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CALL FOR A NEW MECHANISM TO FINANCE A NEW INTERNATIONAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Three prominent academics have called for a new international health strategy that focuses on the health of people and communities.

In an article that appeared on 1 June 2012 in the journal *Policy Review*, Mark Dybul, Peter Piot and Julio Frenk argue that the current focus on specific diseases has exposed fault lines in delivering services in places where people suffer from multiple health issues. Disease-specific programmes, they state, have revealed disparities and inadequacies in health systems. They have also highlighted the crucial role non-health sectors play in health.

The authors note that global health is at a significant crossroads, with the World Health Organization facing a major budgetary shortfall and many multilateral and bilateral programmes bracing for either limited growth or significant cuts.

The authors call for the establishment of a new mechanism to finance integrated national health strategies. This could involve creating something new or transforming current institutions. The authors state that candidates in the latter category include the World Bank and the Global Fund. “Recent changes in leadership at both institutions, and reforms that began with the former executive director of the Global Fund, could provide an opportunity for the Bank and Fund to develop their own, or collaborative, institutional change to maximize financing for integrated health delivery,” the authors said.

The authors state that what is needed is a Bretton Woods-style agreement to guide a new international health strategy and rationalise its structure. (In 1944, at a high-level meeting held in a hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction

and Development [later re-named the World Bank] were created to rationalise global economic policy as World War II was coming to an end.)

Mark Dybul is co-director of the Global Health Law Program at Georgetown University. Peter Piot directs the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Julio Frenk is the dean of the Harvard School of Public Health. Their full article is available [here](#).

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