

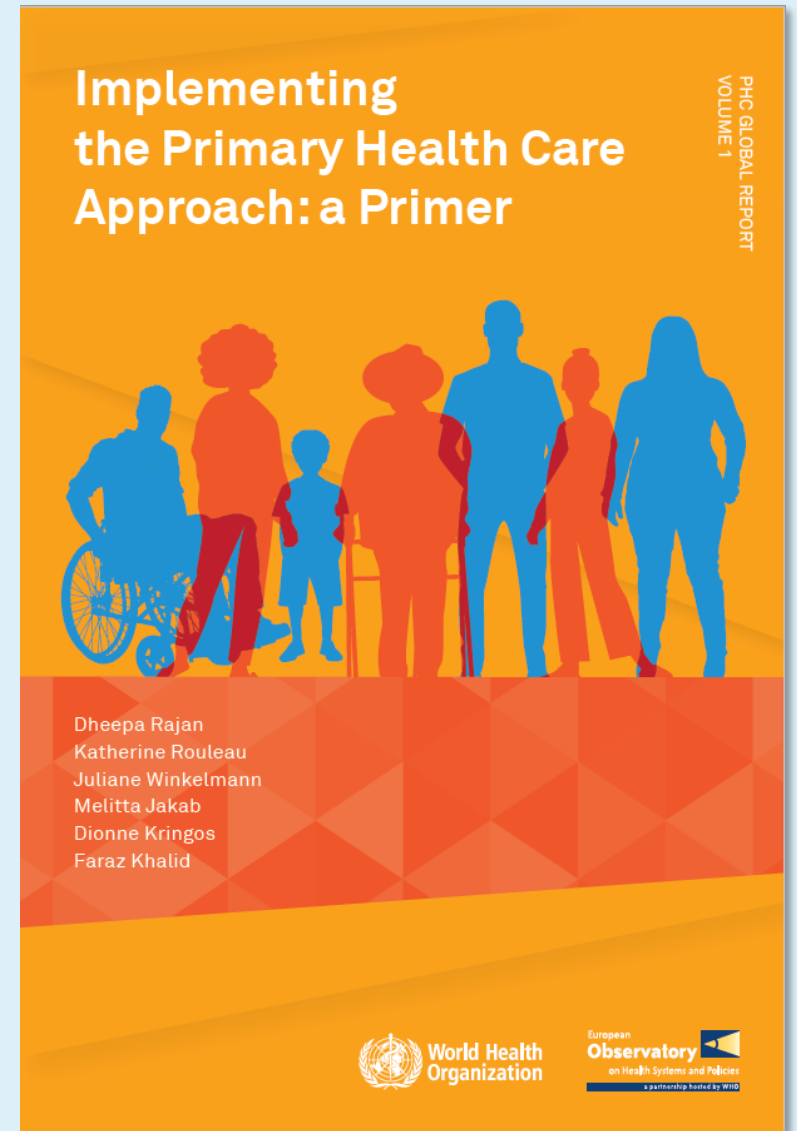
# Overview of *Implementing the Primary Health Care Approach: a Primer*

