Seventy Third Session of the WHO Regional Committee Meeting for the Eastern Mediterranean

Cairo, Egypt
13 - 15 October 2026

Organization Name : *Global Self-Care Federation (GSCF)*

Agenda item : *5(e) Regional strategy to improve access to medicines and vaccines in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2020–2030 (Document EM/RC73/INF.DOC.5)*

English version:

The Global Self-Care Federation (GSCF) welcomes this progress report and commends WHO and Member States for their efforts to improve equitable access to medicines and vaccines across the Eastern Mediterranean Region. We particularly welcome the focus on strengthening supply chains, regulatory systems, affordability, and the availability of safe, effective and quality-assured medical products. Robust and trusted regulatory systems are essential not only for ensuring product quality and safety, but also for building public confidence in medicines, vaccines and self-care interventions.

GSCF supports the report's emphasis on resilient access to medical products and recognizes that access is a fundamental enabler of people-centred care and self-care. Timely access to safe, effective and affordable medicines, vaccines and non-prescription products empowers individuals to manage their health needs, prevent disease and contribute to better health outcomes while reducing avoidable pressure on health systems. This is particularly important in fragile and conflict-affected settings, where individuals and communities often face significant barriers to accessing health services.

GSCF also notes the report's attention to rational use of medicines and antimicrobial stewardship. Promoting responsible self-care requires access to reliable health information and appropriate guidance to support the safe and effective use of medicines. Community-based health professionals, including pharmacists, play an important role in helping individuals make informed decisions, use medicines appropriately and identify when referral to other health services is needed.

GSCF stands ready to work with WHO, Member States and partners to advance equitable access to safe, effective and affordable health products and to promote self-care as an essential component of universal health coverage and people-centred health systems.

Thank you.