



World Health
Organization

COVID-19 Global Research and Innovation Forum

13 May 2021

13:00 – 18:00 Central European Time CET

14 May 2021

13:00 – 18:00 Central European Time CET

DRAFT Agenda

Version 8.0 – 11 May 2021



R&DBlueprint

Powering research
to prevent epidemics

BACKGROUND

Since 1951, a central and historic responsibility for WHO has been the management of the global regime for the control of the international spread of disease. The International Health Regulations (IHR) are an instrument of international law that is legally-binding on 196 countries, including the 194 WHO Member States.

(https://www.who.int/health-topics/international-health-regulations#tab=tab_1)

In May 2015, the Sixty-Eighth World Health Assembly at the request of its 194 Member States, asked WHO to convene a broad global coalition to develop the WHO R&D Blueprint as both a convening mechanism and an instrument to articulate end to end technical guidance for R&D preparedness and support research during epidemics.

(<https://www.who.int/teams/blueprint/covid-19>)

World scientists on COVID-19 met at the World Health Organization's Geneva headquarters on 11–12 February 2020 to assess the level of knowledge about the new virus, agree on critical research questions that need to be answered urgently, and to find ways to work together to accelerate and fund priority research to curtail this outbreak and prepare for those in the future. (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/a-coordinated-global-research-roadmap>)

The Global Forum deliberations led to an agreement on two main goals.

- The first was to accelerate innovative research to help contain the spread of the pandemic and facilitate care for those affected.
- The second was to support research priorities that contribute to the development of global research platforms and, to build on the knowledge from the current pandemic to better prepare for the next unforeseen epidemic.

Thereafter, WHO facilitated a network of global researchers that have since debated research priorities, developed methods, generated new data and critically appraised emerging evidence to inform guidance. Hundreds of virtual scientific consultations including thousands of researchers around the world have taken place. Thousands of critical studies have been initiated.

Through these coordinated actions, emergency response efforts are benefiting from additional tools to combat the virus. Ideally, these coordination efforts will catalyse global changes, promote even greater global collaboration and increase the range of medical technologies available to treat infectious diseases. The net impact should be faster and more effective responses to this pandemic and to future public health emergencies across the globe.

The global health community, national governments, the researchers and populations of all countries, product development partnerships, pharmaceutical & biotechnical companies, and the funders must continue to work together. Further coordinated research efforts will increase investment in research for appropriate medical technologies, ensuring fair and equitable access to, and affordability for the populations in need.

WHO continues to use its convening power to make this vision a reality, but success will rely on the concerted efforts of all stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM

Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic and addressing its consequences necessitates a multi-disciplinary scientific approach to resolve the scientific challenges associated with the development of new tools.

Such an approach can only be successful if it is a part of a broad ranging effort to improve epidemic preparedness, promotes equal access to health interventions, addresses the social and economic impact of the pandemic, and recognizes the vital contribution of communities to the design and implementation of control strategies.

Preparatory consultations benefiting from inputs from hundreds of experts on each of the various thematic areas preceded this Forum. The outcomes of those preparatory consultations will be presented at the Forum but, the focus will be on outlining and debating the research priorities for 2021 and 2022.

The goals of the Forum remain the same as in the original Roadmap:

- To accelerate innovative research to help contain the spread of the pandemic and facilitate care for those affected.
- To support research priorities that contribute to the development of global research platforms and, to build on the knowledge from the current pandemic to better prepare for the next unforeseen epidemic

The outcomes of the Global Research and Innovation Forum will inform the development of a revised COVID-19 Global Research and Innovation Roadmap with clear goals, priority actions and milestones.

DRAFT AGENDA

DAY 1 - Thursday, 13 May 2021

Moderators – Drs Soumya Swaminathan and Michael J Ryan

Time	Topic	Speakers
13:00 - 13:15	Welcome address Objectives of the Forum	Dr Tedros Director-General WHO Dr Soumya Swaminathan Chief Scientist, WHO and Dr Michael J Ryan Executive Director, Health Emergencies programme, WHO
<i>One minute silence to remember the researchers, healthcare workers, frontline workers, and all the people that have fallen to COVID-19</i>		
13:15 - 13:30	A coordinated Global Research Roadmap: overview of global achievements one year on	WHO R&D Blueprint
13:30 - 13:50	Epidemiological drivers: population level susceptibility, variants and implementation of control measures	Professor Gabriel Leung School of Public Health, University of Hong Kong
13:50 - 14:10	Transmission dynamics: knowns and unknowns Research priorities on disease transmission and control measures	Professor Marion Koopmans Erasmus University Medical Centre, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
14:10 - 14:25	Keynote address Meeting the ethical challenges of access to COVID-19 interventions	Professor Peter Singer University Center for Human Values, Princeton University, USA
14:25 - 14:40	Accelerating research and development for COVID-19 vaccines	Dr Philip Krause Office of Vaccines Research and Review, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, FDA, USA.
14:40 - 15:00	SARS-COV-2 Variants: a multidisciplinary global research framework	Dr Sylvie Briand Infectious Hazard Management, Pandemic and Epidemic Diseases, Health Emergencies programme, WHO
15:00 - 15:15	Questions on outlined research priorities	Moderators
15:15 - 15:25	BREAK	
15:25 - 15:40	Keynote address How research can contribute to a healthier world for vulnerable populations	Dr Michelle Bachelet United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
15:40 - 16:00	Evaluating Therapeutics to reduce the short- and long-term effects of COVID -19	Professor Sir Michael Jacobs Clinical Director of Infection at the Royal Free Hospital, London, UK

