



statement

WHO Afro 68 agenda item 13: Ensuring sustainable financing for universal health coverage in Africa in the mist of changing global and local economic factors

Delivered by Cyntia Genolet, Senior Manager Global Health Policy, IFPMA

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 in Africa.

The IFPMA notes the report and agrees with the proposed actions, specifically with recommendations to increase domestic public funding for health, shift out of pocket payments to more progressive means and establishing up to date packages of essential health services.

IFPMA believes that structured, collaborative action on universal health coverage will help meet the shared goals of expanding patient access to medicines through innovative solutions, and achieving long-term sustainability of the health sector.

Meaningful progress and sustainable solutions can only be found in a multi-stakeholders approach and we call for recognition of the value that the healthcare and pharmaceutical industry brings:

The pharmaceutical industry is an important partner, especially in regards to investing in medicines and vaccines development and pursuing innovative approaches to expand access. In addition, working in novel partnerships with NGOs, governments and private sector entities, the industry is supporting UHC through providing expertise in ensuring the quality and integrity of the supply chain, training health care workers, and filling gaps in underserved areas. These all support capabilities which are becoming increasingly essential as the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) rises in Africa, populations age and more countries transition to middle-income status, demanding improved health care services. Access to neglected tropical disease (NTDs) interventions are also an integral part of UHC particularly in Africa, and here the private sector has also played a crucial role, through commitments such as the London Declaration. We are a natural solution partner to governments and patients.

Given the complexities associated with UHC, we encourage governments to explore working through public-private partnerships focused on a wide range of areas, from health literacy and health system strengthening to access to quality service and financial protection schemes. We believe that UHC will only be achieved after a process of learning from experiences and evolving innovation; such processes will produce the best healthcare models, tailored to the needs of each country, instead of "one-size-fits-all" solutions that potentially limit growth. A strong health economy based on country self-sustaining model consistent with national economic development goals is essential to ensure a sustainable system, independent from development assistance. We stand ready to work hand-in-hand with governments to support new models of health financing and delivery that are adaptable to local conditions.

¹ http://www.who.int/health_financing/documents/uhc-in-africa-a-framework-for-action.pdf?ua=1