

### Top news:

- Negotiators of the EU resolution have agreed on a draft text on IP rights over COVID-19 tools which will be tabled at next week's WHA.
- WHO published the 2020 World Health Statistics today – despite progress, particularly in lower-income countries, the report reflects that the rate of progress is too slow to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and will be further thrown off track by COVID-19.
- WHO chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan said it will be four or five years before Covid-19 is under control.
- Sanofi to potentially give US preference on COVID-19 vaccine citing it being first in line to fund its vaccine research.
- Gilead signed non-exclusive voluntary licensing agreements with 5 generic pharmaceutical manufacturers to produce remdesivir for 127 countries.
- EU Commission is weighing using a \$2.6 billion emergency fund to boost pharma companies' manufacturing capacity, fearing shortages of a COVID-19 vaccine once it's developed

### ACCESS & AVAILABILITY

- **Bloomberg:** [French Drug Giant to Give U.S. Preference on COVID-19 Vaccine](#). That's because the U.S. was first in line to fund Sanofi's vaccine research, Chief Executive Officer Paul Hudson said in an interview with Bloomberg News. He warned that Europe risks falling behind unless it steps up efforts to seek protection against a pandemic that's killed more than 290,000 people worldwide.
- **Fierce Pharma:** [With 'multiple shots on goal,' NIAID Director Fauci is 'cautiously optimistic' about COVID-19 vaccine success](#). With at least eight COVID-19 vaccines in human testing and headlines touting their progress each day, the top US health official voiced some optimism about one or more of them working.
- **SupplyChainBrain:** [Q&A: Low- and Middle-Income Countries Struggle With Access to Essential Medicines](#), and ensure the safety and quality of those products that are available. Jude Nwokike, vice president of the public health division of U.S. Pharmacopeia, discusses the medical supply-chain issues that LMICs face now and on a regular basis.

### SUPPLY & MANUFACTURING

- **Gilead:** [Voluntary Licensing Agreements for Remdesivir](#). Gilead has signed non-exclusive voluntary licensing agreements with five generic pharmaceutical manufacturers based in India and Pakistan to further expand supply and distribution of remdesivir in 127 countries.
- **FiercePharma:** [Regeneron CEO: Manufacturing not up to snuff for COVID-19 vaccines, therapies](#). Regeneron CEO Len Schleifer further stated that there's something we have to learn from this pandemic so that when COVID-21 or -25 or -32 comes along, we need a little bit more capacity already in place so that we can get it to everybody.
- **Reuters:** [Fearing shortages, EU may deploy emergency funds in COVID-19 vaccine race](#). Documents seen by Reuters show that the EU Commission is weighing using a \$2.6 billion emergency fund to boost pharmaceutical labs' capacity, fearing that even if a COVID-19 vaccine is developed the EU may not be able to produce enough shots.

## GLOBAL RESPONSE

- **Gates Foundation:** [A down payment on a COVID-free future](#). No one knows yet who will discover the first effective coronavirus vaccine, or where it will be made. What we do know is that governments, corporations, multilateral institutions, and philanthropic organizations need to work with each other to meld their unique resources into a collective effort.

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

- **Financial Times:** [European investment plunge raises fears for future growth](#). Across the region, capital expenditure has contracted sharply, according to data for countries that have published detailed gross domestic product data, while borrowing to invest has dropped across the eurozone, reflecting businesses' rising cash needs and plummeting output.
- **Financial Times:** [Emerging economies hold back on asking creditors for debt relief](#). Renegotiating borrowing from private investors could damage future access to finance. The G20 group of leading nations has agreed to suspend repayments on bilateral debt from 73 poor countries. It also asked private creditors to do the same.

## GLOBAL HEALTH IMPACT

- **UN:** [COVID-19 pandemic 'quickly becoming a child rights crisis': Daily death rate could spike by 6,000 for under-fives](#). UNICEF said that the health crisis is "quickly becoming a child rights crisis", requesting \$1.6 billion to support its humanitarian response for children impacted by the pandemic.

## TREATMENT & VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

### *IFPMA members*

- **The Wall Street Journal:** [Gilead's Remdesivir Tested With Other Drugs to Fight COVID-19](#). The promise and limitations of remdesivir, the first drug to prove capable of helping fight COVID-19, have kicked off efforts to see if it can work better in combination with other treatments and to create new, easier methods of administering it.

### *Others - Vaccines*

- **Financial Times:** [WHO's chief scientist offers bleak assessment of challenges ahead](#). It will be four or five years before Covid-19 is under control. Many factors will determine how long and to what extent the virus remains a threat, including whether it mutates, what containment measures are put in place and whether an effective vaccine is developed, Soumya Swaminathan told the FT's Global Boardroom digital conference.
- **The Wall Street Journal:** [Old Vaccine Gets New Look in Tests for Coronavirus Protection](#). Researchers see promise in using BCG, a 100-year-old tuberculosis shot, until a vaccination for the new virus is developed. Trials have been set up in India, Texas and the Netherlands.
- **Mirror:** [Coronavirus vaccine trial in mice 'successful' raising hopes it could work in humans](#). The coronavirus vaccine has been developed by collaborating scientists at Vietnamese Vabiotech and the University of Bristol in the UK.
- **AA:** [Russia aiming for coronavirus vaccine tests in June](#), says country's Health Minister, Mikhail Murashko. He further stated that scientists working on the vaccine say the first batch could be available by late July.

