

### **Vision Statement**

*MSF is an organisation in a unique position to bring about improved Access to Products for Healthcare (APH), working for, and with, vulnerable populations. Access to Products for Healthcare is an essential aspect of access to care and is integral to the implementation of MSF's social mission, as it partly determines the needs for our interventions as well as our capacity to deliver care and the level of that care.*

*A lack of adequate Access to Products for Healthcare continues to engender unacceptable levels of suffering in places where MSF intervenes and beyond, as well as impeding our ability to provide quality medical assistance. We know that only concerted international political efforts could address its fundamental underlying causes and we are conscious that it is neither solely our responsibility, nor within our ability to do so alone. Nonetheless, over past decades MSF has successfully invested in improving Access to Products for Healthcare in different ways. Today evolutions of the MSF association and of the APH landscape allow us to consolidate this work and offer new opportunities.*

*Over the coming decade, MSF will pursue and accentuate its activities aimed at delivering tangible improvements in Access to Products for Healthcare for people who are deprived of them. Whilst our actions will be as specific to operational contexts as possible, they will also be as global as necessary to achieve the specific improvements sought. This work will expose and address problems faced by patients and by operational teams, will involve the mobilization of the entire movement towards common ambitions, and will leverage the potential of partnerships. It will also preserve space for innovation and reflect the multiple expressions of our social mission. These activities will be in-depth, diverse in nature and adequately resourced, and we will learn from their successes and failures. These ambitions will be reflected in how we structure and govern this work*

### **Background**

In May 2020, the International Board tasked the Full ExCom with clarifying the strategic direction and oversight of all activities and objectives related to MSF's [Access to Medicines](#) work. In October 2020, the full ExCom approved a plan for designing this new strategy and approach. The plan will:

- re-establish the issues of Access to Products for Healthcare which MSF considers are within its social mission to address
- define a vision and the strategic objectives
- set out a new implementation and governance model for the period 2022 to 2026.

This document establishes the definition, scope, principles, criteria and approach framing MSF's work on Access to Products for Healthcare. Its preliminary contents were informed by a broad consultation<sup>1</sup> that took place between February and April 2021 and validated by the Full ExCom in July 2021. This final version was informed by feedback received in the remainder of 2021 and by [an IB Statement on the Summary Outcomes](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> For the outcomes of the consultations please visit [this folder](#)

[of the 2022 IGA](#) <sup>2</sup>. It has been reviewed and cleared for submission to the Full ExCom by [the Access to Medicines taskforce](#).

## 1. **Definition**

Access to Products for Healthcare<sup>3</sup> refers to any activity that any MSF entity undertakes to improve the accessibility, availability, affordability, appropriateness and quality of products<sup>4</sup> for health care<sup>5</sup> for the populations it assists and their communities.

## 2. **Scope**

The hoped-for outcome of any MSF Access to Products for Healthcare activity is a tangible improvement in the specific situations of its patients and the populations it assists. In scope of this is bearing witness to unacceptable lack of Access to Products for Healthcare MSF is confronted with in the delivery of its medical humanitarian operations.

MSF sets Access to Products for Healthcare objectives and delivers activities that aim to reduce rates of mortality and morbidity, improve the management and self-management of health conditions, including disabilities, and improve both patient's dignity and the agency they feel during their treatment.

MSF also conducts Access to Products for Healthcare activity that can benefit patients and the populations it assists not just today but into the future. The improvements that we aim to achieve may also reach beyond the patients that we directly treat and improve Access to Products for Healthcare globally.-To do so MSF sometimes seeks to effect change to national, transnational and global policies, agreements, partnerships and legal frameworks. However, those changes are not an end in themselves and therefore cannot be the starting point of an Access to Products for Healthcare activity.

MSF conducts six types of activities, often inter-related, to meet its objectives of improving Access to Products for Healthcare:

1. MSF introduces new products to continuously improve the medical care provided to the patients and communities it assists, and develops alternative or improved sourcing and supplies models and approaches to products for healthcare.
2. MSF bears witness to the Access to Products for Healthcare problems encountered by the populations it assists and during the delivery of medical humanitarian operations.
3. MSF engages in the development of products for healthcare and in operational research to improve the use of new and existing products for healthcare.
4. MSF funds and collaborates with organisations that are looking to improve Access to Products for Healthcare, where this is relevant to its medical humanitarian operations.
5. MSF advocates for changes to policy and practices to improve Access to Products for Healthcare.
6. MSF shares knowledge with healthcare providers and other like-minded organisations and individuals to improve Access to Products for Healthcare.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Operational Centres and WaCA

<sup>3</sup> The use of the term Access to Products for Healthcare is internal and not necessarily expected to be used for external branding or representation purposes

<sup>4</sup> product: something that is made to be sold, usually something that is produced by an industrial process or, [...] something that is grown or obtained through farming

<sup>5</sup> health care: is the maintenance or improvement of health via the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, recovery, or cure of disease, illness, injury, and other physical and mental impairments in people.

### **3. Principles, criteria and attributes for engaging into Access to Products for Healthcare activities**

#### **Relevance and legitimacy:**

- a. MSF tackles Access to Products for Healthcare problems that affect the people and populations it provides medical humanitarian assistance to.

#### **Pragmatism and effectiveness:**

- b. MSF Access to Products for Healthcare activities are as specific to operational contexts as possible and as global as necessary to tangibly improve Access to Products for Healthcare for the populations it assists.
- c. MSF addresses the Access to Products for Healthcare problems when the hoped-for outcomes have the highest chances of success, will bring the most tangible benefits for its operations and the populations it assists where it has the greatest expertise.
- d. MSF sometimes addresses Access to Product for healthcare problems when the probability of success are remote, to bring them to light and inspire others to act.
- e. MSF develops solutions to Access to Products for Healthcare problems that are as simple as possible and as complex as necessary.
- f. While MSF systematically seeks solutions to overcome Access to Products for Healthcare problems that can be replicated and/or adopted within national health systems, the immediate medical needs of the populations MSF assists within a specific context always have primacy.

#### **Co-ownership and partnering:**

- g. MSF designs its Access to Products for Healthcare projects in consultation with patients, communities and, when required or reasonable, relevant health authorities and grassroots organisations.
- h. MSF works in partnership with organisations that are better suited to deliver on specific aspects of Access to Products for Healthcare problems and whose long-term agendas will not be detrimental to the general improvement of equitable Access to Products for Healthcare.

#### ***Core attributes: analysis and asymmetry***

- i. MSF has the expertise necessary to analyse existing and emerging Access to Products for Healthcare problems and opportunities, and their causes, at both local and transnational levels.
- j. MSF has the capacity to devise or identify appropriate solutions to address any threats or opportunities as they emerge, in a timely and effective manner.
- k. MSF's organisational structure allows it to plan long-term proactive objectives for improving Access to Products for Healthcare and to see them through to their completion.
- l. When designing and/or advocating for Access to Products for Healthcare solutions, MSF systematically considers the socio-anthropological contexts, models of care, health systems and regulations within which they should be adopted or integrated.

**END**