven are digital initiatives powered by the PanaBIOS consortium, a public-private partnership promoting social innovation for pandemic recovery and renormalization.
- While the UNDP is the primary sponsor of the Global Haven Initiative, the Africa CDC (on behalf of the African Union) drives the Trusted Travel and Trusted Vaccines Programs.

Country Spotlight

Zimbabwe

- Dr. Simukai Tirivanhu Zizhou, Director of Health Informatics, Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe presented Zimbabwe's Journey of Trusted Travel and digitalization of PCR certificates.
- Zimbabwe's Health digitalization journey started in 2016 with the establishment of an electronic health data system within the Ministry of Health.
- With the outbreak of COVID-19 and the restrictions, and to be able to have a strong surveillance system, the Ministry of Health was able to develop an application for tracking travelers from the port of entry until their hotel rooms where they were quarantined before joining other community members.
- With an eye towards resuming connectivity with other parts of the world as travel started re-opening, Zimbabwe was keen from the outset on joining the AU Trusted Travel initiative.
- In August 2021, the country successfully concluded all formalities to onboard onto the Trusted Travel platform, thus enabling full digitalization and verification of travel health documents across borders. Zimbabwe is now in the final stages of integration into the Trusted Vaccines program as well.
- 66 laboratories have been accredited to carry out COVID-19 PCR testing and all are integrated with Trusted Travel.
- The cost for testing Travellers is 65 USD.
- To date, Travellers from Zimbabwe can easily access testing centers near them travel with ease to other parts of the world with their authentic PCR test results. Also, passengers entering the country while using Global Haven or Trusted Travel enter smoothly as their health credentials are trusted and easily validated.
- With regards to the vaccination roll-out, Zimbabwe already has a digital national platform which is used as a vaccination database. It is thus able to print out hard copy vaccine cards, while the digital certificate can be verified for international travels in the system or, very soon, through the AU Trusted Vaccines system.
- The hard copy vaccine card has a QR code, all used for verification of vaccination locally.

Togo

- Captain Togbe AGBAGLA, AI and Big Data Manager, Ministry of Digital Economy & Digital Transformation of Togo presented Togo's experience of digitalization of PCR certificates.
- As a country, Togo is delighted to share our experience of developing digital responses to the COVID-19 pandemic with the other countries on the African continent
- In March 2021, Togo launched a digital platform to manage the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in the country as well as to aid in the verification of vaccine certificates.
- The platform was also to serve as a complement to the PCR result certificate issuing and verification system for Travellers.
- As of June 2021, Togo was able to officially launch and issue digital vaccination certificates.
- The digitalisation of COVID-19 certificates, as well as vaccines certificates, is a collaboration between the Ministry of Health and The ICT ministry
- The COVID-19 pandemic, the disruption notwithstanding, has been one of the biggest boosters to the drive for innovative technology in our country
- We are in the final stages of interoperability with the Trusted Vaccines Initiative of the Africa Union through the PanaBIOS platform, having already deployed the Trusted Travel system domestically.
- Togo is the first country in West Africa to onboard onto Trusted Vaccines.
- Interoperability of the different platforms through the aegis of the African Union is very critical for the safe opening of borders and travel across borders during this pandemic.
- One of the biggest challenges so far is that the digital platforms are only online-based. There is a need to deploy an **offline version of the platform to ensure operational continuity in cases and locations where internet access is limited.**

Other Partner Perspectives

African Airlines Association (AFRAA)

