

# BVGH Calls for More Collaboration between Industry and Governments to Increase Access to Medicines

## UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines solicits recommendations from BVGH

NEW YORK, NY, March 9, 2016--- Jennifer Dent, President of BIO Ventures for Global Health (BVGH) called for the expansion and scale-up of collaborations between the biopharmaceutical industry, researchers, and governments to facilitate greater access to medicines during a United Nations panel today.

Dent had been invited to make recommendations to the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines. The Panel is charged with seeking solutions to increase access to needed therapeutics in all countries including low-and-middle income nations.

Dent pointed to the success of BVGH's program with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) – WIPO Re:Search – as an example of how industry is sharing intellectual property assets with nonprofit and academic researchers worldwide to advance therapeutic development for diseases that disproportionately burden individuals and communities in LMICs.

"This program has exceeded our greatest expectations," Dent said. "By identifying, proposing, and facilitating alliances, BVGH has made ground-breaking progress in connecting researchers with drug development companies, establishing collaborations, and advancing product research and development across neglected infectious diseases".

"Scientists around the world have come together across multiple sectors to combine efforts to repurpose industry assets, work to develop new vaccines and diagnostics, accelerate product development, and evaluate products in the field," Dent pointed out.

Dent also outlined several industry initiatives, which support and provide access to needed medicines across infectious and non-communicable diseases. Programs highlighted by Dent include: Novartis Access, which offers LMIC governments 15 drugs for non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, and diabetes, at a cost of \$1 per month. Dent also mentioned Merck's Mectizan® program, which has been donating Mectizan to low-, middle-, and upper-middle-income countries for nearly 30 years; GlaxoSmithKline's annual Albenza® donations to treat children in poor countries whose growth and learning capacity is threatened by intestinal worms; and Pfizer's commitment to provide Gavi with up to 740 million doses of their pneumococcal disease vaccine (Prevenar13®).

Dent emphasized, “With the right programs and partnership structure coupled with program and alliance management, pharmaceutical companies and companies in other sectors will participate in access initiatives focused on the needs of LMICs.”

She recommended, the Commission complete a full analysis of access to medicines programs to determine what is working well, what is not working, and how these programs could be expanded and made more efficient with the addition of new partners.

Dent noted that it was imperative that long-term policies support expansion of capacity building programs that will enable LMIC researchers and healthcare professionals to address health issues at the local level.

“The programs I have outlined today represent just the beginning of what can be accomplished through new models of partnership and program management. BVGH’s experience indicates that companies are willing and even enthusiastic to participate and share knowledge, skills, and IP to support research and development for diseases of poverty, access to medicines across therapeutics fields, and capacity building,” Dent concluded.

Jennifer Dent’s comments and recommendations to the UN High Level Panel Commission, during the open dialogue session, can be viewed by clicking on the following links:

<https://youtu.be/3N057w1RAOs?t=2475>

<https://youtu.be/3N057w1RAOs?t=11030>

<https://youtu.be/3N057w1RAOs?t=18973>

#### About BVGH

BIO Ventures for Global Health (BVGH) is a results-oriented nonprofit organization based in Seattle, Washington, USA whose mission is to engage private industry in global health initiatives. BVGH engages global health stakeholders in partnerships to accelerate the development of new drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics that address the unmet medical needs of the developing world. Working at the crossroads of the biopharmaceutical industry and global health, BVGH creates customized programs that fit the needs and capacity of partners and impact health in measurable ways.

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