In tuberculosis, MPP sublicensed sutezolid, an investigational drug for TB treatment, to the Bill & Melinda Gates Medical Research Institute, thus paving the way for its clinical development.

Cutting across these core diseases, MPP partnered with Unitaid’s grantees, the University of Liverpool, the University of Washington and MedinCell, to increase access to long-acting therapeutics in HIV, TB, HCV and malaria as they become available.

As we push forward in the essential medicines area, MPP bolstered partnerships by formalising Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the International Diabetes Foundation and the World Heart Federation.

In the disease that provided the headlines for most of the year, MPP swiftly expanded its mandate in March to cover products for COVID-19. In a pioneering move, the organisation led an open pledge bringing together 21 generic drug makers from around the globe to combine their manufacturing potential towards developing and delivering COVID-19 treatments.

Directly as a result of its 10 years of experience and its recognised expertise, MPP was asked to be a part of various global multi-stakeholder initiatives to tackle COVID-19, such as the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) and the WHO COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP).

While new patented medicines for COVID-19 that are both effective and suitable for deployment in low- and middle-income countries are still to appear, and MPP is still, therefore, waiting to sign a licence, MPP and its model have received a large amount of media coverage holding us up as a key mechanism in the battle against this pandemic.

This belief in our model has been evidenced by the signing of a new five-year USD 34.3 million grant from Unitaid with its diverse board of countries, foundations, WHO and civil society, as well as by the continued support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

In this Annual Report 2020, themed “10 years of MPP”, we invite you to delve into our journey over the last 10 years including lessons from the decade and news from 2020. Today, we thank each one of you for partnering with us in every step we took. This report is dedicated to all our partners because you share with us our core understanding that health innovations are only as powerful as they are accessible.

Dr Marie-Paule Kieny
Chair of MPP’s Board

Charles Gore
Executive Director of MPP

By working closely with partners including pharmaceutical companies – originators and generic manufacturers – MPP’s voluntary licensing mechanism has led to the supply of over 18 billion doses of quality generic treatments for HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) to 148 countries. This diligent work has contributed to making quality-assured, life-saving drugs available at historically low prices, resulting in almost USD 2 billion in savings for LMICs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on key global health challenges such as insufficient production capacity to meet the needs of affordable life-saving tools for all people in all countries. In just a decade, MPP’s model of voluntary licensing and patent pooling has proven that it can make a difference and can help overcome those issues.

Working shoulder to shoulder with MPP, we strongly believe that what has been achieved until now to facilitate access to medicines in the South can be repeated against COVID-19. Equitable access to innovative tools everywhere in the world is part of the solution to bring the pandemic to an end. MPP’s potential has already gained worldwide recognition first and foremost by countries that benefit directly from MPP’s work, as well as WHO, the G7, G20 and the World Economic Forum.

When Unitaid founded MPP ten years ago, few believed the idea of a patent pool for medicines could work. The concept was ground-breaking, inspiring, and held tremendous potential to bring vital medicines to those in need. Ten years later, the impact is there for all to see.

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Building on MPP’s success and recognising its potential for the future, Unitaid is proud to have renewed its confidence in this model with the recent approval of five-year financial support. Today, maybe more than ever, we need MPP’s experience to help pharmaceutical companies license their rights on a voluntary basis and continue to save lives.

We remain strongly committed to supporting MPP’s assiduous work on HIV, HCV and tuberculosis. There is still much to do. Globally, around three in ten people living with HIV are not receiving treatment, only 21% of people with HCV infection have been diagnosed, and even fewer have been treated and cured, and TB kills 1.4 million people per year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further hindered progress. In this context, better access to medicines against these diseases is critical to ensure people in LMICs continue to receive quality and effective care.

Unitaid also looks forward to strengthening its collaboration with MPP on new global health innovations such as long-acting technologies. We support MPP’s engagement to explore voluntary licensing opportunities for medicines on the WHO’s List of Essential Medicines. Unitaid appreciates MPP’s achievements over the past decade and looks forward to seeing MPP grow further as a key partner, working with originators, generic manufacturers, countries, donors, health agencies and civil society to improve access to affordable, life-saving products.