- Ms. Maureen Kahonge represented AFRAA on behalf of the AFRAA secretary-general
- AFRAA appreciated the collaboration between AFRAA, African Union, and Africa CDC with regards to the safe re-opening of borders
- AFRAA as the biggest Airline body on the African Continent has 3 priorities safe recovery of the Travel of Travel which includes; Lifting of Travel restrictions across borders, Financial support to the Airline Industry, and Survival and Sustainability plan for the airline industry
- This is the 2nd year in the pandemic with travel restrictions still imposed on the Travel industry.
- The last year, 2020, over 12.2 billion US dollars of revenue in Africa was lost in the travel industry due to the ongoing travel restrictions.
- For example, about 8 African airlines have either gone bankrupt or have experienced administrative challenges due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Therefore, lifting the travel restrictions is critical for the recovery of the Travel industry in Africa.
- AFRAA in collaboration with ICAO and other Health Agencies Such as WHO and Africa CDC have made four key recommendations for safe re-opening of borders, which include:
 - ❖ Rapid vaccine rollout in the continent. To date, about 5.3% of the African Continent has been fully vaccinated, a very small percentage of the total population. So even as we recommend that vaccine passports should not be mandatory as a requirement for international travel, vaccination is nevertheless critical for the full reopening of the industry.
 - ❖ The digitalisation of health credentials for travel and their verification can build trust across borders.

- ❖ Reduction and harmonization of COVID-19 PCR test fees for travelers is highly critical, as most of the current fees are too high for travelers.
- ❖ Harmonization of pre-entry and exit requirements.
- AFRAA is a member of Africa CDC/ African Union Taskforce on Trusted Travel and Safe re-opening of borders.
- The task force has recommended the need for interoperability of the different digital platforms on the continent such as Trusted Travel, IATA pass, Smart Health cards, EAC, and ECONET among others to avoid confusion among travelers.

International Air Transport Association (IATA)

- Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, Regional Director for Strategic Relations for Africa Represented IATA in this important meeting.
- IATA is aligned with all other Air Transport associations and bodies on the continent such as AFRAA, ICAO, and AFCAC among others for the safe opening of air travel.
- IATA has been a member of the African Union/ Africa CDC task force for safe re-opening of borders and Trusted Travel.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa was deprived of up to 94% of connectivity with the rest of the world due to border closures both within Africa and outside Africa
- Even though the borders are being opened, connectivity from and within Africa is still limited due to ongoing travel restrictions across borders.
- The Africa Union has commissioned a continental study on the benefits of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). The findings on all the initiatives that support the SAATM should be welcomed by stakeholders.
- The African Union has also recommended and prioritized the digitalization of travel credentials, culminating in the development of the Trusted Travel Initiative, which is welcome by IATA. IATA is glad that it is able to contribute to these efforts.
- IATA looks forward to working with Trusted Travel to ensure that there is interoperability between Trusted Travel and IATA Pass.
- Interoperability of the Different Travel Passes and platforms on the continent is very critical to facilitate the travel of Africans worldwide.
- IATA Pass is a digital platform that processes critical information by integrating with airlines' systems holding traveler information and credentials.
- It is so far being used by over 60 airlines worldwide, 3 of which are African airlines (such as Ethiopian Airlines and Air link).
- IATA is in the process of interoperability with the EAC Travel Pass as well.
- IATA Travel Pass can be interoperable with any other digital travel platform available on the continent and the world at large.
- IATA calls upon the African Union and the Africa CDC to support Member States to fast track the vaccination process and as well as able to produce vaccine certificates that are up to international standards.

Evolving Trusted Travel to Trusted Health (Focus on Genomics & Health Commodities)

