

PRESS RELEASE

Innovation must remain at the heart of pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, says pharma industry

23 SEPTEMBER 2026, GENEVA / NEW YORK – As world leaders gather at the United Nations to agree on a Political Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR), the global pharmaceutical industry is urging governments to seize this opportunity and accelerate practical commitments that strengthen preparedness for future health crises.

Recent outbreaks – including Mpox, Hantavirus, and Ebola Bundibugyo – remind us that health security threats are continuous, and not isolated events. With a [50% probability](#) of a COVID-scale pandemic within the next 25 years, and with future pandemics projected to cost over [\\$700 billion each year](#), strengthening pharmaceutical innovation is central to protecting populations, economic stability, and health security.

This week, at the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations ([IFPMA](#)), will reaffirm industry's commitment to building a world better prepared to prevent, detect, and respond to future pandemics.

Prioritize practical measures

IFPMA will call for governments converging in New York to sustain R&D investment into medicines and vaccines for infectious diseases, as well as address the practical barriers that prevent them from reaching people quickly during health emergencies. This includes better surveillance systems to detect new threats; the rapid sharing of pathogen data that is needed for scientific research; strengthening regulatory and clinical trial infrastructure; and underwriting procurement mechanisms and delivery systems that are needed.

Dr. David Reddy, Director General, IFPMA, said: *“Medicines and vaccines will remain a cornerstone of pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. As governments agree on the Political Declaration, they should adopt policies that enable the discovery and development of life-saving products and strengthen the systems needed to deliver them rapidly, worldwide. Preparedness does not begin when a crisis hits. It is built through the choices countries make every day to value innovation and invest in resilient health systems.”*

Pandemic Agreement proposals risk adding complexity to future outbreak response

At the same time as discussions are taking place in New York, negotiators continue to work to finalize the details of the Pandemic Agreement in Geneva. Some of the current proposals under discussion could add complexity and cost to the response to future pandemics, and delay access to critical samples and information that scientific research relies on to develop and deliver medicines and vaccines.

IFPMA has [warned](#) these approaches will do nothing to strengthen the R&D pipeline to improve global preparedness and will likely lead to fewer companies working in these crucial areas of public health during interpandemic periods.

Lessons from the Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak

The current Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has already generated important lessons that should inform both the discussions around of the UN Political Declaration and negotiations on the final details of the WHO Pandemic Agreement.

With no treatments or vaccines currently approved against the Bundibugyo Ebola virus, pharmaceutical companies have [stepped up to identify priority candidates](#) for clinical studies. Nevertheless, the outbreak underscores the need for greater R&D investment to expand the pipeline of vaccines and therapeutics to address emerging threats – dependent on timely and open sharing of pathogens and data, and voluntary collaborations that allow science to move quickly.

Dr. David Reddy said: *“As four months have passed since the announcement of the Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak, it is clearer than ever that preparedness depends on sustained medical innovation. This relies on strong partnerships, rapid access to pathogens and data, and practical solutions to the real barriers that slow outbreak response — from regulatory readiness and clinical trial capacity to financing, procurement, manufacturing, and delivery. These principles should remain front and center in the UN Political Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR) and in the ongoing negotiations on the final details of the WHO Pandemic Agreement.”*

Note to the media

Strengthening global health security

- Earlier this year, IFPMA published [Strengthening Global Health Security - Perspectives from the Innovative Pharmaceutical Industry](#), which analyses the urgent need for robust health systems and sustainable solutions in responding to emerging and resurging outbreaks. The publication calls for: 1) Sustaining innovation ecosystems through strong intellectual property frameworks and long-term R&D investments; 2) Investing in stronger healthcare systems and country readiness – including routine immunization across the life-course –, and ensure timely accurate, and transparent demand forecasting and predictable procurement mechanisms; 3) Institutionalizing regulatory reliance and comprehensive legal preparedness frameworks, removing trade and export restrictions, and ensuring free and unhindered access to pathogens.
- The report [Health Security for a Safer Future](#) by Foreign Policy Analytics, produced with support from IFPMA, examines the critical role of health care innovation as a key lever to achieving health security goals, underscoring that stronger surveillance, routine immunization across the life course, sustained investment in R&D and country readiness, and improved regulatory pathways are critical to strengthening preparedness and building a safer, more secure world for all.
- At the at the UN Multi-Stakeholder Hearing on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR) in New York on 9 June 2026, [IFPMA delivered a statement](#) to reaffirm industry's commitments and call on governments to ensure the right enabling conditions are in place: predictable demand and financing; regulatory reliance and harmonization; robust health systems and delivery capacity; and resilient supply chains that can support rapid, equitable access to medical countermeasures.
- The INTREPID Alliance, consisting of 8 IFPMA member companies collaborating with stakeholders to accelerate the pipeline for antiviral therapies, published an [interactive R&D pipeline](#) on 24 August 2026, highlighting the lack of antiviral molecules in development. For 3 of the 14 high-risk viral families studied, there are no novel antiviral compounds being studied and for most of the other families, there are critical weaknesses in pre-clinical and clinical stages.
- On 14 September 2026, IFPMA delivered a [statement](#) at the eighth meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG 8) on the WHO Pandemic Agreement, calling for the PABS Annex to focus on practical, workable mechanisms that strengthen preparedness and accelerate collaboration, rather than new obligations that risk slowing response or undermining innovation.

Responding to the current Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak in DRC

- Pharmaceutical companies are working with global partners to respond to the current Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak in DRC. [IFPMA & BIO issued a press release](#) on 25 August 2026 to mark the 100-day milestone since the declaration of the outbreak.
- Within a matter of days after the announcement of the Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak, pharmaceutical companies mobilized alongside partners to develop new vaccines and therapeutics and explore cross-activity from existing ones for the current Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak. [BIO, DCVMN, IFPMA, Vaccines Europe published a statement](#) on 8 June 2026.

About IFPMA

IFPMA represents the innovative pharmaceutical industry at the international level, engaging in official relations with the United Nations and multilateral organizations. Our vision is to ensure that scientific progress translates into the next generation of medicines and vaccines that deliver a healthier future for people everywhere. To achieve this, we act as a trusted partner, bringing our members' expertise to champion pharmaceutical innovation, drive policy that supports the research, development, and delivery of health technologies, and create sustainable solutions that advance global health.

For more information, visit ifpma.org.

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