



# statement

## **WHO Afro 69 agenda item 12: Framework for provision of essential health services through strengthened district/local health systems to support UHC in the context of the SDGs**

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Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important discussion today. IFPMA represents leading research-based pharmaceutical companies as well as national and regional industry associations across the world, including three associations in Africa.

IFPMA stands together with the global health community to support Member States in the WHO AFRO region to accelerate efforts to achieve UHC. We also welcome the recognition that UHC must include access to affordable and quality-assured medicines, vaccines and health products.

Through our work in novel partnerships with governments, NGOs, and private sector entities, the industry is supporting UHC through health systems strengthening – ensuring the quality and integrity of the supply chain, training health care workers, and exploring innovative approaches to financing health coverage.

IFPMA believes that structured, collaborative action on UHC is needed to meet the shared goals of expanding patient access to medicines through innovative solutions, and achieving long-term sustainability of the health sector. This is all the more necessary given the complex mix of interconnected threats to global health which we increasingly face —from poverty and pandemics to conflict and environmental issues.

In the run-up to the UN High Level Meeting in September and as a Core Member of the Private Sector Constituency of UHC 2030, we are pleased to see the Key Asks from the UHC movement going in the right direction. We support in particular the need to uphold quality primary health care, drive forward sustainable financing, and provide an enabling environment to promote improved access to medicines and vaccines, facilitating continued innovation to find new treatments and cures that ensure no-one is left behind.

Now is the time to take action and step forward together in expanding quality, essential health coverage – and to see it not as a cost but as a genuine investment in our human capital, as the drivers of economic development and growth. The opportunities are great in the AFRO region, particularly given the demographic dividend, and we look forward to continuing a constructive and inclusive debate on how to help countries move forward on achieving UHC.