Contents

Message from the Director-General viii

Introduction and Overview xi

Responding to the challenges of a changing world xii
Growing expectations for better performance xiii
From the packages of the past to the reforms of the future xiv
Four sets of PHC reforms xvii
Seizing opportunities xviii

Chapter 1. The challenges of a changing world 1
Unequal growth, unequal outcomes 2
Longer lives and better health, but not everywhere 2
Growth and stagnation 4
Adapting to new health challenges 7
A globalized, urbanized and ageing world 7
Little anticipation and slow reactions 9
Trends that undermine the health systems’ response 11
Hospital-centrism: health systems built around hospitals and specialists 11
Fragmentation: health systems built around priority programmes 12
Health systems left to drift towards unregulated commercialization 13
Changing values and rising expectations 14
Health equity 15
Care that puts people first 16
Securing the health of communities 16
Reliable, responsive health authorities 17
Participation 18
PHC reforms: driven by demand 18

Chapter 2. Advancing and sustaining universal coverage 23
The central place of health equity in PHC 24
Moving towards universal coverage 25
Challenges in moving towards universal coverage 27
Rolling out primary-care networks to fill the availability gap 28
Overcoming the isolation of dispersed populations 30
Providing alternatives to unregulated commercial services 31
Targeted interventions to complement universal coverage mechanisms 32
Mobilizing for health equity 34
Increasing the visibility of health inequities 34
Creating space for civil society participation and empowerment 35
Chapter 3. Primary care: putting people first

Good care is about people 42
The distinctive features of primary care 43
- Effectiveness and safety are not just technical matters 43
- Understanding people: person-centred care 46
- Comprehensive and integrated responses 48
- Continuity of care 49
- A regular and trusted provider as entry point 50
Organizing primary-care networks 52
- Bringing care closer to the people 53
- Responsiblity for a well-identified population 53
- The primary-care team as a hub of coordination 55
Monitoring progress 56

Chapter 4. Public policies for the public’s health 63

The importance of effective public policies for health 64
System policies that are aligned with PHC goals 66
Public-health policies 67
- Aligning priority health programmes with PHC 67
- Countrywide public-health initiatives 68
- Rapid response capacity 68
Towards health in all policies 69
Understanding the under-investment 71
Opportunities for better public policies 73
- Better information and evidence 73
- A changing institutional landscape 74
- Equitable and efficient global health action 76

Chapter 5. Leadership and effective government 81

Governments as brokers for PHC reform 82
- Mediating the social contract for health 82
- Disengagement and its consequences 83
- Participation and negotiation 85
Effective policy dialogue 86
- Information systems to strengthen policy dialogue 86
- Strengthening policy dialogue with innovations from the field 89
- Building a critical mass of capacity for change 90
Managing the political process: from launching reform to implementing it 92

Chapter 6. The way forward 99

Adapting reforms to country context 100
High-expenditure health economics 101
Rapid-growth health economies 103
Low-expenditure, low-growth health economies 105
Mobilizing the drivers of reform 108
- Mobilizing the production of knowledge 108
- Mobilizing the commitment of the workforce 110
- Mobilizing the participation of people 110
## List of Figures

**Figure 1.** The PHC reforms necessary to refocus health systems towards health for all  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 2.1</th>
<th>Catastrophic expenditure related to out-of-pocket payment at the point of service</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.2</td>
<td>Three ways of moving towards universal coverage</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.3</td>
<td>Impact of abolishing user fees on outpatient attendance in Kisoro district, Uganda: outpatient attendance 1998–2002</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.4</td>
<td>Different patterns of exclusion: massive deprivation in some countries, marginalization of the poor in others. Births attended by medically trained personnel (percentage), by income group</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.5</td>
<td>Under-five mortality in rural and urban areas, the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1980–2000</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.6</td>
<td>Improving health-care outputs in the midst of disaster: Rutshuru, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1985–2004</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1.1** Selected best performing countries in reducing under-five mortality by at least 80%, by regions, 1975–2006  

**Figure 1.2** Factors explaining mortality reduction in Portugal, 1960–2008  

**Figure 1.3** Variable progress in reducing under-five mortality, 1975 and 2006, in selected countries with similar rates in 1975  

**Figure 1.4** GDP per capita and life expectancy at birth in 169 countries, 1975 and 2005  

**Figure 1.5** Trends in GDP per capita and life expectancy at birth in 133 countries grouped by the 1975 GDP, 1975–2005  

**Figure 1.6** Countries grouped according to their total health expenditure in 2005 (international $)  

**Figure 1.7** Africa's children are at more risk of dying from traffic accidents than European children: child road-traffic deaths per 100 000 population  

