



**Asia-Pacific
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The North Star: A 2030 Strategy for Enabling Resilient Health Systems and Promoting the Health of our Populations in the Asia Pacific

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: Canada



**Second Health Working Group Meeting
19-20 August 2021**

***The North Star:
A 2030 Strategy for Enabling Resilient Health Systems and Promoting the Health of our Populations in the
Asia Pacific***

We, the APEC Health Working Group and the Life Sciences Innovation Forum:

Recognize that APEC economies are in the midst of a dramatic socio-economic transformation; and that they face increasing health challenges, including infectious diseases outbreaks alongside a growing burden of non-communicable disease;

Acknowledge that the APEC region is currently facing the dual economic and health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the need for investments to strengthen health systems in order to promote a more resilient Asia Pacific, as well as the challenges that limit women's economic empowerment, so as to contribute to the implementation of Putrajaya Vision 2040 of building an open dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040

Note that health is both a prerequisite for and an outcome of sustainable and inclusive development; and that, in this way, strong, sustainable health systems are central to a resilient APEC region;

Emphasize that by developing and sustaining dynamic health systems in the region and strengthening cooperation between health policy development, health industries, and trade, economies can promote healthy populations through the life-course, that can make substantial contributions to our region;

Consider health, and in particular, health equity as integral to the development of public policies of all sectors;

Recognize the huge gaps in access to quality health services and in human resources for health that continue to exist in the Asia Pacific region;

Highlight the concept that there is “no wealth without health” when discussing and coordinating sustainable, inclusive economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region;

Recall with appreciation that APEC economies have already been collaborating to address health-related threats to the economy, trade, and security;

Highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the value of collaboration to increase the likelihood of success of efforts to build health systems resiliency and respond to global challenges, and that these efforts must continue as the region prepares for future health-related economic shocks;

Reaffirm the importance of collaborating with multi-sectoral global partners and harmonizing with the broader global health agenda; and,

Recognize the need for an overarching strategic document upon the expiry of the *Healthy Asia-Pacific 2020* Initiative and Roadmap, and to support the implementation of the Putrajaya Vision 2040

In this context, this document, the “North Star – A 2030 Strategy for Enabling Resilient Health Systems and Promoting the Health of our Populations in the Asia Pacific” outlines the APEC Health Working Group's and the Life Sciences Innovation Forum's strategic priorities for the period 2022-2030.

We will focus on achieving the following outcomes:

- 1. Regional health issues.** Strengthened collaboration across the region by demonstrating the economic imperative of: addressing pandemic and public health emergency preparedness, response, and recovery; preventing and controlling infectious diseases, including immunization and antimicrobial resistance; promoting health and wellbeing; healthy ageing; childhood nutrition; exploring the complementary role of traditional medicine; preventing and managing non-communicable diseases by modifiable behavioural risk factors such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets through a life-course approach including mental health, cancer, and rare diseases; addressing environmental health including water sanitation and hygiene; and other issues at the nexus of health and the economy.
- 2. Health systems strengthening and regulatory convergence:** Strengthened health systems including capacity building for human resources for health, resilient supply chains, and the promotion of regulatory convergence, to support universal health coverage and improved health emergency preparedness, detection, response, and recovery systems for public health emergencies in the APEC region.
- 3. Research and innovation.** Creation of an environment that facilitates life sciences research and innovation, and that fosters health systems innovation, including in the fields of telemedicine and digital health.

Actions:

We will seek to achieve the above aforementioned outcomes by:

- A. Demonstrating to governments the value of health to both economic growth and resiliency of the region to emergencies.
- B. Enabling sustainable and innovative health care financing and allocation of health care resources in a targeted and effective way.
- C. Strengthening platforms for evidence-informed policy development, and facilitate the adoption of transparent government processes, public-private partnerships, and approaches to multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement;
- D. Addressing the health needs of individuals and communities (including populations in vulnerable and at-risk situations) to effectively improve health and wellbeing in the region and ultimately support their economic participation and empowerment, as highlighted in the APEC La Serena Roadmap
- E. Supporting health research and innovation and promote the translation and dissemination of that research and innovation into improved health outcomes for APEC economies;
- F. Enhancing regional and sub-regional cooperation and regulatory convergence to improve health outcomes and health systems, with a focus on strategic cross-fora collaboration, knowledge sharing, policy-focused discussions and capacity building, for the benefit of the entire Asia-Pacific region.

The Health Working Group will leverage its platform as a group of government officials to support and reflect the views of domestic policymakers in support of APEC's economic and technical cooperation agenda

The Life Sciences Innovation Forum will leverage its platform of government, industry, and civil society to foster public-private partnerships and multi-sectoral collaboration and demonstrate their value in support of APEC's trade and investment agenda.

The Health Working Group and Life Sciences Innovation Forum agree to be guided by the above outlined strategic vision, as the "North Star", and work together with all APEC fora for a Healthy Asia Pacific.