Africa CDC

- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC made key remarks on evolving of the Trusted Travel to Trusted Health.
- As a continent, this is a pivotal time/point for us as we watch the evolving geopolitics and how they are influencing some of the decisions being taken in Africa with regards to our health security. For example, we have seen the effects of geopolitical vaccination distribution decisions as well as the results of the escalating vaccination diplomacy during this pandemic.
- Vaccine diplomacy should be defined according to our needs as a continent.
- All geopolitical developments have grave implications for the deployment of Trusted Travel and Trusted Health, and as a continent, we need to have our own solutions that respond to our unique context and interests.
- As the Pandemic evolves, we need to know how many vaccines we need as a continent, what is available, which types are being administered, which vaccine certificates are genuine, and how the vaccines are actually performing in our situation. We should have the same visibility and control when it comes to PCR-based diagnostics and related public health matters.
- Hence the establishment of the Trusted Travel and Trusted Vaccines platforms, and why we cannot stand still but must evolve these systems to what we are calling the Trusted Health paradigm within the New Public Health Order.
- Given the critical role that biotechnology will play in dictating public health outcomes, Trusted Health shall prioritise the development of digital genomics capacity, even as we keep an eye on the mutating COVID-19 virus and other pathogens of continental interest.
- Staying at the forefront of digital genomics is critical to continental health security.
- The continent needs to work strongly together in making Trusted Health a success in areas like genomics, health insurance markets, decision support automation etc.
- The world needs a bold and innovative Africa that can stand its ground when its interests are at stake and, as outlined in Agenda 2063, assert itself in the arena of nations.

Dr. Edem Adzogenu, Co-chair of AfroChampions

- The COVID-19 pandemic has been an opportunity to table radical changes and to accelerate the adoption and growth of Digital Public Health and E-health in general. This is very much in line with the realization of the greater African Union 4D agenda.
- It has led to increased resilience and the fast-tracking digital capabilities acquisition throughout the continent.
- The Africa Union 4D agenda is a Collaborative Platform for Large Scale Innovations on the Continent.
- It is an outcome of a push by multiple African Union organs and agencies, and their strategic partners in the private and civil society sectors, to develop a common collaborative platform for large-scale transformation of the continent.
- The African Union's ambitious plan is to transform the continent into a leading united global power by 2063, and the 4D Agenda sits at the center of that ambition.
- For this to be actualized, policies must be agile, technologies emergent from Africa's lived experience, and politics made to flow from the use of authority to mobilize African society's fullest creative potential .
- The 4D agenda has 4 flagships that include;
 - Trusted Health

- Caravan (also used for powering the digital Green & Fiscal Corridors)
- Nefertiti
- ProPer
- For African Transformation to happen, continental leaders need a 4D lens:
 - Design-centric and data conscious in policymaking
 - Trust digital natives to help navigate the emerging terrain
 - Be ready for disruption
 - Put human development front and Center
- All principal stakeholders in the African private and public sectors should join hands and enthusiastically support the African Union 4D agenda.

International Partnerships & Multilaterals Panel

European Union (EU)

- Dr. Jan Paehler who heads the International Partnerships portfolio of the European Commission presented on the partnerships between the African Union and EU.
- Appreciated the invitation to participate in this important meeting to discuss Trusted Health.
- Assured participants of the commitment to the partnership agreements signed between the EU and African Union.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how disruptive cross border transmission of disease can be.
- It has also shown the need to implement novel surveillance techniques and measures to contain disease spread without damaging the economic livelihoods of millions.
- The EU strongly supports the Africa Against COVID-19 "Saving lives economies and livelihood's campaign" especially its 1st objective of minimising the spread of COVID-19 across borders.
- There is especially the need to embrace digital technology to advance the campaign's objectives.
- The EU has developed an EU digital platform for verification of travel documents and vaccination certificates for travelers entering or exiting the EU member states
- In addition, the African Union has developed the Africa CDC Trusted Travel platform with the same objective of verification of the travel credentials to minimize the spread of COVID-19.
- The EU is in collaboration with the Africa Union to ensure interoperability between the African Union Trusted Travel and The EU travel pass gateway.
- Currently, 43 countries are connected to the EU gateway, and we hope with the collaboration with the African Union through the Trusted Travel system, many African countries will be able to interoperate with the EU gateway and attain mutual recognition of their health certificates.
- The EU is committed to supporting the African Union in the actualization of agenda 2063 especially in respect of the goals dependent on digital innovations, and those with an emphasis on health.
- Digital Health is an added block for the partnership between the EU and African Union through the Africa CDC.

