



Statement in response to WHO and Government of Costa Rica Solidary Call to Action to achieve universal and equitable access to COVID-19 health technologies

May 29, 2020

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) welcomes the call by the WHO Director-General, the President of Costa Rica and several governments and co-sponsors participating in the Solidary Call to Action to achieve universal and equitable access to COVID-19 health technologies.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development specifically highlights the need to accelerate efforts to improve both innovation of new health technologies, and enabling access; acknowledging that addressing innovation, access and delivery are critical components for achieving universal health coverage. This is even more needed in times of epidemics, including in the global efforts to respond to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for increased investments on health technology innovation and universal and equitable access to health technologies. Personal protective equipment (PPE), diagnostics, medical devices, vaccines, therapeutics and other health technologies for COVID-19 are urgently needed. It is critical that these are made accessible, affordable and available everyone, everywhere.

Global cooperation and solidarity to speed up the development, production and equitable access to existing and new health technologies requires a major multilateral effort and greater levels of solidarity, collaboration and unity than ever before. Existing efforts must be strengthened, and new tools added and deployed. Accelerating innovation and planning for equitable access and delivery in the research and development process is a global health and security priority as well as a human rights and development priority. Voluntary pooling and sharing of knowledge, intellectual property and data, open innovation approaches and technology transfer are essential tools that communities, governments, the private sector, civil society and the development community need to bolster their responses to COVID-19 and the SDGs more broadly.

UNDP is a core partner of the recently launched Technology Access Partnership (TAP) hosted by the UN Technology Bank, in partnership WHO and UNCTAD. The TAP aims to facilitate technology transfer needed to ramp up local production of COVID-19 technologies in developing countries as a way of addressing acute shortages of PPE, diagnostics and medical devices.