

Statement on agenda item 13.5—Follow-up of the report of the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination

Delivered at the 70th World Health Assembly

Global Health Council members, PATH, and GHTC members have deep expertise in the development, scale-up, and delivery of a range of lifesaving technologies, including vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, and devices.

Based on this experience, we call for the rapid operationalization of the Global Observatory on Health Research and Development, including its full funding. If adequately funded, the observatory would provide critical analyses of health research, which is an integral tool in navigating the global health research and development (R&D) landscape and guiding global R&D priorities.

Our organizations continue to support the purpose of the pooled fund to support research and development and note the need for additional funding for new tools to prevent, diagnose and treat poverty-related and neglected diseases. We support the exploration of new and innovative sources of funding for both the observatory and the pooled fund, but we caution that such funding should not come at the expense of existing successful programs. Both the Observatory and the pooled fund should leverage and complement existing funding and coordination mechanisms.

It is challenging that some of the funding for the demonstration projects have come with “earmarks” or conditions attached. Such conditionality strikes at the very heart of how an independent pooled funding mechanism should operate.

Within that context, we call for continued transparency to ensure that the observatory and pooled fund’s foundation is sound science and public health. If governed well, with leadership from an apolitical independent body, the pooled fund has the potential to stimulate funding from member states who have not traditionally funded global health and the observatory can help democratize prioritization of R&D efforts, both critical needs to achieving the global goals.