

# GOVERNANCE

BASEL INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE

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## Main challenges of medication access

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The last decade or so has changed history, as shown by the growth in biomedical science and exponential advance in technologies. The delivery of these technological advances and their benefits have been inequitable, with some parts of the world having maximum benefit and others not. Despite the increased financial flow seen over the last few years, particularly targeted at improving treatment care and support to particularly to tackle major infectious diseases, access remain a barrier due to various challenges. At the centre of this human crisis is a failure of health systems.

Health outcomes are unacceptably low across much of the developing world and sub-Saharan Africa is worst affected. Much of the burden of disease can be prevented or cured with known, affordable technologies. The problem is getting staff, drugs, vaccines and information timely, consistently and in sufficient and affordable quantities to those who need them. In too many countries the health systems needed to do this either do not exist or are on the point of collapse.

Interventions aimed at reducing disease burden and saving lives are not by themselves a complete solution, the social determinants of health should also be taken into account. Effective and equitable health systems are an absolute requirement to achieve the MDGs as well as others related to TB, malaria and HIV treatment and care, safe motherhood, child survival and immunization. Regional based strategies are sound in confronting some of the inequities and lack of access. These will promote collaboration among countries, facilitate synchronisation of actions, and strengthen institutions and regional networks. There is a comparative advantage where technological development is under consideration in regional settings.

We need new ways of thinking, and openness to collaboration and exploitation of every opportunity and potential advance. The regional economic blocs are considered as ways to confront the challenges and improve health systems performance.