

Medicines, vaccines and health products

5.7.1 Access to medicines and vaccines

Access to medicines is a fundamental component of the right to health. To achieve this, WHO and MS must work together to decommodify essential medicines.

We urge the WHO to be bolder in its actions to ensure equitable access to medical products. If a new drug is made, but people cannot afford it, does it still cure disease?

The WHO needs to provide active support to MS to use TRIPS-flexibilities to combat high drug prices. We urge MS to refrain from using threats against the use of TRIPS-flexibilities, especially compulsory licenses for procuring affordable medicines.

To avoid the diversion of funds from health innovation, the WHO should offer guidance to MS on the regulation of marketing expenditure and share buybacks. WHO should support MS in establishing publicly-owned pharmaceutical manufacturing to address areas of market failure, enhance access and build developing countries' manufacturing capabilities.

To avoid double payment from taxpayers, a paradigm shift is needed to re-imagine health technologies as a public good. Therefore increased knowledge sharing as well as transparency in drug pricing, clinical trials, and R&D costs is vital. We applaud the Roadmap's deliverables on price transparency and delinkage. However, procuring entities could be further empowered by increased transparency on innovation costs, particularly the relative involvement of public funders vs. private investors.

We would like to caution the WHO that measures to ensure access to quality medicines should not compromise access to medicines. Regulatory systems' strengthening should be evidence-based and avoid conflict of interest and regulatory capture.

Finally, we call upon the WHO and MS to create a binding international legal instrument to regulate the marketing of medical products.