



## Questions and Answers: The Coronavirus Global Response

Brussels, 24 April 2020

### What is the Joint Call for Action?

The coronavirus pandemic affects practically every country in the world. Past experiences have shown that even with the availability of effective tools at the world's disposal, some are protected, while others are not. This inequity is unacceptable – all tools to address the pandemic must be available to all.

With this in mind, the World Health Organization (WHO) and an initial group of global health actors have launched a landmark, global collaboration for the accelerated development, production and equitable global access to new COVID-19 essential health technologies. The partner organisations include: the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations (GAVI), the Global Fund, UNITAID, the Wellcome Trust and the World Bank.

Read the joint call to action [here](#).

### What is the Coronavirus Global Response?

To respond to the joint call for action from health actors, the EU is joining forces with France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway and Saudi Arabia to host a pledging event.

Researchers and innovators around the world are working very hard to find solutions to save lives and protect our health. But they need more funding. World-leading scientists and health experts say **€7.5 billion** (\$8 billion) is now needed to develop solutions to test, treat and protect people, and to prevent the disease from spreading.

With the Coronavirus Global Response, the EU and its partners are taking the lead in the global effort to close this funding gap.

The initiative has two main aims:

- To rally support for global efforts and attract sizeable financial contributions from the public, private and philanthropic sectors, to bridge the funding gap estimated at €7.5 billion for the development and deployment of diagnostics, treatments and vaccines;
- To secure a high-level political commitment to ensuring equitable access to therapeutics and vaccines, leaving no-one behind.

More information about the initiative and its programme will be made available on the website: [europa.eu/global-response](https://europa.eu/global-response).

### How was the €7.5 billion fundraising target set?

The €7.5 billion (\$8 billion) figure is based on an assessment, done in March 2020, by the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB), an independent monitoring and accountability body to ensure preparedness for global health crises.

GPMB identified a shortfall of funding for major needs to fight this pandemic in key areas:

- \$1.25bn for the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the most vulnerable countries;
- \$3bn for research and development (R&D) of vaccines for COVID-19 (\$2bn), plus seed funding for manufacturing and deployment (\$1bn);
- \$2.25bn for R&D on therapeutics for COVID-19, plus seed funding for manufacturing and deployment;
- \$0.75bn for R&D on diagnostics for COVID-19, plus seed funding for manufacturing and deployment, and
- \$0.75bn to stockpile essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and vaccines.

GPMG has indicated that the full scale up of manufacturing and delivery will cost well above the current target, which covers only the most urgently needed initial amounts.

## **Where are the main needs in the areas of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics?**

In these three areas, underfinancing exists mainly on manufacturing, procurement and deployment rather than research and development, even if this is the most urgent area to cover. The current situation in the three selected areas is as follows:

- **Vaccines** are difficult to develop and the outcome of research is uncertain. Currently, there are more **than 70 vaccines in development, and at least 3 have entered into clinical trials**. Once a vaccine is available, the challenge will be to produce it in the extremely high quantities needed and required, as well as to ensure that it is available and accessible for all countries, including low and medium-income countries.
- **Therapeutics:** So far more **than 40 developers of potential treatments for COVID19 have contacted the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the Member States** for scientific advice. Most of the treatments proposed are medicines currently authorised for other diseases. Clinical trials are currently ongoing to determine their efficacy for the treatment of COVID-19 patients. Once new therapies are identified, the challenge will be their production and manufacturing capacity and the need for large-scale procurement. Procurement at a global level will be costly and funding is therefore needed.
- **Diagnostics (Tests):** At the moment, several types of tests, for different purposes, are in use. Some are used to detect the active disease and others to detect if the person passed on the disease. The latter still have to be validated in terms of performance and produced on a large scale. The challenge is procurement and deployment, including equipment to analyse the results when applicable, as well as the link with effective and well-resourced testing strategies.

All new vaccines, diagnostics and treatments developed for COVID-19 will **need to be made available globally for an affordable price**, regardless of where they were developed or how they were funded. That is the reason why funds from this pledging initiative will go to organisations that are coordinating the global response to this crisis.

## **What is the GPMB?**

Launched in 2018, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) is an accountability and advisory body composed by 15 members to better respond to global health emergencies. It was created following the recommendations formulated by the UN Secretary General's Global Health Crises Task Force in 2017.

The goals of the Board are to 1) assess the world's ability to protect itself from health emergencies, 2) identify critical gaps to preparedness across multiple perspectives and 3) advocate for preparedness activities with national and international leaders and decision-makers and mobilise its influence with other leaders and policy makers at global, national and community levels.

