

The Healthy Asia Pacific 2020 Roadmap

INTRODUCTION: THE HEALTHY ASIA PACIFIC 2020 INITIATIVE

In the 2014 APEC Leader’s Declaration and Joint Ministerial Statement, it is recognized that the prospect of shared prosperity of APEC member economies will depend on innovative development, economic reform, and growth in the region. Inclusive support is seen as essential to maintaining growth while also providing a solid foundation for economic growth and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.

In this context, the APEC Leaders welcome the “Healthy Asia Pacific 2020” Initiative¹ which was endorsed by the Ministers at the 26th Ministerial Meeting in 2014.

The Initiative was formulated by the APEC Health Working Group (HWG) and APEC Life Sciences Innovation Forum (LSIF) and approved by Health Ministers participating in the 4th APEC High-Level Meeting on Health and the Economy (HLM4) in Beijing in August 2014. The Initiative sets forth a new set of health management responses through 2020 that can help mitigate threats to the region’s people, trade and economic security.

The Initiative calls on the APEC economies to develop sustainable and high performing health systems by adopting or adapting, as appropriate to their domestic context, “health in all policies” and a holistic approach namely “whole-of-government”, “whole-of-society”, and “whole-of-region” to achieve people’s health and wellbeing throughout the whole life course by 2020. In so doing jurisdictional responsibilities and limits are recognized, as well as other economic and governance factors specific to member economies.

Specifically, the initiative focuses on four key areas:

1. Continuing to advance unfinished health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in a manner that complements activities of the post-2015 development agenda, including de-stigmatization and equality.
2. Strengthening the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, including mental illnesses, disabilities, violence and injuries. This includes adopting a holistic and multi-sectoral approach that provides continuous health management and early diagnosis/treatment.
3. Strengthening health systems to support Universal Health Coverage, providing the whole population with access to safe, effective, quality, affordable and sustainable primary health care.
4. Improving health emergency preparedness, surveillance, response and recovery systems for public health emergencies, including pandemic events and natural disasters.

¹2014/SOM3/HLM-HE/002

The Roadmap proposes five actions to advance these four key areas:

1. Appropriately encourage multi-sectoral action in health policy development, implementation and evaluation to put “Health in All Policies” and a “Whole-of-Government” approach into practice. This should include encouraging non-health sectors in health policy development and resource setting and to encourage them to prioritize health considerations into their policy making, implementation and evaluation.
2. Adopt a “Whole-of-Society” approach that empowers individuals and communities to participate in health planning, legislation, services delivery, education, training, monitoring, and knowledge dissemination.
3. Encourage public-private partnerships to address health-related issues and encouragement of both public and private stakeholders to play a vital role as responsible employers in advocating healthy lifestyles, prevention and wellness.
4. Encourage research and innovation that adds value to health systems and meet the needs of all APEC member economies, particularly low and middle income economies. Encourage the sharing of innovative knowledge and training in transferring innovative research and technology. Support the translation of research and innovation into practice through including but not limited to innovative health financing channels and mechanisms.
5. Develop the capacity of APEC member economies to address current and emerging health challenges through comprehensive partnership between governments and stakeholders; the expansion of bilateral, regional and sub-regional dialogues between governments, industry, academic and civil society organizations; and through addressing current and emerging public health issues throughout the health value chain, including barriers in the health supply chain that drive up costs and inhibit access to medical products by patients.

Finally, through endorsement of the Roadmap, APEC commits to strengthening dialogue and cooperation among its own working groups, and with other multi-lateral health bodies, to ensure there are joint and coherent efforts in the Asia-Pacific region to promote health development while setting a model for global health governance.

THE ROADMAP: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY ACTIONS

The following action items are offered to inform consideration at economy level. They can be adapted and adopted as appropriate within the domestic context of APEC economies.

FACTOR 1: GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO HEALTH

Achieving the goals of the Healthy Asia Pacific 2020 requires strong government commitment and leadership. This means enhanced government understanding of the value

of health to economic growth and development. According to the WHO, health is a precondition for, an outcome of, as well as an effective integrated indicator for measuring progress in sustainable development. Strong government leadership is required to garner support of government institutions, the private sector, and the whole community for improving health and strengthening health systems.

