



REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Provisional Agenda item 9

*Seventy-fifth Session
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Progress reports on selected Regional Committee resolutions

The High-Level Preparatory Meeting for the Seventy-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, held virtually on 18–20 July 2022, reviewed the progress reports on the following selected Regional Committee resolutions:

1. (a) Regional Plan of Action for the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020–2030: Healthy Environments for Healthier Population (**SEA/RC72/R4**), and (b) Malé Declaration on Building Health Systems Resilience to Climate Change (**SEA/RC70/R1**);
2. Strategic Action Plan to reduce the double burden of malnutrition in the South-East Asia Region 2016–2025 (**SEA/RC69/R5**);
3. (a) South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (**SEA/RC60/R7**), and (b) Expanding the scope of the South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (**SEA/RC69/R6**);
4. Strengthening emergency medical teams (EMTs) in the South-East Asia Region (**SEA/RC71/R5**);
5. Ending preventable maternal, newborn and child mortality in the South-East Asia Region in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (**SEA/RC69/R3**);
6. Challenges in polio eradication (**SEA/RC60/R8**);
7. Measles and rubella elimination by 2023 (**SEA/RC72/R3**); and
8. Strengthening health workforce education and training in the Region (**SEA/RC67/R6**).

The recommendations made by the High-Level Preparatory Meeting on each of these progress reports are submitted to the Seventy-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia for its consideration.

Introduction

1. The High-Level Preparatory Meeting for the Seventy-fifth Session of the Regional Committee for South-East Asia held virtually on 18–20 July 2022 reviewed the progress reports on the following selected Regional Committee resolutions:

- i. (a) Regional Plan of Action for the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020–2030: Healthy Environments for Healthier Population (SEA/RC72/R4), and
(b) Malé Declaration on Building Health Systems Resilience to Climate Change (SEA/RC70/R1);
- ii. Strategic Action Plan to reduce the double burden of malnutrition in the South-East Asia Region 2016–2025 (SEA/RC69/R5);
- iii. (a) South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (SEA/RC60/R7), and
(b) Expanding the scope of the South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (SEA/RC69/R6);
- iv. Strengthening emergency medical teams (EMTs) in the South-East Asia Region (SEA/RC71/R5);
- v. Ending preventable maternal, newborn and child mortality in the South-East Asia Region in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (SEA/RC69/R3);
- vi. Challenges in polio eradication (SEA/RC60/R8);
- vii. Measles and rubella elimination by 2023 (SEA/RC72/R3); and
- viii. Strengthening health workforce education and training in the Region (SEA/RC67/R6).

2. The recommendations made by the High-Level Preparatory Meeting on each of these progress reports are submitted to the Seventy-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for its consideration.

1. **(a) Regional Plan of Action for the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020–2030: Healthy Environments for Healthier Population (SEA/RC72/R4), and (b) Malé Declaration on Building Health Systems Resilience to Climate Change (SEA/RC70/R1);**

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Strengthen climate-sensitive disease surveillance and capacity-building on risk modelling and integration of climate data into existing health data platforms as guided by the Regional Plan of Action.
- (2) Prioritize and mobilize funds through the Green Climate Fund (GCF), for which WHO is now an Accredited Delivery Partner.

- (3) Prioritize and implement the recommendations of the Regional Plan of Action in the areas of air pollution, WASH, urbanization, work settings, management of chemicals, and climate change, including potential targets as identified in the monitoring framework.
- (4) Consider extending the tenure of the Framework for Action in building Health Systems resilient to climate change in the WHO South-East Asia Region 2017–2022, by another five years until 2027 through a Decision at the Seventy-fifth Session of the Regional Committee in September 2022.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Continue to provide technical guidance and support for the implementation of the Male' Declaration and the Regional Plan of Action.
- (2) Provide technical assistance to Member States to address the environmental determinants of health and climate change as suitable in the country context.

2. Strategic Action Plan to reduce the double burden of malnutrition in the South-East Asia Region 2016–2025 (SEA/RC69/R5)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Focus on improving multisectoral coordination and implement nutrition-sensitive interventions and surveillance measures to address food insecurity as stated in the Regional Action Plan.
- (2) Optimize infant and young child feeding, growth monitoring and promotion, adolescent and maternal nutrition interventions that are double-duty actions and that support reduction in all forms of malnutrition.
- (3) Prioritize and implement recommendations adopted by the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly for preventing and managing obesity over the life-course, including the proposed targets.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Advocate with Member States to prioritize vulnerable populations, provide technical guidance and coordinate with development partners to continue surveillance and supportive actions to address food insecurity.
- (2) Provide technical assistance to Member States to address obesity through implementing the 2022 recommendations to prevent and manage obesity as suitable to the country context.
- (3) Advocate and provide technical support to Member States to recognize and mitigate the effects of the commercial determinants of malnutrition.

