

HEALTHY CITIES

GOOD HEALTH IS GOOD POLITICS

Toolkit for local governments
to support healthy urban development



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Contents

Message from the Regional Director	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Abbreviations	ix
What will be your mayoral legacy?	x
Why this toolkit?	xii
Why Healthy Cities?	xii
Who will use this toolkit?	xiv
How to use this toolkit?	xiv
 Chapter 1. WHAT IS “HEALTHY CITIES”?	1
 Chapter 2. WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF A HEALTHY CITY?	7
2.1 Good urban governance	7
2.2 Policy coherence – Health in All Policies	8
2.3 Reduce inequities	11
2.4 Innovations	12
 Chapter 3. WHO WILL DRIVE HEALTHY CITIES?	21
3.1 Healthy City focal point	21
3.2 Healthy City core group	22
3.3 Multisectoral steering committee	23
3.4 Secretariat	25
 PATH TO A HEALTHY CITY	34
 Chapter 4. HOW TO MOBILIZE PARTNERS AND GATHER AN EVIDENCE BASE FOR ACTION	37
4.1 How to mobilize partners	37
4.2 Conduct participatory situation analysis	39
4.3 Develop a Healthy City strategic plan	40
4.4 Assess the health impact of a policy or programme intervention	41
 Chapter 5. HOW TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS PRIORITY ISSUES OF THE CITY	49
5.1 Develop multisectoral action plans	49
5.2 Monitor and evaluate	52
 Chapter 6. HOW CAN NATIONAL AGENCIES SUPPORT HEALTHY CITIES?	57
6.1 National focal point	57
6.2 Mentoring and/or twinning	58
6.3 Networking	58
6.4 Recognition and awards	59
 References	63

Toolkit contains additional resources including a participant's workbook, a self-assessment tool, and a list of useful resources. These documents can be accessed at http://www.wpro.who.int/health_promotion/about/urban_health/en/.

Message from the Regional Director

More than half of the 1.8 billion people in the Western Pacific Region already live in urban areas. Asia's urban population, estimated at 1.9 billion in 2011, is projected to grow to 2.7 billion by 2030.

Indeed, cities are already an integral part of the landscape. They will continue to grow, both in size and significance, as more and more people move to cities in pursuit of better education, jobs and services.

With proper governance, cities can develop into hubs of productivity and innovation — places where people interact, ideas thrive and action happens. Without effective governance, however, cities will struggle to provide even basic infrastructure. They will become testaments to inequality, poverty and poor health.

Now the Healthy Cities vision is more relevant than ever, as we search for guidance during this critical time in our development.

Healthy Cities have many qualities that promote health and well-being.

Fundamentally, the city should be clean and safe, including access to food, water, shelter and health care. Developmentally, the economy should be diverse and innovative, providing work opportunities and promoting fair business practices. Socially, communities should be engaged and mutually supportive, with the city encouraging connections and enabling participation in public processes.

A Healthy City may be achieved through a range of actions. Before anything else, the political will and commitment to urban health should be established to mandate action. The needs of the people should be assessed to inform new initiatives, taking account of inequalities and policy impacts on health. Stakeholders should be mobilized through a participatory approach to implement integrated solutions. Delivery systems should be transparent and accountable. Finally, performance should be monitored and evaluated to ensure quality improvement down the road.

This toolkit has been produced by the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific to support and strengthen the efforts of local leaders in applying the Healthy Cities approach. We stand ready to assist you toward enhancing the state of your cities and the quality of life of your urban residents.



Shin Young-soo, MD, Ph.D.

WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific

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