Evidence shows that economies with governments that make healthcare a key priority have significantly better health outcomes than others. Achieving domestic health goals requires, among other elements, both sufficient sustainable health care financing consistent with rising levels of economic development and allocating health care resources in a targeted and effective way. Even in resource-limited contexts, governments have the ability to make the political commitments necessary to create sustainable, high-performing healthcare systems.

- ACTION 1: Encourage other sectors to build “healthy public policies” to ensure public policies are supportive of health-promoting conditions. Include a health lens (i.e. health related indicators) in measuring the progress of an economy with regard to sustainable development.
- ACTION 2: Conduct research into the impact of disease burdens on the economy as a whole, taking a whole of government approach and including ministries/agencies responsible for economic growth and development.
- ACTION 3: Encourage action to address the current and future fiscal implications of ill health, especially from non-communicable disease and aging and promote the development of diverse sustainable financing options to meet the health care needs of all citizens. This may include an appropriate mix of public and private investment in health care.
- ACTION 4: Encourage patient-centered, evidence-informed, and holistic approaches to healthcare and increase equitable access to efficient quality healthcare services.
- ACTION 5: Strengthen capacity in policymaking, regulation, and implementation with the assistance of APEC member economies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and other development partners.
- ACTION 6: Build adaptive health systems, which are sustainable, provide access to safe, effective and good quality medical products and traditional and complementary medicines backed by sound scientific evidence and a comprehensive regulatory process.
- ACTION 7: Encourage and support the development of a motivated, appropriately-trained workforce.
- ACTION 8: Develop effective, interoperable health information systems; and sound governance structures.

FACTOR 2: PLATFORMS FOR POLICY DIALOGUE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Establishing platforms for policy dialogue and the adoption of open and transparent government processes and ongoing stakeholder engagement, including in healthcare priority-setting and regulatory formulation, is essential to achieve the goals of the Healthy Asia Pacific 2020 Initiative.

Stakeholder perspectives, including those of patient groups, medical associations, healthcare industry, as well as the general public, are important to ensure the sustainability of evidence-based approaches to decision making. Governments are encouraged to make each step of the stakeholder engagement process transparent and open to the public, in accordance with their domestic and local contexts.

- ACTION 1: Develop interagency working groups, as appropriate, to ensure a whole of government approach to health issues that include ministries of labor, health, transportation, economy, and finance, as well as the private sector, patients groups, academics, and other health stakeholders to develop policies and regulations that improve overall access to health care, drawing on international best practices.
- ACTION 2: Develop, as appropriate, social accountability mechanisms (e.g., community score cards, social audits, citizen charters, etc.) to strengthen stakeholders' ability to monitor, evaluate, and demand accountability from service providers and insurers.
- ACTION 3: Encourage engagement with vulnerable and marginalized populations in health and health-related policy dialogues.
- ACTION 4: Leverage the role of APEC in fostering public-private partnerships to inform policy development and optimize resources, while ensuring patient-centered, evidence-informed and holistic approaches to effectively and efficiently increase equitable access to quality healthcare services.
- ACTION 5: Communicate the short and long-term benefits of a healthy workforce and encourage local small and medium enterprises and businesses to discuss ways employers can promote health awareness and wellbeing and implement best practices.

FACTOR 3: PREVENTION, CONTROL AND AWARENESS

To promote a comprehensive approach to prevention, a change in thinking is needed which will stimulate the commitment and actions of patients and families, health care professionals, communities, employers, and policymakers through partnership approaches at all levels.

Governments have an important role in improving patient awareness of their own health status and risk. Governments can also have an important role in the creation of “healthy environments” through healthy public policies that facilitate behavioral change in populations. Reducing premature mortality and morbidity through increased investment in prevention programs will free up resources that can then be focused on the patients most in need, while relieving the economic burden of such diseases on society as a whole and eventually leading to higher economic growth.

- ACTION 1: Support the development of a well-trained, competent, health workforce.
- ACTION 2: Promote innovative tools to increase health literacy, such as awareness of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), mental illnesses, disabilities, violence and injuries including preventive and curative interventions, and their respective behavioral risk factors.
- ACTION 3: Support health promotion and primary prevention including a healthy cities and communities approach.
- ACTION 4: Advocate and support screening initiatives and early intervention as part of a comprehensive prevention and treatment response.
- ACTION 5: Provide increased access to immunization and other preventive initiatives for both communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- ACTION 6: Collaborate on regional and economy-specific surveillance and preparedness programs and continue to implement the WHO’s International Health Regulations (2005).
- ACTION 7: Encourage the collection of health data to assess the quality and performance of health systems and track progress to enable appropriate benchmarking of policies against high-performing health systems.
- ACTION 8: Continue to develop capabilities to respond appropriately to local, regional and global health emergencies, including pandemics and natural disasters.