Time	Topic	Speakers
16:00 – 16:20	Clinical management of COVID-19: from prioritization of drugs to access interventions	Dr DJ Christopher Department of Pulmonary Medicine, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India Dr Leticia Kawano-Dourado HCor Research Institute, Hospital do Coração, São Paulo, Brazil Division of Pulmonology, InCor, Faculty of Medicine, University of São Paulo, Brazil INSERM, University of Paris, France
16:20 – 16:40	Post COVID-19 condition: an emerging research agenda	Dr Hannah Davis Patient Led-Research Collaborative, USA Dr Regis Goulart Rosa Critical care physician and post-ICU outcomes researcher, Hospital Moinhos de Vento, Porto Alegre, Brazil
16:40 – 16:55	Questions on outlined research priorities	Moderators
16:55 – 17:15	Ethical considerations for research during the pandemic	Dr Beatriz da Costa Thomé Preventive Medicine Department Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil Dr Maxwell Smith School of Health Studies Western University, London, Ontario, Canada
17:15 – 17:50	Panel discussion How can Research Funders further contribute to fair and equitable access to life saving interventions? Moderated by Dr Bernard Pécoul	Dr Tom Kariuki , Director of Programmes, African Academy of Science (AESA) Dr Trevor Mundel , Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), USA Dr Richard Hatchett , Chief Executive Officer, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) Dr Bernard Pécoul , Executive Director Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) Professor Charlotte Watts , Chief Scientific Adviser, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, UK Dr Charu Kaushic , Chair of the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GLOPID-R) Dr Colin McIlff , Deputy Director of the Office of Global Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, USA Dr Sir Jeremy Farrar (TBC), Director of Wellcome, UK
17:50 – 18:00	Summary of Day 1 deliberations	Moderators
18:00	ADJOURN	

DAY 2 – Friday, 14 May 2021

Moderators – Drs Soumya Swaminathan and Michael J Ryan

Time	Topic	Speakers
13:00 – 13:15	Keynote address How research can help transform the way we fight global poverty and pandemics ?	Professor Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA
13:15 – 13:35	Virus natural history and transmission: remaining research priorities	Professor Christian Drosten Office for Global Health and Director Institute of Virology, Charité, Berlin Germany
13:35 – 13:55	Understanding the virus at the animal human interface: remaining research priorities	Professor Marion Koopmans Erasmus University Medical Centre, Rotterdam, The Netherlands Dr William Karesh Health and Policy at EcoHealth Alliance
13:55 – 14:15	Research to further expand availability to diagnostic tests	Dr Martha Fernandez Suarez Senior Director of R&D, FIND Dr Mark Perkins Scientist, WHO
14:15 – 14:30	Questions on outlined research priorities	Moderators
14:30 – 14:45	Keynote address Research to improve community engagement and global accountability	Dr Githinji Gitahi GCEO Amref Health Africa & former Co-Chair of UHC2030 Steering Committee
14:45 – 15:05	Community centered approaches to pandemic response	Professor Emily Chan Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and Collaborating Centre for Oxford University, UK
15:05 – 15:25	Infodemiology - the science of managing infodemics	Dr Tina D Purnat Principal Expert on eHealth and Digital Innovations for Public Health, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
15:25 – 15:40	Research progress and current and future priorities for IPC	Professor May Chu Colorado School of Public Health, USA Professor Mary-Louise McLaws University of New South Wales, Australia
15:40 – 15:50	BREAK	

Time	Topic	Speakers
15:50 – 16:05	Keynote address COVID-19 and social challenges: building a better future	Professor Alicia Bárcena Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Santiago, CHILE
16:05 - 16:20	Improved global coordination and new long-term investments in research preparedness	Dr Suwit Wibulpolprasert Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand
16:20 – 16:40	Regulatory convergence process: progress and the way ahead Interface between trials and regulatory assessment: towards public health goals	Dr Emer Cooke European Medicines Agency on behalf of International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA) Dr Marion Gruber Office of Vaccines Research & Review, CBER/FDA, USA
16:40 – 16:50	End to end R&D platforms: from research to policy development, to equitable access	WHO R&D Blueprint
16:50 – 17:00	Questions on outlined research priorities	Moderators
17:00 – 17:15	Keynote address Cutting edge research: its contribution to end this pandemic and prevent future ones	Professor Emmanuelle Charpentier Founding Director Max Planck Unit for the Science of Pathogens An Independent International Institute from the Max Planck Society, Germany
17:15 – 17:45	Global solidarity during the pandemics: public goods and COVID-19 research capacity	Professor Joanne Liu School of Population and Global Health McGill University, Montreal, Canada Dr Cleopatra Mugenyi International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), Africa Mr Carl Bildt WHO Special Envoy for the ACT Accelerator and Former Prime Minister, Sweden
17:45 – 18:00	Concluding remarks and next steps	Drs Soumya Swaminathan and Michael J Ryan
18:00	END OF MEETING	