



THE  
GRADUATE  
INSTITUTE  
GENEVA

GLOBAL  
HEALTH  
CENTRE

**MONOCLONAL ANTIBODIES FOR THE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION  
OF DISEASES: WHY AND HOW TO EXPAND GLOBAL ACCESS**

**BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS**

## AYESHA SITLANI

Associate Vice President, Antibody Strategy, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI)



Ayesha Sitlani, Ph.D. is Associate Vice President of Antibody Strategy at IAVI, a non-profit scientific research organization focused on translating scientific discoveries into global health solutions. For the past 3 years, Ayesha has been driving IAVI's flagship program to launch a set of initiatives, through public-private partnerships, to make **monoclonal antibody treatments and preventives affordable and globally accessible**. IAVI's strategy is to enable the access of mAbs through innovation and investments in product development and optimization, low-cost manufacturing and new policy frameworks and business models. Ayesha is supporting IAVI's pipeline of antibody candidates for COVID-19, HIV, and other infectious diseases that are being advanced in collaboration with development and manufacturing partners in low-, middle-, and high-income countries, with the goal to enable global access. Recently, Ayesha led an effort, commissioned by the Wellcome Trust, to conduct a landscape analyses of the challenges and opportunities to global access to monoclonal antibodies. This work which was compiled through an analysis of access barriers to marketed antibodies and primary interviews with more than 100 stakeholders across 15 countries, led to a recently launched publication, **Expanding Access to Monoclonal Antibody-based Products: A Global Call to Action**. The publication presents recommendations, with the intention to galvanize the global health community, to address the distressing gap in access to existing and future monoclonal antibodies for treatment and prevention of many communicable (including RSV, HIV, Ebola, COVID-19) and non-communicable diseases (cancer, autoimmune), especially for people in low- and middle-income countries. The findings are particularly relevant now, given that research on the use of monoclonal antibodies for prevention and treatment of COVID-19 is proceeding at an urgent pace.

Prior to joining IAVI, Ayesha spent almost 20 years at Merck & Co. Inc, where she gained broad leadership experience in antibody and vaccine research & product development, strategy, integration, business development, operations, and change management. Ayesha has published over 40 peer-reviewed publications and patents that have spanned several therapeutic areas including infectious diseases, oncology, endocrinology and women's health, immunology and cardiovascular research. She is passionate about translating her research and development experience into solutions that enable global access to innovative medicines. Ayesha received her B.A. from Smith College, M.A from Columbia University, and her Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the California Institute of Technology. Ayesha trained as a postdoctoral fellow in Biophysical chemistry at Yale University.

## MODERATOR

### MARCELA VIEIRA

Project Coordinator of the Knowledge Network for Innovation and Access to Medicines, Global Health Centre



Marcela Vieira is Project Coordinator of the Knowledge Network for Innovation and Access to Medicines, a project of the Global Health Centre. She has a background in Law and Social Sciences, with a specialisation in Intellectual Property Law and New Technologies of Information and holds a masters degree in Public Health from the Universidade de Sao Paulo (Brazil), obtained with a dissertation about alternatives models of innovation for health technologies. Prior to joining the Global Health Centre, she was coordinator of the Brazilian civil society Working Group on Intellectual Property (GTPI) and legal consultant and researcher at accessBSA: Innovation & Access to Medicines in India, Brazil and South Africa, a project conducted in partnership with the National School of Public Health/Fiocruz in Brazil. She has been working on access to medicines and intellectual property issues since 2005, in close collaboration with several civil society organisations, mostly from developing countries. She has also consulted for a number of international organisations in the field.