

WHO, FIND to drive universal access to essential diagnostics

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By closing major diagnostic gaps at country level and bolstering disease surveillance



The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) have announced that a memorandum of understanding has been signed by the two organizations to formalize a strategic collaboration that will strengthen diagnosis in resource-poor countries by closing major diagnostic gaps at country level and bolstering disease surveillance that will inform public health initiatives and enhance outbreak preparedness and response.

“This collaboration is an inspiring development that will take us a long way towards ensuring access to diagnostics to all who need them,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. “Global health challenges such as the ongoing novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak demonstrates that without these essential elements of health systems, we cannot hope to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable. I look forward to working closely with FIND to determine what countries need and to forge a path to deliver these innovations so that no one is left behind.”

FIND has been an active partner with WHO since 2008 and a WHO Collaborating Centre since 2014, acting in the areas of laboratory strengthening and diagnostic technology evaluation. This expanded collaboration will put in place the building blocks necessary to enable transformative change in a move toward a country-led diagnostics alliance. Initial workstreams will focus on demand-driven access to essential diagnostics and the development of national Essential Diagnostics Lists, alongside collection of data that assist the scale up of diagnostics to support low- and middle-income countries on their paths to universal health coverage.

The strategic collaboration agreement will initially run for a period of 5 years, until 2025.