**Figure 1.8** The shift towards noncommunicable diseases and accidents as causes of death  

**Figure 1.9** Within-country inequalities in health and health care  

**Figure 1.10** How health systems are diverted from PHC core values  

**Figure 1.11** Percentage of the population citing health as their main concern before other issues, such as financial problems, housing or crime  

**Figure 1.12** The professionalization of birthing care: percentage of births assisted by professional and other carers in selected areas, 2000 and 2005 with projections to 2015  

**Figure 1.13** The social values that drive PHC and the corresponding sets of reforms  

**Figure 2.1** The effect on uptake of contraception of the reorganization of work schedules of rural health centres in Niger  

**Figure 2.2** Lost opportunities for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (MTCT) in Côte d’Ivoire: only a tiny fraction of the expected transmissions are actually prevented  

**Figure 2.3** More comprehensive health centres have better vaccination coverage  

**Figure 2.4** Inappropriate investigations prescribed for simulated patients presenting with a minor stomach complaint in Thailand  

**Figure 2.5** Primary care as a hub of coordination: networking within the community served and with outside partners  

**Figure 2.6** The progressive extension of coverage by community-owned, community-operated health centres in Mali, 1998–2007
List of Boxes

Box 1 Five common shortcomings of health-care delivery xiv
Box 2 What has been considered primary care in well-resourced contexts has been dangerously oversimplified in resource-constrained settings xvii

Box 1.1 Economic development and investment choices in health care: the improvement of key health indicators in Portugal 3
Box 1.2 Higher spending on health is associated with better outcomes, but with large differences between countries 6
Box 1.3 As information improves, the multiple dimensions of growing health inequality are becoming more apparent 10
Box 1.4 Medical equipment and pharmaceutical industries are major economic forces 12
Box 1.5 Health is among the top personal concerns 15

Box 2.1 Best practices in moving towards universal coverage 26
Box 2.2 Defining “essential packages”: what needs to be done to go beyond a paper exercise? 27
Box 2.3 Closing the urban-rural gap through progressive expansion of PHC coverage in rural areas in the Islamic Republic of Iran 29
Box 2.4 The robustness of PHC-led health systems: 20 years of expanding performance in Rutshuru, the Democratic Republic of the Congo 31
Box 2.5 Targeting social protection in Chile 33
Box 2.6 Social policy in the city of Ghent, Belgium: how local authorities can support intersectoral collaboration between health and welfare organizations 35

Box 3.1 Towards a science and culture of improvement: evidence to promote patient safety and better outcomes 44
Box 3.2 When supplier-induced and consumer-driven demand determine medical advice: ambulatory care in India 44
Box 3.3 The health-care response to partner violence against women 47
Box 3.4 Empowering users to contribute to their own health 48
Box 3.5 Using information and communication technologies to improve access, quality and efficiency in primary care 51

Box 4.1 Rallying society’s resources for health in Cuba 65
Box 4.2 Recommendations of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health 69
Box 4.3 How to make unpopular public policy decisions 72
Box 4.4 The scandal of invisibility: where births and deaths are not counted 74
Box 4.5 European Union impact assessment guidelines 75

Box 5.1 From withdrawal to re-engagement in China 84
Box 5.2 Steering national directions with the help of policy dialogue: experience from three countries 86
Box 5.3 Equity Gauges: stakeholder collaboration to tackle health inequalities 88
Box 5.4 Limitations of conventional capacity building in low- and middle-income countries 91
Box 5.5 Rebuilding leadership in health in the aftermath of war and economic collapse 94

Box 6.1 Norway’s national strategy to reduce social inequalities in health 102
Box 6.2 The virtuous cycle of supply of and demand for primary care 107
Box 6.3. From product development to field implementation – research makes the link 109
List of Tables

Table 1 How experience has shifted the focus of the PHC movement xv

Table 3.1 Aspects of care that distinguish conventional health care from people-centred primary care 43
Table 3.2 Person-centredness: evidence of its contribution to quality of care and better outcomes 47
Table 3.3 Comprehensiveness: evidence of its contribution to quality of care and better outcomes 48
Table 3.4 Continuity of care: evidence of its contribution to quality of care and better outcomes 50
Table 3.5 Regular entry point: evidence of its contribution to quality of care and better outcomes 52

Table 4.1 Adverse health effects of changing work circumstances 70

Table 5.1 Roles and functions of public-health observatories in England 89
Table 5.2 Significant factors in improving institutional capacity for health-sector governance in six countries 92