

## The future of financing for WHO

*Statement by PHM to Executive Board of WHO, 20 Jan, 2011*

WHO faces a financial crisis. The increasing dependence on extra-budgetary funds relative to assessed contributions is distorting priority setting. Allocations to the social determinants of health have shrunk while expenditures on medicines are growing although funding to promote the rational use of medicines has almost dried up entirely.

There must be an increase in member state contributions. There must be a clear code of conduct regarding voluntary contributions and donations, so as to prevent conflicts of interest between donor priorities and the member state driven agenda of the WHO.

The Constitution mandates WHO to take a leadership role with respect to international decision making on health. This should include holding the large donors to account. Virchow taught us that health is political as well as technical. WHO must accept the responsibility of engaging in the politics of health as well as advising on technical issues.

We are concerned that the 'mainstreaming' of 'cross-cutting issues' will lead to the neglect of such issues, because there would be no internal champions. For example, a strong gender focus would be critical in addressing the huge burden of disease globally which is rooted in gender inequality and patriarchy.

These distortions are reflections of the terrible pressure that the Secretariat is working under. WHO must not retreat from its constitution. The bottom billion desperately need a courageous, independent and properly funded WHO. We urge the EB to issue a powerful call to member states to increase their untied contributions.