



Useful Facts on Research for Health

Milestones

- Brazil discovered Chagas disease. In 1909, Carlos Chagas discovered American Trypanosomiasis (Chagas disease).
- India developed Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT). In 1953, HN Chatterjee published the first human study of ORT.
- Chile led the development of the copper Intra Uterine Contraceptive Device. In 1969, Jaime Zipper Abragan and Howard Tatum developed the first copper IUD.
- China developed Artemisinin for the treatment of malaria. In 1972, Chinese researchers isolated Artemisinin from a traditional Chinese fever remedy.
- Cuba developed the first Meningitis B vaccine. In 1991, VG Sierra and HC Campa published the first randomised controlled trial of their Meningitis B vaccine.
- Thailand built up the evidence to inform its national health reforms. Health research and good research management played a pivotal role in the reform of the Thai health system. Research is one of eight pillars of the new system and is considered central to efforts to implement, monitor and evaluate further reforms.
- Sudan altered its malaria treatment protocol. Using national research on resistance to Chloroquine, Sudanese policy-makers altered their national malaria treatment protocol.
- Progressively, 'research for health' is no longer seen as solutions to diseases and conditions, but as a key strategy to national, economic and social development.

Equity Approximately 90 percent of the global disease burden exists in developing countries. *Source: The 10/90 Report on Health Research 2003-2004.* Priority action is needed to combat the health status and economic inequities faced by individuals and their families in developing countries. *Source: The 10/90 Report on Health Research 2003-2004.* Only 5% of global investment in health research is devoted to problems faced primarily by developing countries, even though these countries carry over 90% of the global burden of disease. *Source: Commission on Health Research for Development (COHRED) (1990) Health research essential link to equity in development. Oxford, Oxford University Press.* A national health research system is a vital component of an effective national health system. *Source: COHRED (2007) Research for Health Briefing 5, COHRED Comment* There is great potential in researchers from developing countries, who comprise 27% of total researchers worldwide. *Source: Paris: Institute of Statistics, UNESCO; 2004.* **Funding** Of the 73 billion invested annually in global health research by the public and private sectors, less than 10% is devoted to research into the global disease burden measured in Disability-Adjusted Life years. *Source: The 10/90 Report on Health Research 2003-2004.* Resources to conduct research are reliant on external funds, giving foreign donors an undue influence on the health research agenda of developing countries. *Source: COHRED (2004). Health Research expenditures: essential information for rational decision-making (2004.2) Making Health Research Work for Everyone. Geneva, Council on Health Research for Development.* Available health research funding is low in comparison to its very high potential benefits. Thus, it is essential that it is based on a rational priority-setting process. *Source: The 10/90 Report on Health Research 2003-2004.* **Implementation** Research for health plays a critical role of ensuring that measures proposed to help break the vicious



cycle of poor health and poverty are based, as far as possible, on evidence, and that the available funds to finance them are optimally utilized. *Source: The 10/90 Report on Health Research 2003-2004.* **Responsible Vertical Programming** Research for health needed by developing countries is mostly conducted for them, sometimes with them but rarely by them. *Source: COHRED statement 2007 on Responsible Vertical Programming* Research for health in developing countries is problem-specific – or ‘vertical’ and does not usually contribute to building the national system for research for health . *Source: COHRED statement 2007 on Responsible Vertical Programming* The questions addressed by research for health in developing countries are largely determined by the international community – specifically those funding global health research. *Source: COHRED statement 2007 on Responsible Vertical Programming* Research for health is not seen as a key driver of development in low-income countries. *Source: COHRED statement 2007 on Responsible Vertical Programming*