

# Governing Health Systems In Africa

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Drawing on various disciplinary perspectives, this book re-focuses the debate on what makes a good health system, with a view to clarifying the uses of social science research in thinking about health care issues in Africa. The explosion of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the persistence of malaria as a major killer, and the resurgence of diseases like tuberculosis which were previously under control, have brought about changes in the health system, with implications for its governance, especially in view of the diminished capacity of the public health facilities to cope with a complex range of expanded needs. Government responsibilities and objectives in the health sector have been redefined, with private sector entities (both for profit and not-for profit) playing an increasingly visible role in health care provisions. The reasons for collaborative patterns vary, but chronic under-funding of publicly financed health services is often an important factor. Processes of decentralisation and health sector reforms have had mixed effects on health care system performance; while private health insurance markets and private clinics are pointers to a growing stratification of the health market, in line with the intensified income and social differentiation that has occurred over the last two decades. These developments call for health sector reforms.

Publisher: Codesria Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: Governing Health Systems in Africa Pages: 00000 (Encrypted PDF) On Sale: 2010-11-01 SKU-13/ISBN: 9782869781825 Category: Medical : Health Care Delivery

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