



**Statement Delivered by the South Centre to the 79th World Health Assembly  
(WHA79)**

**Agenda Item 12.5 Primary Healthcare**

**Agenda Item 12.8 Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel**

Strengthening primary healthcare (PHC) must remain a top priority. It is the key pathway to universal health coverage and the right to health for all, without discrimination, that includes the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. It is also the foundation for resilient health systems, better equipped to respond to health emergencies, including pandemics.

Increased investments are urgently needed to deliver essential PHC services. Adequate financing requires that the international community address the debt burden facing developing countries, enabling greater investment in their populations' health.

It is also concerning that the current funding available for WHO at end of March 2026 for global outcomes on PHC (3.1) is low at 37% as for health and care workforce, health financing and access to quality-assured health products (3.2) at 55%.

Priority must be given to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) or universal access will not be achieved by 2030.

Primary healthcare must ensure integrated delivery of services for communicable and non-communicable diseases, while addressing the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance.

A strong health workforce is essential for PHC delivery. We support the strengthening and full implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, including the additions recommended by the Expert Advisory Group, to address health worker mobility and its impact on health inequalities.