



Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative*

## **144<sup>th</sup> Executive Board of the WHO**

### **DNDi intervention on Agenda Item 5.7 – Medicines, vaccines and health products: Access to medicines and vaccines**

Chair, distinguished delegates,

DNDi welcomes the development of the roadmap. Today the consequences of lack of access to existing and new health tools are felt in all countries, at all levels of income, and across diseases areas, from insufficient R&D for neglected and emerging infectious diseases, AMR, and high prices of medicines, such as for Hepatitis C or oncology.

If this access crisis is to be addressed, it is important that WHO focus on, and Member States provide political and financial support to concrete deliverables that provide practical guidance and support to stakeholders.

There are three additional areas in which we feel work could be progressed with catalytic effect:

1. The WHO has a key role in providing guidance on prioritization of R&D, based on public health needs, not commercial gain. In addition to work planned, WHO could
  - Reconvene the Expert Committee on Health Research and Development to identify health R&D priorities, and
  - Produce a list of missing essential medicines, which provide guidance for all and form the basis for new approaches based on the practical implementation of principles of affordability, effectiveness, efficiency and equity.
2. Open and collaborative approaches to innovation can significantly speed up drug discovery, increase efficiency and reduce costs. The roadmap should include:
  - the development of a pro-access legal terms repository, that promotes access to knowledge throughout the R&D process, and reflects the flexibilities provided for in the TRIPS Agreement, and
3. Finally, there remains an important gap in the implementation plan:
  - recognition of the specific needs of children, who are among the most neglected and deliverables to address this neglect.

For our part, we will continue to contribute to the WHO efforts to achieve access for all people, everywhere.