



Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative*

144th Executive Board of the WHO
DNDI Intervention on Agenda Item 5.5 Universal Health Coverage

Chair, distinguished delegates,

Public health driven research and development is an often overlooked cornerstone of universal health coverage (UHC). The collective UHC agenda cannot be delivered without addressing the diagnostic and treatment technology gaps that hinder the effective treatment of patients, and are required to tackle the rising threat of drug resistance and for the sustainable elimination of infectious diseases -- including hepatitis and Neglected Tropical Diseases.

Developing new tools, based on target product profiles (TPPs) that focus on public health priorities and principles of affordability, effectiveness, efficiency and equity, can significantly contribute to both individual health, and the quality and resilience of health systems, reducing waste, inefficiency and the burden of care.

Poor-quality care accounts for 60% of deaths from treatable conditions. The dearth of appropriate tools to assess, diagnose and treat the most vulnerable is a significant driver of poor quality health services. A key measure of UHC will therefore be the extent to which it provides quality health care to the most vulnerable: the poor, children, those with neglected or stigmatized diseases, and other neglected populations.

We therefore ask member states to ensure that the UN High Level Meeting on UHC addresses measures in national and global policies that:

- Include indicators measuring the progress in meeting the specific needs of vulnerable and neglected populations, including children and adolescents,
- Accelerate the availability and accessibility of existing essential medicines,
- Support public-interest research and development collaborations aiming to address hurdles to UHC
- Provide input into the development of TPPs for missing essential medicines,
- Build joint strategies between drug and diagnostics developers and delivery systems,
- Take measures both to identify and accelerate priority products already in pipelines, and to build and support public-health driven innovative R&D approaches to ensure evolving needs are continually met.

Thank you.