

# Summary report of the Covid Innovations For All (CIFA) consortium

**Background** Covid-19 created great havoc across the globe and was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020. In response, a group of expert NGOs established the Covid Innovations For All (CIFA) consortium to contribute to accelerated development, sufficient production and equitable, affordable deployment of medical technologies needed to combat Covid-19.<sup>1</sup> This overview will highlight the work that has been done by the CIFA consortium with a particular focus on technology sharing mechanisms, such as the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP), and the Pandemic Accord negotiations.

## Theory of change

**Input** The world faced the public health threat of Covid-19 and barriers in access to essential medical products. The start of the pandemic brought the CIFA consortium together to address these barriers by sharing intellectual property (IP), knowledge and data.

## Activities

- ▶ Support the creation of a voluntary Covid-19 pool and the sharing of IP, knowledge and data, through evidence-based advocacy, strategic communications and technical advice.
- ▶ Monitor and raise public awareness about pharmaceutical and diagnostic companies working on promising Covid-19 products, predominantly in high-income countries.
- ▶ Advocate for national and regional public research institutions, including universities, to engage in responsible licensing, including commitment of their knowledge to technology sharing mechanisms, such as C-TAP.
- ▶ Provide technical advice and tools (including legal analysis) to NGOs, journalists, governments and international institutions seeking to secure access to Covid-19 technologies.
- ▶ Create clearly presented, open-source data to support all of the above efforts, including pricing, investments (public and private) and other information critical for equitable access to Covid-19 technologies.

## Outcomes

- ▶ Increased support from public and private sector actors for technology sharing mechanisms, such as C-TAP.
- ▶ Establishment of public health-oriented policy measures that enable access to medical countermeasures against Covid-19.
- ▶ Increased number of Covid-19 technology suppliers in developing countries due to technology transfer.
- ▶ Longer-term solutions for dealing with Covid-19 as well as preparing for future pandemics based on the lessons learnt.

## Impact

- ▶ Equitable access to medical products against Covid-19, including vaccines, treatments and diagnostics.
- ▶ Improved public health outcomes from reduced Covid-19 mortality and morbidity.
- ▶ Minimized economic and social impact of Covid-19.
- ▶ Long-term sustainability of the principles of sharing IP, knowledge and data for equitable access to medical products that go beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ▶ A blueprint of an effective model for a coordinated international pandemic response.

<sup>1</sup> With funding from Unitaid.

## Introducing the CIFA consortium

To achieve these aims, leading expert voices and public health organisations formed the CIFA consortium. CIFA's members complement each other with their extensive knowledge and experience in access to medicines and IP issues, networks at national, regional (specifically North and South America and the European Union) and global level and contacts with influential media platforms.



Wemos lead of the consortium  
Evidence-based advocacy at Dutch, European and global level for structural change to improve public health including equitable access to medical products.



Health Action International (HAI) Track record in research and advocacy for access to medicines and health systems strengthening in Europe and globally.



Innovarte Chile-based Latin American NGO with expertise in international negotiations regarding intellectual property instruments, free trade agreements, and public policy.

## The CIFA members



Pharmaceutical Accountability Foundation (PAF) Analysis of pharmaceutical development, regulatory and pricing processes, and anti-competitive behaviour. Undertakes legal action in case of unacceptable company practices.

### Medicines Law & Policy

Medicines Law & Policy (ML&P)  
Policy and legal analysis of intellectual property issues. Provides consulting, training and communications on IP and access issues.



Knowledge Ecology International (KEI) Expertise in problem solving and thought leadership on innovation and access to medicines, including via voluntary and compulsory licensing.

## Interventions and results

The CIFA members have been a force to be reckoned with setting up and promoting C-TAP and other sharing mechanisms, such as the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) with an expended mandate and the mRNA hubs. This work also included driving international conversations on improved preparedness and response to future pandemics. CIFA's most important areas of impact are the establishment and use of C-TAP and the Pandemic Accord negotiations.

## C-TAP and other sharing mechanisms

### Interventions

Through decisive advocacy, including engagement with the WHO and Member States, the CIFA consortium is co-responsible for the establishment of C-TAP, a new mechanism for open source sharing and global, non-exclusive licensing for the production of essential medical products related to the pandemic. Subsequently, the CIFA members conducted persistent advocacy and provided technical advice to governments, pharmaceutical companies and public research institutions to stimulate the sharing of IP, knowledge and data with C-TAP or other sharing mechanisms.

