From November 16-19, 2010, 1,200 participants from over 100 countries gathered in Montreux, Switzerland for the First Global Symposium on health systems research. Under the theme “science to accelerate universal coverage”, the Symposium reviewed state-of-the-art research and discussed strategies for strengthening the field of health systems research.

After five days of keynotes, plenaries, concurrent sessions, satellites and informal discussions and debates, the Steering Committee recognizes that there is an enormous energy to move forward with a further agenda of action reflecting the spirit and commitment that brought us to Montreux from Mexico and Mali. This agenda includes:

1) Bringing this symposium to fruition by electronically preserving and disseminating the intellectual products and knowledge discourse, ensuring their appropriate archiving and creating channels of innovative communication.

2) Creating an international society for health systems research, knowledge and innovation, which under the umbrella of “science to accelerate UHC”, will take forward the collective opportunities identified by participants in Montreux with the aim of building greater constituency, credibility and capacity for systems research on health globally.

3) Articulating a further agenda of “improvement” and “action” related to research on systems for health
   a. Provide visibility and lend support to regional and national efforts to strengthen health systems research;
   b. Work with the priority agendas related to the recently agreed UNSG strategy on maternal, neo-natal and child health; and the upcoming UNGASS related to NCDs to bring more effective health systems strengthening to accelerate universal health coverage;
   c. Catalyze contributions from the global scientific community to establish norms, standards and practices to strengthen the foundations for health systems research related to the production, translation and reproduction of knowledge for health systems including: 1) the terms and typologies of research; 2) the range and appropriate use of methods, measures and instruments; 3) criteria for evaluation of strength of evidence and methods for its synthesis; 4) mechanisms for bridging the gap between demand and supply for HSR and enhancing its translation to policy; and 5) opportunities to strengthen research capacity through core curricula, and courses, clearer career paths and supportive institutions;
   d. Identify joint opportunities for collaborative research and knowledge production across different disciplines, sectors, stakeholders and geographies.
4) Gather for a Second Global Symposium on Health Systems Research in 2012 or 2013 to evaluate progress, share insights and recalibrate the agenda of science to accelerate universal health coverage. China has kindly offered to host such a symposium.