



International Health and Aid Policies

The Need for Alternatives

Jean-Pierre Unger, Pierre De Paepe,
Kasturi Sen and Werner Soors

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Preface

This book explores health policies through examining patterns of commercialization that have underpinned the vast majority of these policies in different regions of the world, at the same time providing the reader with both concepts in public health and techniques to develop health services with a social mission. The chapters in the book include case studies and an extensive review of the literature.

We began this task with one main purpose: to explore the extent to which donors and international agencies have, over the past two decades, shared the same underlying motivation: that is to primarily commercialize the health sector of low-income countries (LIC) and middle-income countries (MIC), despite the stated aim of improving access to health care and addressing issues of poverty and exclusion. In this book, we provide evidence showing the contradictions between access to care and strengthening health systems on the one hand and increased commercialization on the other.

The ideas and evidence presented in this book thus call for an exploration of the contradictions of commercialized health care delivery under the guise of maintaining public provision. The book challenges the discourse and status quo among national bodies, in global policy circles, among donors and northern governments. It argues for

- the creation of health care services that have a social rather than a commercial motivation, and
- delivery of publicly oriented health care based on (professionally defined) 'needs' and on the (population) 'demand' to access quality, polyvalent health care, rather than on health interventions efficiency only.