

Agenda item: 10.3 Follow-up to the report of the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination - Planning for an open-ended meeting of Member States to discuss progress

Speaker: Bernard Pecoul, MD, MPH

The Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative is a collaborative, nonprofit R&D organization, that uses an alternative, needs-driven innovation model to discover, develop, and deliver affordable and adapted treatments for neglected patients.

We welcome the steps taken by WHO and TDR to establish the Global Health R&D Observatory and Pooled Fund. DNDi is pleased to contribute to this process concretely, with one of the selected R&D demonstration projects, by developing new treatments for leishmaniasis in a way that implements the CEWG principles of open innovation, de-linkage, and affordable access.

Our experience over the last decade has shown it is possible to work openly and collaboratively with a variety of partners to develop affordable and appropriately adapted drugs provided there is clear definition of needs, target product profiles, careful coordination of partners, and policies to ensure equitable access. However, we must move beyond individual examples to a more sustainable innovation system, that provides a clear normative framework for all R&D actors.

The need for a comprehensive framework is clearer today than ever, as evidenced by the numerous R&D issues before the Executive Board. The multiplication of R&D frameworks proposed risks further fragmentation and duplication and lacks consistent application of the CEWG principles.

The Open-Ended Meeting, should not present the Observatory, Fund, and demonstration projects as the end of the CEWG process. We urge Member States to 'connect the dots' so all areas of market failure are discussed. We also urge Members States to consider more ambitious financing goals to ensure the level and sustainability of funding required. Finally, we urge Member States to be ambitious at the March meeting and agree to a process elaborating a global R&D agreement, based on the principles of 'affordability, effectiveness, efficiency and equity', to ensure the development of appropriate and affordable innovations of public health importance.

.