

On 7 December 2016, WHO joined Global Fund; the GAVI Alliance, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, UNITAID, United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Office for Project Services in signing a statement of intent to align and “green” procurement of health commodities, in an effort to protect the environment and contribute to sustainable development.

As stated by WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan, “We need to make sure that when international organizations procure health commodities, we promote responsible consumption and production patterns and support the Sustainable Development Goals.”

WHO and its sister United Nations agencies collectively procure an estimated US\$ 3 billion in health commodities each year. United Nations agencies procure significant amounts of generic anti-retroviral therapies (ARTs), anti-malaria medicines and insecticide-impregnated bed nets, anti-tuberculosis medicines and condoms, as well as certain vaccines. Additional health commodities procured include medical and laboratory equipment and consumables.

The new agreement sends an important message to suppliers and manufacturers of health commodities that purchasers will increasingly be looking for environmentally and socially sourced health commodities, particularly those within the international health development sector.

WHO and the other signatories have agreed to reflect this common commitment to advancing environmental and socially responsible procurement as part of their standard engagement with suppliers and manufactures. They will also include it in their institutional strategies and policies.

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