## Results

Firstly, the establishment of C-TAP is a normative success, providing a new system for technology transfer and important lessons learnt for achieving global access to medical products in future health crises. Moreover, CIFA contributed to four signed agreements with C-TAP and/or MPP for sharing IP, knowledge and data on Covid-19 technologies:

- ▶ In October 2021, Merck & Co (MSD) shared its Covid-19 therapeutic molnupiravir with the MPP. Generic manufacturers can now produce low-cost versions for supply in 105 low- and middle-income countries.
- ▶ In November 2021, Spain's National Research Council (CSIC) made an agreement with C-TAP for sharing their diagnostic tests globally, transparent and non-exclusive. It was out-licensed to the South African pharmaceutical company Biotech Africa.
- ▶ In November 2021, Pfizer made an agreement with the MPP to share its oral Covid-19 treatment nirmatrelvir in combination with ritonavir for supply in 95 low- and middle-income countries.
- ▶ In May 2022, US President Biden announced the agreement between the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) and C-TAP, for the development of 11 innovative therapeutics, early-stage vaccines and diagnostic tools for Covid-19. These licences are transparent, global and non-exclusive.

More agreements are still in the pipeline.

## Pandemic Accord negotiations

### Interventions

In 2022, CIFA's goal became technology sharing for current and future pandemic response, enabling widespread manufacture of medical countermeasures to save lives and being able to address future pandemics quickly and effectively.

Several important activities by the CIFA consortium contributed to this goal, including:

- ▶ Launch of covid19response.org, online overview and review by Wemos of international initiatives by public institutions to enhance access to medical products during pandemics, introducing 5 dimensions for an equitable and effective response (9 February 2022).
- ▶ World Health Assembly side event 'Taking stock of C-TAP: lessons learnt for future pandemic preparedness and response' (18 May 2022).

## C-TAP timeline

- **11 MARCH 2020**  
WHO declares Covid-19 pandemic
- **MARCH 2020**  
KEI engages with government of Costa Rica to introduce the idea of C-TAP to WHO
- **27 MARCH 2020**  
Costa Rica sends letter to WHO-DG proposing to create C-TAP
- **MARCH-MAY 2020**  
Advocacy by CIFA members calling national governments to support C-TAP
- **25 MAY 2020**  
C-TAP is mentioned in the WHO Local Production Resolution
- **29 MAY 2020**  
44 WHO Member States endorse C-TAP Solidarity Call to Action. C-TAP is launched
- **MAY 2020-SEPTEMBER 2022**  
Advocacy by CIFA members calling governments, companies and public research institutions to share IP, knowledge and data with C-TAP
- **2021-2022**  
Discussions and negotiations C-TAP with IP rights holders
- **23 NOVEMBER 2021**  
Agreement with CSIC for diagnostic tests
- **12 MAY 2022**  
Agreement with NIH for 11 innovative products
- **9 NOVEMBER 2022**  
Review report by Wemos on functioning of C-TAP with recommendations for future pandemic preparedness and response
- **FROM 2023 ONWARDS**  
CIFA members involved in WHO evaluation of C-TAP

- ▶ [Fair Pharma Scorecard](#) launch (28 June) and [event](#) (30 June 2022), offering guidelines for human rights compliance by pharmaceutical companies during pandemics.
- ▶ BMJ Global Health article '[A pandemic treaty for equitable global access to medical countermeasures: seven recommendations for sharing intellectual property, know-how and technology](#)' (July 2022), resulting in an expert working group organised by CIFA members, which has directly influenced the zero-draft of the Pandemic Accord.
- ▶ Written and oral input by several CIFA members during the [public hearings](#) of the Pandemic Accord intergovernmental negotiation body (INB) (April and September 2022).
- ▶ Input by consortium member ML&P in the [Informal Focused Consultations on intellectual property of the INB](#) (7 October 2022).
- ▶ Publication of a [review report on the functioning of C-TAP](#), including recommendations for effective technology sharing during future pandemics (9 November 2022), gaining much interest from stakeholders, resulting in constructive conversations with the Technical Advisory Group of C-TAP and contributing to WHO's internal evaluation of C-TAP.

## Results

Thanks to CIFA's efforts, the need for sharing IP, knowledge and data has become an unquestioned part of the international conversation on pandemic preparedness and response.

Moreover, the [zero-draft of the Pandemic Accord](#), published by the WHO in February 2023, demonstrates some of the CIFA members' principal recommendations. It stimulates the use of attaching conditions to public funding to safeguard affordable pricing, fair allocation and sharing of know-how and technology. It also aims to increase the transparency on the amount of public funding and the pricing.

