Working for Better Health in the Western Pacific





Countries and areas of the WHO Western Pacific Region



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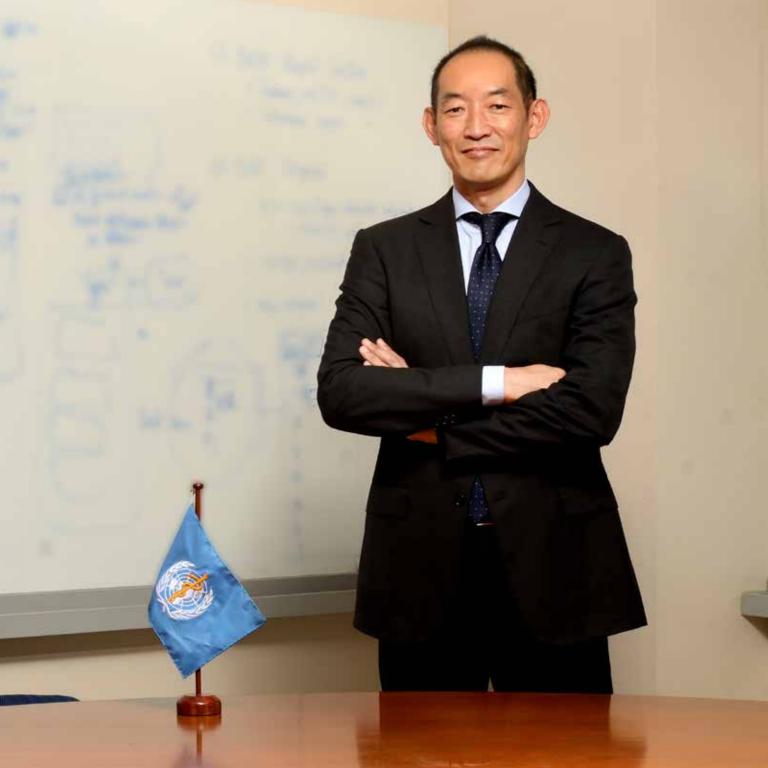


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Message from the Regional Director

For more than seven decades, Member States in the Western Pacific Region have counted on the World Health Organization (WHO) to help identify solutions to public health challenges. Since its founding in 1948, the Organization has focused much of its resources and work on infectious diseases such as HIV, malaria and tuberculosis and issues such as infant and maternal mortality.

However, an era of rapid economic, environmental and social change in the Western Pacific – the world's most populous and diverse region – has presented new challenges, such as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and ageing populations, climate change, and ever-present threats to health security.

People are dying younger from illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and cancer that once used to strike only those in old age. At the same time, in many countries people are living longer, but often with multiple chronic conditions. Climate change poses a vast range of health risks. The nature and range of the health security threats we face today is more complex than ever before. All of these issues can test even the most advanced and resilient health systems.

To confront these challenges, and continue to address unfinished business such as neglected tropical diseases, we work in close collaboration with the 37 countries and areas of the Region, with WHO colleagues from our global headquarters, regional office and country offices working together to provide countries and areas with the best possible support. And we do so mindful of the fact that in a changing world, WHO must also to continue to evolve - building on accomplishments of the past while closely attuned to realities on the ground.

As Regional Director of WHO in the Western Pacific, I am committed to working together with Member States, health workers, partners and the best WHO experts from across the globe to make a real difference in the health and quality of life of the Region's more than 1.9 billion people as we move forward into the second decade of the 21st century.

Jahesni Kases

Dr Takeshi Kasai

WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific

The World Health Organization

About WHO

The World Health Organization (WHO) was established on 7 April 1948 with an ambitious goal – ensure the highest attainable level of health for all people.

More than 7000 WHO staff members all over the world collaborate with governments and other partners to build a healthier world. WHO operates as an independent specialized agency of the United Nations.

WHO assists countries in building robust national health systems and in preparing for and responding to emergencies. We lead the fight against noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes that cause millions

The Western Pacific Region

WHO's Western Pacific Region stretches across seven time zones and is home to more than one quarter of the world's population. The Region extends from the Mongolian steppes in central Asia, east to the Pitcairn Islands in the Pacific Ocean and south to New Zealand. It includes countries big (such as China, with 1.4 billion people) and small (such as Niue, home to just 1000 people), rich and poor, some with exploding populations and others that are rapidly ageing. Health systems and services are strong in some countries and weak in others.

Health outcomes across the Region have improved in recent decades, but serious challenges remain. More than 30 000

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