Discussions (All participants)

- The African continent must work together to develop and support local and indigenous technology innovations and ensure that they are up to international standards.
- One of the most critical sets of innovations that have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic is the Trusted Health framework, encompassing Trusted Travel and Trusted Vaccines. It is incumbent on all stakeholders to work together and support this pioneering effort of the African Union.
- There is a need for standardisation of the proliferating digital health platforms under the aegis of the Trusted Health framework.
- There is an urgent need for full interoperability of the African Union Trusted Travel platform with the EU gateway and the systems of other continents.
- There is a need for the African private and public sectors to work together to successfully execute the African Union 4D agenda.

Wrap-Up

- H.E. Dr. Amani Abdou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC, and Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC all gave closing remarks to wrap up the meeting
- They emphasised that all continental stakeholders must throw their weight behind technology innovation as it is very important to drive development for the continent. As a continent, Africa must innovate in a manner consistent with the continent's long heritage of consultation, collaboration and cooperation. Every crisis brings in its wake opportunity for fresh contexts and perspectives.
- COVID-19 has shown Africa's leaders that the continent cannot slow down on its efforts to stand more strongly and closely together.
- COVID-19 has provided an impetus for unity, harmony and solidarity that must be invested into advancing long delayed mega-prospects for Africa's transformation.
- Africa needs to bolster its positioning globally and asserts its interests on all fronts to prevent further marginalisation.
- The health crisis is not over, so Africa needs to apply smart tools and innovative strategies to guide the recovery from safe harbour to safe harbour keeping the well-being of communities foremost in all plans and actions.

Appendix

Meeting Agenda

Ministerial Roundtable

- Registration / Connexion
- Welcome Speech
 - ❖ H.E. Dr. Amani Abdou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC
 - ❖ H.E. Dr. Moustafa Mijiyiwa, Minister of Health, Republic of Togo and Africa CDC Governing Board Chair

Update on SLL & Trusted Travel

- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC
The journey so far: Trusted Travel (Video screening)
Ministerial Remarks
 - ❖ H.E. Dr. Lia Tadesse, Minister of Health, Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
 - ❖ H.E. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu, Minister of Health, Republic of Ghana
 - ❖ H.E. Dr. Hala Zayed (TBC), Minister of Health, Arab Republic of Egypt
 - ❖ H.E. Amr Talaat (TBC), Minister of ICT, Arab Republic of Egypt

Trusted Health Partners Panel (Prospects for Innovation)

- Representatives from Ethiopian Airline & ECONET & Panabios and ASLM

Country Spotlight

- Dr. Simukai Tirivanhu Zizhou, Director of Health Informatics, Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe
- Captain Togbe AGBAGLA, AI and Big Data Manager, Ministry of Digital Economy & Digital Transformation, Togo

Other Partner Perspectives

- African Airlines Association (AFRAA)
- International Air Travel Association (IATA)

Evolving Trusted Travel to Trusted Health (Focus on Genomics & Health Commodities)

- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC
- Dr. Edem Adzogenu, Co-chair of Afrochampions

International Partnerships & Multilaterals Panel

- Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa, UNDP
- Dr. Jan Paehler European Commission – International Partnerships

Discussions (All participants)

Wrap-Up

Pictorial view of the meeting



H.E. Dr. Amani Abdou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC, giving her welcome Speech



Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC giving updates on the Journey of the AU Trusted Travel Initiative has travelled so far.



H.E. Dr. Moustafa Mijiyiwa, Minister of Health, Republic of Togo and Africa CDC Governing Board Chair, giving his speech



H.E. Dr. Lia Tadesse, Minister of Health, Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, giving her remarks.



Dr. Nsiah-Asare, Presidential Adviser on Health, Republic of Ghana, giving his remarks



The progress of The AU Trusted Travel Initiative

PROGRESS OF AFRICA CDC

**TRUSTED TRAVEL PLATFORM
AND UNVEILING OF THE
TRUSTED HEALTH PARADIGM**

WITHIN THE AFRICAN UNION'S 4D AGENDA



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