



**ATOM**  
Access to Oncology Medicines



# **An analysis of access-related capacity building gaps and opportunities in ATOM Coalition countries**

Executive Summary



Launched in May 2022, the Access to Oncology Medicines (ATOM) Coalition is a global partnership spearheaded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) that currently brings together 40 leading organisations from civil society, and the public and private sectors in a shared ambition to reduce suffering and deaths caused by cancer in low- and lower middle-income countries (LLMICs) through improved access to and use of essential cancer medicines

In the first phase of operations, the ATOM Coalition will focus its efforts on increasing access to essential oncology medicines in 46 LLMICs. In parallel, capacity building activities will be launched in a subset of 10 of the 46 LLMICs agreed by ATOM Coalition partners based on analysis conducted in 2022-23 on a range of readiness criteria.

The primary objective of the Coalition's capacity building efforts is to address critical challenges and barriers affecting access to essential oncology medicines, focusing on key access challenges across four critical areas:

1. registration
2. supply chain management
3. pathology and diagnostic infrastructure
4. appropriate use with patients.

The Coalition will prioritise work with its network of partners to substantially increase access to essential cancer medicines through a variety of channels, including reduced pricing, donations and public health-oriented voluntary licensing mechanisms. The ATOM Coalition's capacity building programme is also expected to support the implementation of such global initiatives.

This executive summary presents highlights of the main findings of the research conducted by the ATOM Coalition secretariat to support the decision-making process and initial design of the ATOM Coalition capacity building programme.



**For a complete analysis, download the full report.**

To determine the initial group of LLMICs to implement the ATOM Coalition capacity building programme, a survey was conducted among all Coalition partners to gain insight into the scope and breadth of capacity building activities implemented by partners in the 10 ATOM Coalition capacity building countries. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with eight Coalition partners to collect more qualitative data on their specific capacity building programmes and potential integration within the ATOM Coalition's capacity building implementation plans.

To support the research, an analytical framework of 55 indicators was developed based on survey data, UICC in-house knowledge base, and desk research on the health systems of the 10 capacity building countries to estimate potential feasibility and impact of capacity building activities in the target country group.

### **Main findings:**

#### **Country presence and expansion of scope of capacity building programmes in ATOM Coalition countries**

ATOM Coalition partners have strong presence across all 10 countries, with significant capacity building support in India, Uganda and Zambia. ATOM Coalition partners appear to prefer expanding the scope of their current activities in countries in which they already operate. However, nearly 60% of the respondents expressed openness to expand their activities to other countries within the ATOM Coalition group of capacity building countries.

#### **Breast cancer as a potential platform for coordination**

Findings from the survey and research show that more than 60% of capacity building programmes currently implemented by partners address breast cancer. Many partners reported having existing relationships with these communities and the wider medical oncology community.

#### **Capacity development of healthcare professionals**

The results of the capacity building mapping survey indicate that ATOM Coalition partners are primarily focused on improving the quality of cancer care through providing support to build the capacity of medical specialists. Most of these capacity building programmes are established between the Coalition partner and medical associations or providers, with no direct collaboration with policymakers.

### **Opportunities to increase the impact of donation programmes**

Opportunities were also identified to enhance the impact of ongoing donation programmes, especially those involving essential medicines. One such opportunity is to engage more systematically with health authorities and the public sector through the Coalition and to use current donation programmes as catalysts to develop more sustainable strategies for medicine demand and supply.

### **Perceived gaps that could be addressed by the ATOM Coalition**

ATOM Coalition partners identified unique opportunities and products within each of the capacity building pillars that the Coalition could either address or develop as part of its efforts (A full analysis is provided in the Research Summary).

### **Potential impact and feasibility of ATOM Coalition capacity building activities**

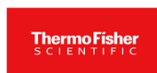
Qualitative data from the survey combined with quantitative data on health systems were aggregated to determine an initial score for each country assessing potential impact and feasibility of future ATOM Coalition capacity building activities. The assessment of potential impact and feasibility will inform decision-making efforts on resource prioritisation towards countries with both high potential impact and feasibility.

### **Conclusions and key recommendations**

The objective is to use capacity building as a mechanism to support the identification and prioritisation of actions by local stakeholders and implement systems change through the development of tailored and adequate solutions that take into account the local context in an agile and effective manner.

Moving forward, a robust country-level situational assessment and a formal engagement process with national and local stakeholders will be developed to support the implementation of capacity building activities.

# SUPPORTED BY



# THE ATOM COALITION



**ATOM**  
Access to Oncology Medicines



*"To reduce suffering and deaths caused by cancer in low- and lower-middle income countries through improved access to and use of essential cancer medicines"*

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**The Access to Oncology Medicines (ATOM) Coalition**

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