**Suraya Dalil**

Director

Special Programme on PHC

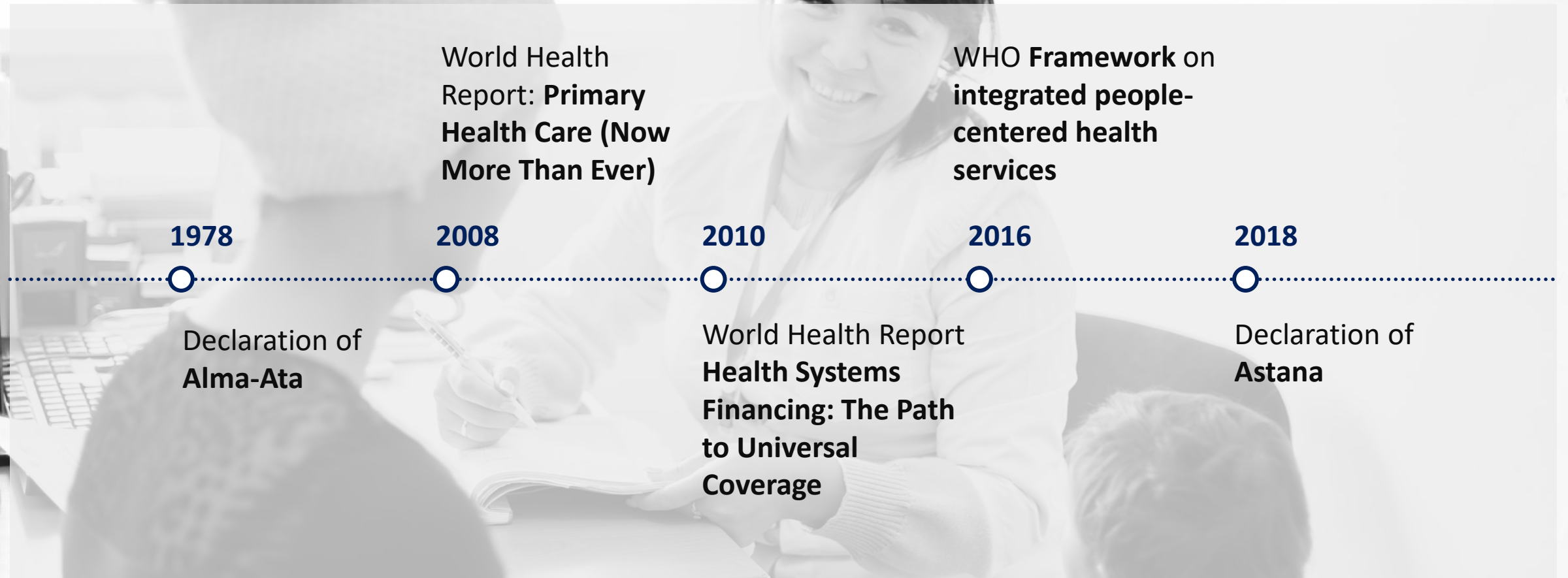
WHO headquarters





# Global Reports & Declarations

PHC definition & operationalization

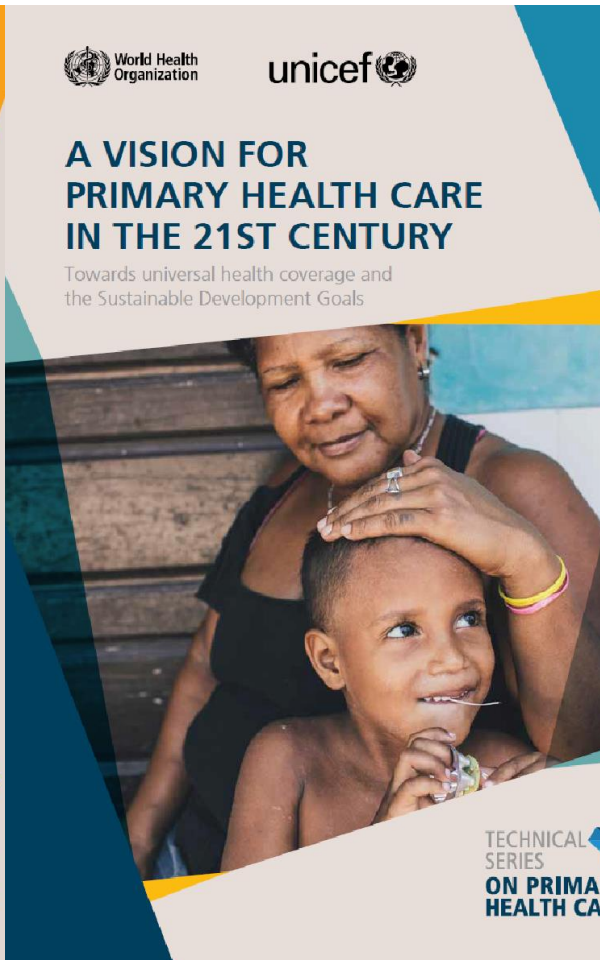


# Overview of key PHC products

October 2018

November 2020

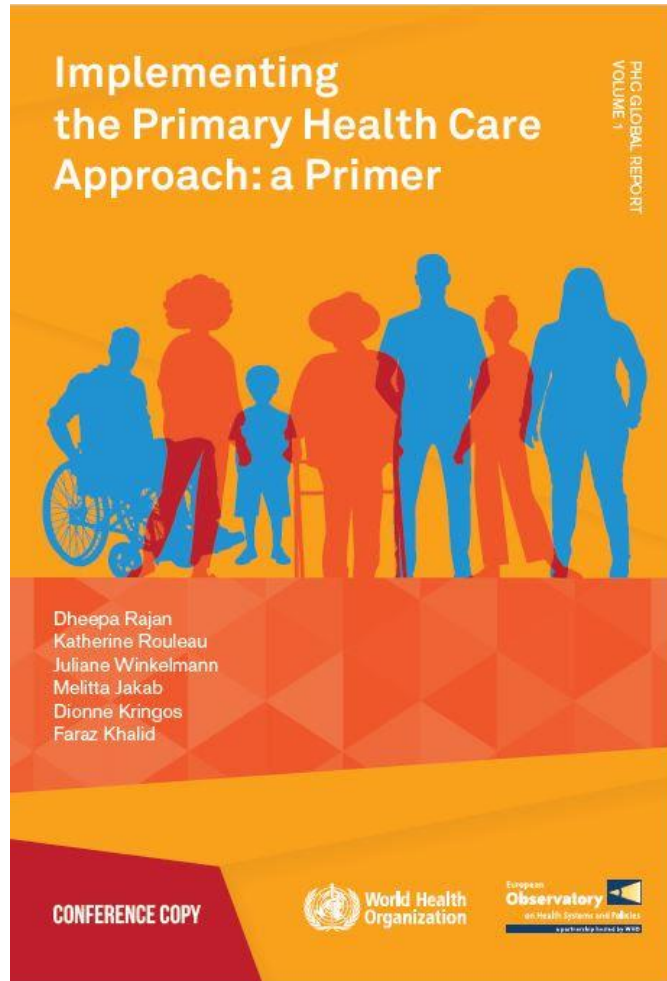
February 2022



“Primary health care is one of the **most important** concepts in public health –  
– and also one of the **most misunderstood.**”

**Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**  
**WHO Director-General**

Remarks at the Investing in the radical reorientation of  
health systems towards Primary Health Care UNGA side event  
21 September 2023



## About the Primer: Aims

- Cultivate a **common understanding of PHC** and of the specific role of primary care and essential public health functions at the core of integrated health services
- Elaborate on **strategies and actions** within each of the PHC Operational Framework levers that support health system's **transition towards PHC**
- Emphasize the potential of PHC to **achieve health system objectives** and improve **health system performance**
- Through a critical analysis of the policies and actions to strengthen PHC, **identify common enablers and barriers** to advance PHC

# About the Primer: **Data and process**

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## **Narrative reviews**

Narrative reviews of scientific and grey literature summarize and analyze key findings, trends and knowledge gaps