### *Others - Treatments*

- **Financial Times:** [Researchers look to blood antibodies as weapons in virus fight](#). Biotechnology and pharmaceuticals companies are working to create more sophisticated antibody medicines, some human and some developed in animals
- **The Brussels Times:** [Belgium studies treatment with recovered patients' plasma](#). The large-scale DAWN-plasma study is a collaboration between university and non-university

hospitals across the country, treating patients with plasma from people who have recovered.

- **Xinhua:** [Global study to analyze ICU patient data to guide COVID-19 treatments](#). The study uses artificial intelligence (AI) to uncover the best standards of treatment for COVID-19 and help health systems worldwide cope with critically-ill patients.
- **NDTV:** [Two Japanese Drugs In Race To Develop COVID-19 Treatment](#). Avigan and Camostat are among dozens undergoing testing around the globe and illustrate how the race to develop treatments and vaccines is still wide open.
- **Forbes:** [Researchers Explore Low Doses Of Radiation To Treat Severe Coronavirus Cases](#). The technique showed good results when used during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Ethics**

- **Nature:** [Coronavirus drugs trials must get bigger and more collaborative](#). The pandemic has given rise to too many small and uncontrolled clinical trials that do not include control groups and ensure transparency with data.

#### **PREPAREDNESS**

- **The Guardian:** ["10 days of battle": Wuhan draws up ambitious COVID-19 testing plan](#). Chinese authorities in Hubei province are preparing to test 11 million people in Wuhan after a small outbreak this week.
- **The Lancet:** [Africa faces difficult choices in responding to COVID-19](#). To flatten the curve, some African governments have imposed stringent lockdowns to reduce transmission. However, the safety of this approach in poor communities has not been evaluated, and it is plausible that lives lost to lockdown could exceed those saved from COVID-19.

#### **GEOPOLITICS**

- **Forbes:** [An Infectious Disease Expert Explains Why The WHO Is Crucial For Fighting The Coronavirus Pandemic](#). The article explores the possible reason why the US withholds funding for the WHO.
- **Reuters:** [Taiwan's exclusion from WHO caused coronavirus deaths, U.S. panel says](#). In a report released on Tuesday, the U.S. Congress' U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission said Taiwan's exclusion contributed to "critical delays" in timely receipt and accurate guidance for WHO members in the early stages of the outbreak.
- **CGTN:** [Taiwan never excluded from WHO: Chinese FM spokesperson](#). Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's remarks came after a top U.S. government commission on China and stressed that China urges the US to abide by the one-China principle and stop supporting the Taiwan authorities' political manipulation of the virus for "Taiwan independence".

#### **WHO - COVID-19 UPDATE, 13 May**

Statement by Dr Tedros during today's media briefing [here](#).

- Today, the [2020 World Health Statistics](#) were published by WHO.
  - The biggest gains were reported in low-income countries, which saw life expectancy rise by more than a fifth since the turn of the Millennium.
  - Better maternal and child healthcare has led to a halving of child mortality since the year 2000.

- Furthermore, lower-income countries dramatically scaled up access to services to prevent and treat HIV, malaria and tuberculosis, as well as a number of neglected tropical diseases such as guinea worm.
  - However, the report reflects that the rate of progress is too slow to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and will be further thrown off track by COVID-19.
  - The new statistics shine a light on one of the key drivers of this pandemic: inequality.
- During the World Health Assembly next week we will discuss with health leaders from across the world not only how to defeat COVID-19 but also how we can build back stronger health systems everywhere.
- We urge political leaders to ensure that COVID-19 preparedness and responses in closed settings are identified and implemented in line with fundamental human rights and are guided by WHO guidance and recommendations to protect human health.
- The WHO Academy app provides health workers with mobile access to a wealth of COVID-19 resources, developed by WHO, that include up-to-the-minute guidance, tools, training, and virtual workshops that will help them care for COVID-19 patients and protect themselves.
- Furthermore, in response to COVID-19, WHO has utilized our OpenWHO platform and translated guidance into training, including 68 online courses to improve the response to health emergencies.

**WHO:** [UNODC, WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR joint statement on COVID-19 in prisons and other closed settings](#). They want to urgently draw the attention of political leaders to the heightened vulnerability of prisoners and other people deprived of liberty to the COVID-19 pandemic, and urge them to take all appropriate public health measures in respect of this vulnerable population that is part of our communities.

**WHO:** [Launch of the WHO Academy and the WHO Info mobile applications](#). The WHO Academy app is designed to support health workers during COVID-19. The app provides health workers with mobile access to a wealth of COVID-19 knowledge resources, develop. The WHO Info app is designed to inform the general public and will give real-time mobile access to the latest news and developments.

**PAHO:** [PAHO Director asks countries to address health, social and economic emergencies together, as COVID-19 expands in the Americas](#). Carissa F. Etienne, Director of PAHO, called on countries to address health, social and economic emergencies, saying she is “deeply concerned” by the rapid expansion of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Americas. She urged that countries must support their economies while building strong social protection networks and embracing evidence-based public health measures that are essential to saving lives.