

[Home](#) · [About](#) · Achievements

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Achievements

In 2008, after ten years of operations, what do stakeholders in research for health see as the Global Forum's greatest achievements?

1. Effectively advocated around the "10/90 gap" and gave a voice to people who would otherwise not have had one

In 1990, the Commission on Health Research for Development estimated that only about 5% of the world's resources for health research were being applied to the problems of low- and middle-income countries, where 93% of the world's preventable deaths occurred.

It was the Global Forum's idea to express, in a few words, that mismatch between needs and investments by coining the term 'The 10/90 gap in health research'. The term, while not representing a current quantitative measure, has become a strong and resonating symbol of the continuing mismatch.

2. Provided a forum for exchange and learning to decision-makers in research, funding and policy

The annual meetings of the Global Forum have become premier international events for hundreds, and over the years, thousands of decision-makers in research for health.

The open interaction of very heterogeneous stakeholders beyond sectoral boundaries was an absolute innovation at the Global Forum's early meetings. They passionately discussed R&D issues that touched them all, yet in different ways. Most of the participants had strong opinions on what needed to be funded, researched and put into practice to improve the health of poor populations. It was only by focusing on evidence, both 'hard' and 'soft', that the Global Forum has been able to maintain a constructive interaction and fertile debate.

3. Developed high-quality evidence and tools

The Global Forum has been providing high-quality evidence and tools that help guide funding, research and policy decisions in research for health. The flagship reports "The 10/90 Report on Health Research" (up to 2004) and "Monitoring Financial Flows for Health Research" (since 2001) both make the case for more appropriate R&D investments. Tools include a methodology for setting research priorities based on a process in which a variety of stakeholders clarify values and positions and debate priorities informed by evidence.

Furthermore, the Global Forum has been identifying research gaps (e.g. in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and mental health) and recommended ways to close them, thereby influencing the global research agenda. A joint publication between the Global Forum and the World Health Organization on child health research led to a document, which was tabled at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session

in 2002. Evidence, which revealed gaps in research, led to initiatives such as the Initiative on Child Health and Nutrition Research (CHNRI) and the Initiative for Cardiovascular Health Research in Developing Countries (IC-Health), which are today both legally independent entities.

Resources

Further reading:

Download publication on 10th anniversary 1998-2008:

[GLOBAL FORUM FOR HEALTH RESEARCH 1998-2008 - 10TH ANNIVERSARY](#)

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