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## **50+ country cases**

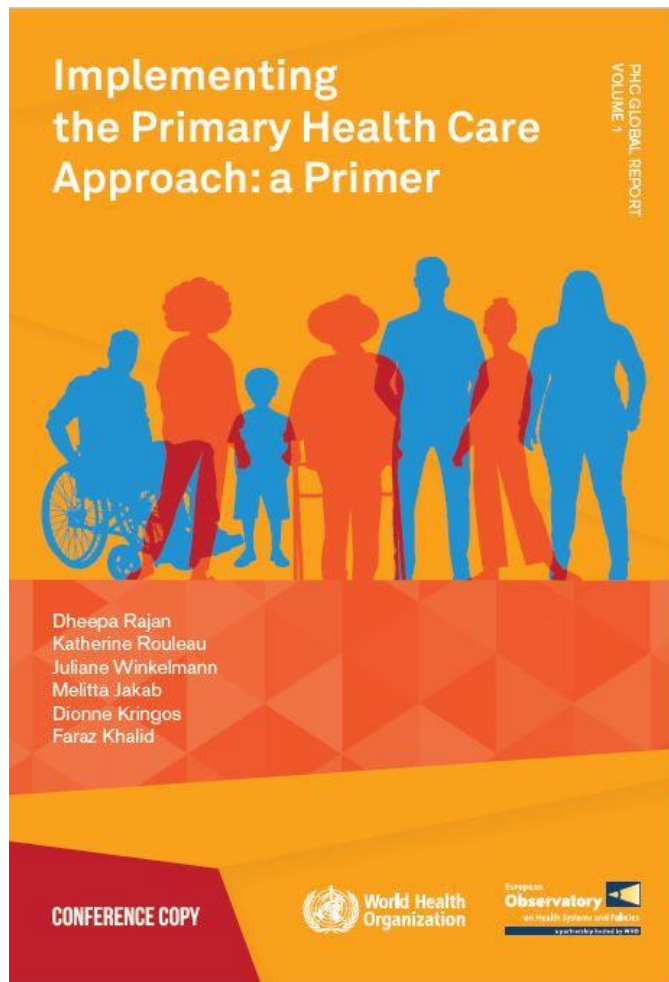
Country- and setting-specific cases describe the contextual drivers, enablers and barriers of PHC transformations

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## **70+ authors**

Chapter-specific author teams engaged more than 50 international PHC experts, with input from more than 50 WHO colleagues

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# About the Primer: Contents

<p><b>PART I</b> The PHC approach: foundations, history and concepts</p>	<p><b>Evidence on strategies within operational levers supporting health systems transition towards PHC models of integrated care</b></p>	<p><b>PART III</b> The PHC approach: impact and performance</p>
<p><b>Understanding PHC, its history, and its power to change models of care</b></p>	<p><b>PART II</b> The PHC approach: implementation</p>	<p><b>PHC's potential to achieve health system objectives, improve health system performance and resilience</b></p>



# PART I: Foundations, history and concepts

- ❖ Highlights how global commitment to fundamental principles of the PHC approach, cultivate a common understanding of PHC and of the specific role of primary care and essential public health functions at the core of integrated health services, lays out its pivotal role in health systems of the 21st century and describes how models of care have been reoriented towards a PHC approach

## Country illustration snap shots

- **Brazil:** the Family Health Strategy was pivotal to improved health system performance
- **Ethiopia:** improved health outcomes through sustained efforts and health sector investments
- **Lithuania:** fostering links between public health and primary care at municipal level
- **Slovenia:** integrating primary care and public health through a community-based person-centred PHC model
- **Bangladesh:** community health workers as first point of contact in community clinics
- **Islamic Republic of Iran:** a strong network of CHWs and multidisciplinary teams allows a multi-tiered referral system

## PART I

The PHC approach:  
foundations, history  
and concepts







## PART II: Implementation

- ❖ Presents evidence related to various PHC operational levers and some strategic levers and how they may be implemented to align with PHC orientation with an analysis of the current evidence on implementation – what has worked well and less well

### Country illustration snap shots

- **Costa Rica:** decentralized decision-making with a strong national steer
- **Netherlands:** autonomous working in teams as a basis for attractive working environments - the Buurtzorg model
- **Afghanistan:** Financing PHC in a fragile state
- **India:** Raising awareness, acceptability and affordability through a generic medicine programme
- **Mongolia:** mobile health clinics bring PHC to vulnerable communities
- **Ghana:** Driving action on infection prevention and control (IPC), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
- **South Africa:** an mHealth application that fosters health information exchange

### PART II

The PHC approach:  
implementation





## PART III: Impact on performance

- ❖ Examines the impact of PHC on key dimensions of health system performance and presents evidence related to quality and efficiency, equity, access, financial protection and resilience, and environmental sustainability.

