

WHO-WIPO-WTO Technical Symposium on Sustainable Development Goals: Innovative technologies to promote healthy lives and well-being

Geneva, 26 February 2018

WHO Headquarters

IHF participated to a meeting on the challenges and opportunities the international community faces to ensure that innovative technologies are developed and reach patients in order to realize the right to health and the health-related SDGs. Various stakeholders and representatives of the relevant sectors shared their initiatives and partnerships that research, develop and facilitate access to novel, needs-based health technologies.



Geneva-based delegations to WHO, WIPO and WTO, representatives of international and philanthropic organizations, experts on trade and intellectual property policies, civil society organizations and industry representatives were invited.

As part of the introductory remarks¹, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Director General, WHO) informed the audience about his commitment with Roberto Azevêdo (DG, WTO) and Francis Gurry (DG, WIPO) to strengthen their trilateral collaboration focusing on the progress of universal health coverage. The discussion led during this meeting was an important step to advance their project.

Three panels of three stakeholders each were set up followed by a discussion.

In the first panel entitled “Global health data, disease burden and the challenges ahead”, the first panellist Andrew Hill² (Senior Visiting Research Fellow, University of Liverpool, UK) showcased the benefits for countries to buy generic drugs at close to cost prices. He raised the resolution to maximize the use of generic drugs in national treatment campaigns and to identify high quality generic suppliers. To make companies lower drug prices, Mr. Hill recommended to re-evaluate the cost-effectiveness of all patented drugs versus cheap generic alternatives.

Sarah Rickwood’s presentation³ (Vice President, IQVIA, UK) focused first on global prescription medicine which both volume growth and value spend has decelerated. Then she presented the challenges encountered in antibiotics and orphan drugs accessibility.

Sherine Helmy⁴ (CEO, Pharco Pharmaceuticals, Egypt) presented the achievements in access to treatment against the Hepatitis C virus in Egypt.

¹ Speech of Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus available at <http://www.who.int/dg/speeches/2018/tehnical-symposium-sdgs/en/>

² <http://www.who.int/phi/1-AndrewHill.pdf?ua=1>

³ <http://www.who.int/phi/2-SarahRickwood.pdf?ua=1>

⁴ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/3-SherineHelmy.pdf?ua=1>

The second panel was entitled “Technology as a driver of medical progress and access”. Under this topic, J. Raffo⁵ (Head, Economics and Statistics Division, WIPO) presented the changes in regulation and the development of the patent system caused by the innovations in antibiotics. L. Pinheiro⁶ (Student Leader, Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM), Brazil) spoke about the role of the university in the innovation system, and their contribution to it. J. Brennan⁷ (Secretary General, EuropaBIOm and Representative of the International Council of Biotechnology Associations, Belgium) presented the biotechnologies putting forward supporting arguments and the development process.

The three panellists of the third panel presented their work under the topic “How policy choices impact on access to innovative technologies”. Margaret Kyle’s presentation⁸ (Professor of Economics, Mines ParisTech, France) covered patent protection, entry regulation and price regulation, supported by evidences from countries. K. Shadlen⁹ (Professor of Development Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK) showed secondary patents in pharmaceuticals and their adoption regulation in India, Brazil and Argentina. D. L. Salcedo¹⁰ (Advisor, State of Ecuador) explained the role of the state of Ecuador in providing access to drugs and medicines.

The program of the event, the panellists’ presentations and the speeches of Dr. Ghebreyesus, Mr. Azevêdo and Mr. Gurry are available at

http://www.who.int/phi/sustainable_development_goals_February2018/en/

⁵ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/1-JulioRaffo.pdf?ua=1>

⁶ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/2-LuizaPinheiro.pdf?ua=1>

⁷ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/3-JohnBrennan.pdf?ua=1>

⁸ <http://www.who.int/phi/1-MargaretKyle.pdf?ua=1>

⁹ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/2-KennethShadlen.pdf?ua=1>

¹⁰ <http://www.who.int/entity/phi/3-DanielLopezSalcedo.pdf?ua=1>