FACTOR 4: INNOVATION

Meeting the goals of the Healthy Asia Pacific 2020 Initiative will require APEC economies to innovate and be open to innovation. Increasing awareness of the long-term value of research and development in the medical life sciences sector, and the return on investment in health innovation, are also key to supporting healthy populations in APEC economies.

Innovation is critical to making the most effective use of available health care resources and optimizing patient outcomes. As health needs grow and disease patterns diversify in the Asia-

Pacific region, new approaches and models are needed for research and development in healthcare.

- ACTION 1: Invest in research and development programs which promote the development of innovative healthcare, including medical products.
- ACTION 2: Create environments that provide appropriate incentives for investment in innovative products and tools, including transparent regulatory systems and effective and adequate intellectual property rights (IPR) systems.
- ACTION 3: Partner closely with the private sector on the development spectrum, from research and development to bringing innovative products to the consumer.

FACTOR 5: INTER-SECTORAL AND CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION

It is essential that APEC member economies enhance regional and sub-regional cooperation in healthcare service and delivery for the benefit of the Asia-Pacific region.

- ACTION 1: Promote cross-fora collaboration in APEC on health and health sciences towards developing best practices for a “health in all policies”, “whole of government” and “whole of society” approach to health policy development and implementation.
- ACTION 2: Take on a multi-disciplinary, inter-economy approach in identifying and addressing barriers in the health supply chain that impede population access to affordable, safe and effective medical products and services.
- ACTION 3: Provide vehicles for knowledge sharing, technology transfer or adaptation of and/or capacity building across APEC economies on proven interventions and best practices.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS:

To fully achieve the goals set forth in the Healthy Asia Pacific 2020 initiative, APEC economies may wish to undertake the following complementary actions:

A. Continue the unfinished business of the MDGs as they transition to SDGs in the context of Universal Health Coverage

1. Promote early childhood health and development and adolescent health
2. Prevent maternal deaths including universal access to women’s health services (e.g. antenatal, postnatal and family planning services)
3. Ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation, and safe blood
4. Ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services
5. Sustain and build on the gains in the fight against Tuberculosis and Malaria
6. Collaborate in addressing health impacts of environmental change

B. Invest in the health of our population at all stages of life

1. Address Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health
2. Ensure a healthy workforce, including migrant health
3. Enhance multi-sectoral action and public-private partnerships to combat communicable diseases and prevent and control non-communicable diseases
4. Address the health needs of aging populations and people with disabilities
5. Invest in the prevention of Neglected Tropical Diseases that are increasingly endemic in some APEC member economies, such as vaccination for the prevention of dengue
6. Invest in new technologies, including health technologies, information and communication technology

C. Promote the Global Health Value Chain using a health systems approach

1. Develop sustainable health care financing schemes
2. Provide access to affordable, safe, effective, good quality medical products, health services delivery, and health technologies particularly in developing economies
3. Address health care associated infections and anti-microbial resistance
4. Develop interoperable health information systems
5. Assess, inform, and monitor the health impact of trade and development policies

D. Enhance Regional Cooperation on Human Security

1. Strengthen health emergency preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters
2. Ensure bio-preparedness
3. Address emerging and re-emerging infectious disease outbreaks (e.g. Ebola)
4. Improve infection prevention and control, reducing the spread of antimicrobial resistance and increasing the stewardship of antimicrobial drugs

ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION:

Phase one – Roadmap development (2015)
1. Development of the critical success factors (2015)
Phase two – Implementation of Roadmap and Periodic Assessment of Critical Success Factors (2016-2018)
1. Meetings and workshops to support Roadmap implementation (2016-2018)
2. Showcase successful implementation of Roadmap Critical Success Factors at future HLMs (2016-2018)
Phase three – Comprehensive Review of Roadmap Implementation (2019-2020)
1. Comprehensive Review of Roadmap Implementation (2019)
2. Official Report to Ministers and Leaders (2019-2020)