### Country illustration snap shots

- **People's Republic of China:** Expanding coverage of PHC to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, user satisfaction
- **Thailand:** transitioning towards PHC oriented system improved equity, access, and financial protection
- **Spain:** Strong PHC policy contributes to low levels of inequity and financial hardship, as well as good access to services
- **Mexico:** PHC and health system resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Canada:** PHC and environmental sustainability

### PART III

The PHC approach:  
impact and  
performance



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# From policy to action: related products for evidence synthesis and knowledge management



# Thank you!

## Related events

**5–6 March 2024**

Tehran, Iran | Hybrid event  
International congress on PHC for UHC

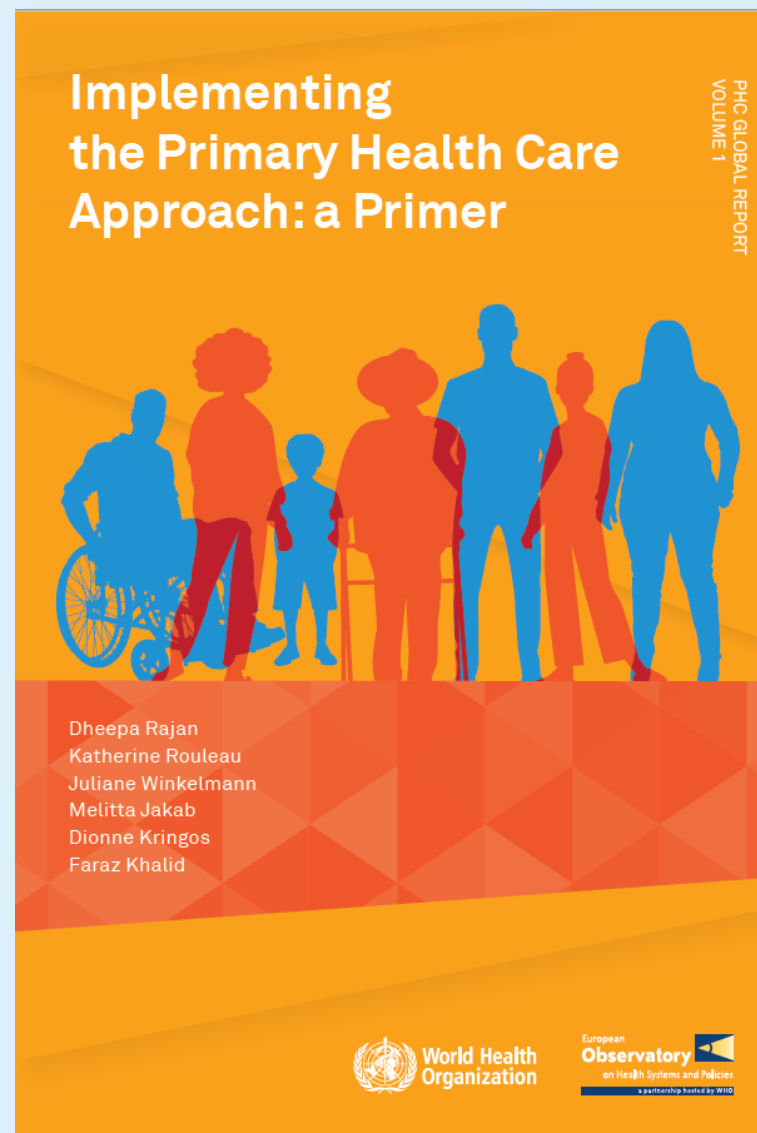
**11 March 2024**

Madrid, Spain | Hybrid event  
Transforming PHC: from Spain to Europe



**27 May 2024**

Geneva, Switzerland | In-person  
Primary health care side event



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# Member States Q&A

## Questions for discussion

- How can the WHO Secretariat best support Member States in advancing this work and applying the findings of the Primer?
- How can the WHO Secretariat further facilitate the exchange of country experiences and cross-country learning?