STATEMENT

DNDi welcomes the progress report and emphasizes that dengue is a climate-sensitive disease. Rising temperatures, heat waves, and longer summers create ideal conditions for vector adaptation, enabling the spread of dengue beyond tropical areas and extending transmission seasons.

While dengue is a self-limiting illness in most individuals, severe dengue – dengue haemorrhagic fever, which requires hospitalization – can wreak social and economic havoc on individuals, families, and health systems. In addition, those with severe dengue can face mortality rates as high as 13%. It poses a particular risk to pregnant women and those with co-morbidities. Studies show that pregnant women are three to four times more likely to die from dengue, with the risk increasing to 450 times if the disease progresses to severe dengue.

The progress report rightly notes that there is no specific treatment for dengue. Although there has been considerable progress, at this stage, vaccines and vector control strategies alone will not be sufficient to address dengue. Appropriate treatments are urgently needed to prevent medical complications and progression to severe disease and to decrease the overall burden on public health systems. There is therefore a need for increased innovation for therapeutics for dengue.

A multi-country South-South partnership, the Dengue Alliance, was initiated in 2022 and is currently led by institutions from Brazil, Thailand, India, Malaysia, and DNDi. This collaborative effort enables dengue-endemic countries to lead research and development strategies. The Dengue Alliance aims to develop affordable and accessible treatments for dengue by progressing pre-clinical investigations of potential treatments, testing the efficacy of repurposed drugs, and implementing clinical trials for the most promising drug candidates.

We urge countries in the region to invest in and implement actions to respond to dengue, including the development of appropriate health tools, to prevent, test and treat it.