



WHO Executive Board, 140th Session, 2017

Agenda Item 8.5: Follow-up of the report of the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination

Speaker: Katy Athersuch

MSF has keenly followed the CEWG agenda since its inception, as it seeks to find solutions to the challenges we face in our operations on a daily basis. The responsibility to address these shortcomings rests with all governments and requires concerted, collective action. We note with encouragement the work undertaken to establish the R&D Observatory. The funds secured have enabled this important progress, and we urge Member States to commit the additional outstanding funds needed to support the Observatory's operation over the next biennium.

MSF welcomes the work to develop a Terms of Reference for the Expert Committee on Health R&D. In addition to what is outlined within the proposed scope, we ask the Committee to expand its work to provide guidance on how the principles established under the CEWG can be implemented in R&D initiatives within, and beyond, WHO. Further, we would like to see a role for the Committee in overseeing the promotion of policy coherence across WHO's work on R&D, as requested in Resolution 69.23.

We welcome the proposals for an R&D fund under CEWG. We note several proposals put forward to Member States on how to raise funds for the establishment and operation of this mechanism, and we ask Member States to reflect on the political decisions they take as to where to allocate funding. With the launch of CEPI this month, it is clear that there is no shortage of funding when political will is present, yet public health needs addressed by CEWG suffer from underinvestment.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the important recommendations of the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines. It is critical to advance these recommendations at the Member State level and we welcome further discussion on the report, and its implications for R&D at WHO.