The EU as such is not represented in the Board.

## **Who is in charge of the funds raised?**

The European Union will coordinate the collection of the funds, which will be directed towards the needs identified by the GPMB in three strands: diagnostics, treatments and vaccines.

## **What is the breakdown of funds allocated to the three strands of work?**

The 4 May will mark the beginning of the rolling out of the initiative aimed at developing three strands of work: diagnostics, treatments and vaccines. The breakdown of the funds will be further refined based on the initial indication of the needs identified by GPMB.

Pledges may be general or they may be earmarked for a specific strand.

## **Who will be developing the diagnostics, treatments and vaccines?**

As of 20 April, the WHO had already identified 76 vaccine candidates supported by public, private and public-private consortia. There are many researchers and developers worldwide currently working on innovative solutions, including vaccines, treatments and diagnostics. The pressing needs and the special nature of research and development requires strong global collaboration.

## **Who will have ownership of the products produced with funding from the initiative?**

Funding will benefit organisations that strive to ensure that the products will be available, accessible and affordable across the world, especially in the most vulnerable countries. Pledges will notably target CEPI and GAVI.

Funding pledged will also be accompanied by high-level commitments from donors in support of global access and fair deployment of new diagnostics, treatment and vaccines against COVID-19.

## **Who can donate?**

All countries, international organisations or financial institutions may contribute, but also the private sector, or foundations.

### **Why can't private individuals make a donation?**

The EU is not legally able to ask for citizens' donations. Nonetheless, we are calling on individuals to show their support by interacting on-line, spreading awareness about the initiative and encouraging the private sector to pitch in. In addition, individuals may make contributions to partner funds, such as the WHO COVID-19 solidarity response fund: <https://covid19responsefund.org>.

### **Until when can donations be made?**

Donations can be made as of 4 May 2020. On that day, the Commission will also announce the next milestones of a global campaign, which is to kick off an ongoing rolling replenishment.

### **What will you do if you exceed the fundraising target?**

We aim to reach €7.5 billion as we believe it is a realistic target for the current needs. More funding will be needed to sustain the actions in the coming months, which could benefit from donations beyond the targets.

### **What is the estimated timeline for delivery on the three strands?**

Given the current crisis, there is no time to lose. Funds will be allocated as quickly as possible. While a number of solutions are already being investigated, R&D, manufacturing and deployment are all time-consuming, resource-intensive steps. This is why it is crucial to coordinate efforts at international level, to identify as quickly as possible the most promising approaches while accelerating their development.

### **What are the links with the funds already raised for the WHO?**

The WHO is currently helping to coordinate the worldwide response to COVID-19, which it declared to be a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) on January 30, and a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. The WHO Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan outlines the public health measures that the international community stands ready to provide to support all countries to prepare for and respond to COVID-19.

The funds raised by the Coronavirus Global Response would be complementary to the WHO's work and their appeal. The first iteration of the WHO Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) called for a total resource requirement of \$675 million, of which \$61.5 million were for WHO's urgent preparedness and response activities for the period of February to April 2020. An updated plan will be launched in April and will identify significantly larger resource needs for country response, research and development and WHO itself.

The EU's partnership with the WHO to respond to the COVID-19 is not new and will be reinforced via our current initiative. For example, the EU is already working with the WHO to supply medical devices and personal equipment such as ventilators, laboratory kits, masks, goggles, gowns, and safety suits.

### **Which countries were invited to take part in the initiative?**

All countries, international organisations and foundations who have shown interest in fighting the COVID-19 have been invited to participate.

### **Will the fruits of the initiative only benefit countries that participate?**

No, the objective of this pledging event is to speed up innovations and ensure access for all, irrespective of the geographical origin of funds. Pandemics can only be effectively controlled when solutions are deployed globally. The initiative aims to rally significant financial contributions to develop diagnostics, treatments and vaccines and secure a high-level political commitment to ensure equitable access to diagnostics, treatments and vaccines to make sure no-one is left behind.

### **How does this pledging event compare to and complement other international initiatives?**

This is an integral part of the multilateral response to the COVID-19 emergency and is aligned with the logic of on-going UN appeals. It stems directly from G20 Leaders' commitment, and the G20 Action Plan to provide immediate resources to key entities in the global health response.

The conference will focus on the quest for solutions that currently do not exist, first through R&D, then deployment (access to new solutions), whereas the UN system is primarily tackling other needs such as humanitarian assistance, mitigation of the socio-economic impacts and preparedness of health systems for future outbreaks.

### **For more information**

[Coronavirus Global Response website](#)

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