

## STATEMENT

### **78<sup>th</sup> WHO Regional Committee for the Americas: Policy on the application of data science in public health using artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies**

#### **Agenda item 8.8-G**

1 OCTOBER 2026, WASHINGTON, D.C. – We commend PAHO and Member States for the progress reflected in this report, particularly efforts to strengthen data governance, interoperability, digital capacity, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies in public health. These are essential foundations for stronger, more resilient, and more equitable health systems.

As countries advance digital transformation, we encourage continued attention to enabling trusted, secure, and lawful cross-border health data flows, supported by robust privacy, security, and governance safeguards. While the report rightly highlights interoperability, the ability to responsibly access, share, and analyze health data across borders is also critical for public health surveillance, emergency preparedness and response, scientific research, and innovation.

The innovative pharmaceutical industry relies on predictable cross-border data flows and well-designed governance frameworks to develop medicines and vaccines, generate evidence, and advance biomedical innovation. Such frameworks should both protect individuals and enable the responsible use of data in support of research and innovation, thereby contributing to improved health outcomes for patients and populations. We encourage continued multistakeholder collaboration, including with the pharmaceutical industry, to build trusted health data ecosystems in support of these objectives.