Because of CIFA's work, equity is increasingly at the centre of the proposed Pandemic Accord when it comes to access to medical products. If this is implemented and enforced adequately, the accord has a chance to remedy a substantial part of the mistakes made during the Covid-19 pandemic and better prepare the world for future pandemics.

## CIFA in figures

<p><b>160 invitations</b> for CIFA members to speak as experts.</p>	<p><b>27 public sector actors or governments</b> stating their commitment to the effective and sustainable implementation of a technology sharing mechanism, such as C-TAP.</p>	<p><b>35 targeted private sector actors</b> engaged with the establishment or implementation of a technology sharing mechanism, such as C-TAP.</p>	<p><b>20 international and national policy measures</b> considered or adopted that improve access to Covid-19 technologies.</p>
<p><b>4 manufacturers of Covid-19 products</b> shared their IP, knowledge and data through a technology sharing mechanism (C-TAP and/or the MPP) – more agreements are still in the pipeline.</p>	<p><b>129 meetings or conversations</b> held, targeting international institutes or governmental representatives on the creation and implementation of technology sharing mechanisms.</p>	<p><b>36 briefing sessions</b> organised by CIFA members for Covid-19 IP rights holders.</p>	<p><b>628 articles</b> published by high-profile national or international news and technical media on sharing IP, knowledge and data, thanks to outreach by CIFA members.</p>

## CIFA in practice: a selection of impact stories

### Successful lobby results in Dutch parliamentary motion to support C-TAP

In 2020, after extensive lobbying from Wemos, the Dutch parliament adopted a motion that urges the government to take up a leadership role during the WHA in May 2020 and to support Costa Rica's proposal for C-TAP. This motion aimed to hold the government accountable in making sure that IP, knowledge and data are shared in C-TAP. Additionally, it urged the government to attach conditions on affordability and accessibility when investing public money in new Covid-19 vaccines.

### Industry engages with the Fair Pharma Scorecard

The [Fair Pharma Scorecard](#), launched in 2022, was designed by PAF to assess pharmaceutical companies' compliance with international human rights principles during Covid-19, including sharing of IP, knowledge and data. Since its launch, the scorecard has evoked numerous responses from pharmaceutical companies and media with regards to unmet human rights responsibilities. In addition, social investors are interested in using the Fair Pharma criteria as benchmarks when choosing which companies to invest in.

### Research shows that Moderna failed to disclose federal support in vaccine patents

In 2020, KEI conducted ground-breaking research that found that Moderna – the company with a leading Covid-19 vaccine, winning multibillion-dollar contracts – did not adhere to a law designed to protect public investments. The company repeatedly received funding from the US government, but failed to disclose federal support in any vaccine patents, despite the legal requirement to do so. The media attention and public discussion this caused contributed to Moderna's statement that it will not enforce its vaccine patents during the pandemic.

### Engagement with Universidad de Chile for technology sharing

Innovarte's diligence to technology transfer through C-TAP has resulted in an alliance with Universidad de Chile. Innovarte met with the university in 2021, to inform them on the existence of C-TAP. Shortly after, Universidad de Chile offered to share their technology – that allows multiple testing and usage in level 2 biosafety laboratories. Innovarte facilitated a bilateral meeting with a representative of C-TAP to discuss specific issues and procedures necessary for the technology transfer. C-TAP and the university are now in contact with each other to reach an agreement.

### Increasing knowledge on TRIPS flexibilities with the TRIPS Flexibilities Navigator

HAI aimed to tackle the issue of lack of information on TRIPS (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) flexibilities to overcome IP barriers in access to medicines, and to promote their use. In 2022, HAI and fellow CIFA members launched the [TRIPS Flexibilities Navigator](#). This tool brings together existing data from ML&P's TRIPS Flexibilities Database with legal information on the use of TRIPS flexibilities in national contexts, pressure points for advocacy and research opportunities. It resulted in meaningful engagement with policymakers, advocates and researchers.

### BMJ publication and advisory role in drafting Pandemic Accord

The process towards a future Pandemic Accord has been heavily influenced by CIFA's work. An expert working group chaired by CIFA members in 2021 resulted in a 2022 [article](#) in the influential BMJ Global Health. The publication was led by ML&P and underlined the working group's conclusions on what provisions in the accord are needed to ensure effective sharing of IP, knowledge and data. This was followed by ML&P being invited to advise at the Informal Focused Consultations on IP of the INB. Most CIFA members gave written and oral input during the public hearings. As mentioned before, the zero-draft of the accord contains important elements that CIFA has advocated for.