GENEVA¦ 5 April 2012 – New sources of funding are needed to **stimulate health research** specifically for diseases that affect people in developing countries, according to a report published today by an international expert group convened by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The C*onsultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination (CEWG)* has called for increased global commitment to funding and coordinating health research to meet the specific needs of developing countries. The group proposes a package of changes that includes utilizing open knowledge innovation and prizes as incentives, mandatory government commitments, pooling of funding and an international binding convention on global health research.

“Intellectual property rights and sales do not provide enough incentive to encourage investment on diseases that mainly affect people in developing countries,” says John-Arne Røttingen, CEWG chair. “If the price of health products continues to reflect the full cost of R&D products will never be affordable for those that need them most. We therefore need to do two things: to delink the cost of research from the price of the product, and to develop mechanisms in addition to intellectual property rights to incentivize research investment in these diseases. ”

The CEWG report “Research and development to meet health needs in developing countries: strengthening global financing and coordination” includes, among others, the following recommendations:

- Research outputs that address health needs of developing countries should be in the public domain or made available through open licensing.
- Patent pools should be used to increase sharing of research results.
- Pooled funding mechanisms should coordinate financial resources and some of the funds should be used for capacity building in developing countries including direct grants to

companies that can help promote technology transfer.

- WHO should play a central coordinating role in global health research.
- Increased funding is needed from governments and philanthropic sources in the light of market failures of private investments.
- All countries should commit to spend at least 0.01% of gross domestic product on research to develop health technologies for use in developing countries.

Discussion on the recommendations will take place at the 65th World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2012.

The report has been posted in English. Other languages will be posted when available in six official languages at http://www.who.int/phi/en/

Note to editors:

In 2010, the CEWG was asked by the World Health Assembly to review and take forward the work done by the previous Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Coordination and Financing. .

The work of the CEWG is linked to the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health which was set up by WHO in 2003 when Member States agreed at the World Health Assembly (WHA) to look at the relationship between intellectual property, innovation and public health. The Commission produced its report in 2006. In follow-up of the recommendations of the Commission's report an intergovernmental working group negotiated over two years and WHA adopted a Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (GSPA-PHI) in 2008. Search for enhanced and sustainable financing for R&D for treatments of diseases that predominantly affect developing countries was an unfinished agenda of the GSPA-PHI which was first taken up by the Expert Working Group in 2010 and then by a Consultative Expert Working Group which has now produced this report.

The CEWG is made up of 21 regionally representative experts, nominated by their governments and appointed by WHO's Director-General Dr Margaret Chan. The group met three times in Geneva during 2011. In an effort to be transparent and inclusive, the CEWG

encouraged input from many different stakeholders, held regional consultations and published all relevant documents and meeting outcomes on the WHO website.

A progress report was discussed at the Executive Board of WHO in January 2012, and the report will be considered by the World Health Assembly in May 2012.