3. (a) South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (SEA/RC60/R7), and (b) Expanding the scope of the South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHEF) (SEA/RC69/R6);

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Provide leadership and strategic guidance to further increase the corpus of SEARHEF for the preparedness and response streams.
- (2) Enhance monitoring and reporting of the utilization of SEARHEF in both the preparedness and response streams.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Provide regular updates to Member States on SEARHEF and encourage enhanced Voluntary Contributions towards the corpus of SEARHEF.
- (2) Advocate with donors and increase attention on the Fund by showcasing its utility, and identify opportunities for sustainable financing based on global developments for financing emergency preparedness and response.

4. Strengthening emergency medical teams (EMTs) in the South-East Asia Region (SEA/RC71/R5)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Support the development of national emergency management teams for deployment at the national/subnational levels during emergencies.
- (2) Support capacity-building of national emergency management teams to respond to outbreaks.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Continue capacity-building of Member States on the development of national emergency management teams in line with national requirements, adopting standards and quality assurance processes relevant to the national contexts.
- (2) Sustain mentorship and the verification process of emergency management teams that are already in the pipeline.

5. Ending preventable maternal, newborn and child mortality in the South-East Asia Region in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (SEA/RC69/R3)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Continue to focus on sustaining the gains and accelerating progress towards achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Regional Flagship Priority Programme.
- (1) Mitigate the risks due to the COVID-19 pandemic through continuous monitoring of RMNCAH services to understand the degree of service disruption and recovery.
- (2) Establish/strengthen the National Technical Advisory Group on RMNCAH as a substantial value addition at the country level.
- (3) Strengthen appropriate health system actions as based on domestic financing and address human resource issues related to RMNCAH.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Support Member States of the Region to keep RMNCAH at the centre of UHC in order to sustain the gains and accelerate progress towards achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Regional Flagship Priority Programme.
- (2) Provide continued strategic and technical support and guidance to Member States for mitigating the disruptions that emerged on account of the COVID-19 pandemic through country support plans.

6. Challenges in polio eradication (SEA/RC60/R8)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Continue to demonstrate commitment to sustain high routine immunization coverage, maintain a sensitive surveillance system and strong outbreak response capacity, as well as containment of polioviruses in facilities.
- (2) Ensure long-term sustainability of polio infrastructure through domestic/alternative funding resources to maintain the gains in polio and achieve other public health goals.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Provide technical support to Member States in the implementation of the Global Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026.
- (2) Provide technical support for polio risk assessments and outbreak preparedness and response in countries of the Region.
- (3) Continue to provide oversight for the implementation of polio transition plans in five Member States with significant polio infrastructure and assets.

7. Measles and rubella elimination by 2023 (SEA/RC72/R3)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Continue to demonstrate political and programmatic commitment that translates into action to accelerate progress towards measles and rubella elimination.
- (2) Develop and refine strategic, operational and policy guidelines for reviving immunization and surveillance activities.
- (3) Ensure targeted implementation of local-specific strategies to plug gaps in immunization and surveillance, which have emerged following the outbreak of COVID-19.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Continue to provide the highest level of technical support to accelerate implementation of the Strategic Plan, as well as support for mobilization of required resources to optimally implement the national plans on measles and rubella elimination.
- (2) Consult with subject experts and Member States to assess the progress and challenges as well as deliberate on the need for resetting the target date for achieving the measles–rubella elimination goal, and share the recommendations of the consultation at the next Regional Committee Session.

8. Strengthening health workforce education and training in the Region (SEA/RC67/R6)

Recommendations

Actions by Member States

- (1) Strengthen capacities of the ministries of health of Member States to engage with stakeholders in the private and other related sectors to ensure that health workforce development prioritizes health needs, with a focus on priorities related to transformative education and rural retention.
- (2) Bolster and optimize investments in human resources for health, especially with respect to PHC teams.
- (3) Further strengthen HRH information systems and explore linkages with routine health facility data, as well as continue to share HRH and service delivery information as part of regional and global monitoring processes.

Actions by WHO

- (1) Enable cross-country knowledge- and experience-sharing, including expanded collaboration with regional platforms, with a focus on transformative education, rural retention and other pragmatic approaches to optimize PHC workforce teams.

- (2) Provide HRH-related strategic technical support to SE Asia Region Member States, including on strengthening PHC workforce teams, health information systems, and the design of health workforce training to meet the changing health needs post-COVID-19.
- (3) Conduct an assessment of the SE Asia Region's Decade for Strengthening Human Resources for Health, with a focus on accelerating progress and responding to the changes brought about by COVID-19.
- (4) Engage in discussions with Sri Lanka on actions and opportunities towards integrating medical humanities in health professional education as a means to advance people-centred health care in the Region.