



# statement

## IFPMA Statement at 76<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly

**Geneva / New York, 21 September 2021:** In the margins of the 76<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly and as the world continues to grapple with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, IFPMA and the biopharmaceutical industry would like to underscore its commitment to working alongside governments worldwide to combat this unprecedented crisis. Unparalleled collaboration among all sectors of society is the only way to meet this challenge.

The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a harsh reminder of the pervasive inequities that prevent achieving health for all. At the same time, it reinforces the clear need to build up health systems and create more equitable societies, underpinned by universal health coverage.

Paying the price for weak health systems in the context of COVID-19 has been illustrated all too well by what we have witnessed in NCDs. Health services, including routine and specialist care and rehabilitation, have all been severely disrupted by the pandemic, which will likely lead to a longer-term upsurge in NCD mortality. In addition, PLWNCDs are at higher risk of Covid complications, more likely to be hospitalized, have a higher risk of death and may face additional long-term health challenges.

Whilst UHC is an urgent priority to help end the current global health crisis, Target 3.8<sup>1</sup> of the SDGs looks to be insurmountable if we look at global progress made on UHC. UHC2030's first review of the state of commitment to UHC at the end of 2020 showed that countries have much still to do. In many countries, poor and vulnerable groups are further behind than they were before the pandemic and many governments are neglecting to invest in health, social safety nets and emergency preparedness before COVID-19 struck, when it matters most.

As members of the UHC2030 Private Sector Constituency, we join our partners in calling on political leaders to, amongst other things, prioritise UHC to tackle and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and invest in public health and primary health care, building emergency preparedness into all health system reforms. We urge governments to implement policies and plans to achieve the targets set for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address other health threats and issues including antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The global health crisis is a stark reminder that achieving universal health coverage must be at the forefront of countries' responses as they build back better and create more resilient health systems which will be the foundation of our preparedness for any future health threat.

---

<sup>1</sup> Target 3.8 covers: achieving universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all