



Asia Pacific Observatory  
on Health Systems and Policies

APO eNewsletter

October 2024



## Building Resilient Health Systems:

### APO's Latest Updates



## Toward Resilient Health Systems

We are excited to bring you the latest updates from APO, including key outcomes from our recent board meeting, our 2030 medium-term strategy and APO's growing contributions to health systems research and policy.



APO's work with experts, partners, and WHO teams is crucial for strengthening research and policy ecosystems, advancing our mission of Health for All.



**Dr Saia Ma'u Piukala**

Regional Director  
WHO Regional Office  
for the Western Pacific



## 1 - IN FOCUS: Shaping Health Systems Research in APAC

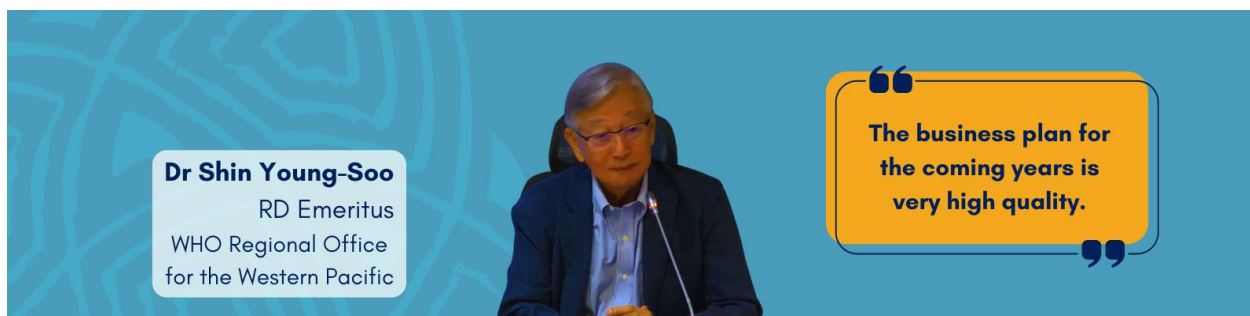
On 13 August 2024, we held our 26th Board Meeting, bringing together board members, partners from Australia, Singapore and Thailand and our Internal Review Panel (IRP) members.

We were honored by the steadfast support of the WPRO Regional Director who reminded us that working as a collective and fostering ecosystems is the way forward.



A key focus of the meeting was the presentation of APO's 2024 to 2027 Business Plan, which reinforces our commitment to knowledge generation, brokering and management, with a special emphasis on capacity building and expanding our networks across the Asia Pacific.

We were inspired by the commendation from WPRO Emeritus Director on APO's business plan. We will continue striving for excellence in health systems research and policymaking.





## 2 - APO's Medium-Term Strategy

We are thrilled to announce **APO's strategic plan for 2024 to 2030**! This ambitious roadmap will guide our work toward transformative health systems and policies in the Asia Pacific region, ensuring a culture of evidence-informed decision-making at regional, national and subnational levels.



### 2024-2030 Strategy of the Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

#### What are APO values?

- Partnership through Co-production is at the heart of Asia Pacific Observatory (APO). Researchers and Policymakers work collaboratively to ensure APO's work is relevant to local country end users.
- Building HPSR Capacity is integrated in all APO work and processes. The increasing demand for evidence informed policy making in the Asia Pacific requires increased capacity to generate evidence and the knowledge of how to use it.
- The Observatory upholds High Standards of research, analysis, and application, to ensure all APO products are credible, reliable, and high-quality.
- APO will at all times maintain Independence in its work and be free from conflicts of interest.
- APO will exercise Probity and Integrity in all its dealings

#### What is our vision?

APO's vision is to see a culture of evidence-informed decision-making in health systems at regional, national, and subnational levels throughout the Asia Pacific region.

#### What will APO do to achieve this?

1. Analyse the current state of health systems, identifying their challenges + opportunities.
2. Generate knowledge about effective contemporary health policy strategies to facilitate cross-national learning.
3. Facilitate transmission of policy developments and support translation of these to local contexts.
4. Build local capacity for evidence informed decision-making and Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR).

#### What does success look like?

1. **Reputation:** APO holding a strong reputation amongst policymakers and Health Policy and Systems (HPS) Researchers for producing quality work and being easy to work with.
2. **Value:** APO programs, products, and services, valued and used by Policymakers, Policy Entrepreneurs, and Development Partners.
3. **Impact:** APO outputs create, or improve, relevant policy options and possibilities for local Policymakers.
4. **Capacity-Building:** Policymakers and Researchers who engage with APO experience improvement of their HPSR competency and capacity.

#### What areas will APO focus on being successful in?

- Models of sustainable financing, commissioning, delivering, and harmonising, people-centred services including primary health care to achieve UHC.
- Approaches to achieve and maintain fit-for-purpose health workforce now and into the future.
- Tackling inequities in health due to gender, social inequities, being uncaptured, or unreached.
- Use of digital health technologies and data to enhance health system outcomes.
- Health system resilience and adaptability to external and evolving pressures such as climate change and pandemics.

#### How will success be achieved?

- **Generating Knowledge + Networks**
  - Health in Transition publications (HT) up to date, easily accessible, co-produced, and co-maintained.
  - HT creation and maintenance processes to facilitate local and regional HPSR networks that connect Policymakers and Researchers, along with current leaders and upcoming talent, in meaningful ways.
  - HT processes will result in regular Policy Briefs relevant to local policy priorities and policy cycles, and Journal articles relevant to current national and regional discourses.
  - APO to facilitate cross-country comparisons, to include building on HT data and networks.
  - APO to commission research relevant to, and valued by, Policymakers.
- **Managing Knowledge**
  - Policymakers, Researchers, Development Partners, and Advocates able to easily access, filter, and sort the latest HPS Research in ways useful for their current policy priorities. As well as easily identify, filter, and connect with Researchers and Research Institutes operating in the region.
- **Brokering Knowledge**
  - Leading HPSR research broadcasted and communicated effectively in ways that increases awareness of the best evidence and how it can be applied to different contexts.
  - APO to facilitate or support Policy Dialogues and Workshops that Policymakers find timely and useful.
  - APO, in conjunction with partners, facilitate regional events that Policymakers and Researchers find enjoyable, valuable, and that furthers the quality of local evidenced-informed decision making.
  - APO processes to link people and institutions that have more experience in HPSR, with those that have less, in ways that build the HPSR competency and capacity of both.

#### How will success be measured?

- Annual review of performance indicators established by the Board and reported on by the Secretariat.
- 3yr mid-point review to evaluate progress and suggest improvements.

#### What internal capabilities should be in place to enable this?

1. Sustainable business model including diversified revenue streams, effective fundraising program, cost-sharing, and long term financial commitments.
2. Fit-for-purpose Secretariat that includes the right quantity and competency of human resources needed to achieve this strategy.
3. Strong networks, platforms and engagement with:
  - Policymakers and policy entrepreneurs.
  - Researchers and research institutes.
  - Development partners and advocates.
4. Strong knowledge brokering skills, tools, and resources.
5. Effective Quality Assurance systems and controls that consistently ensure the credibility, reliability, and value of APO products, and services.
6. Effective leadership, management, and governance across a diverse range of relevant competencies including management information systems



### 3 - PUBLICATION: Thailand HiT Second Edition 2024

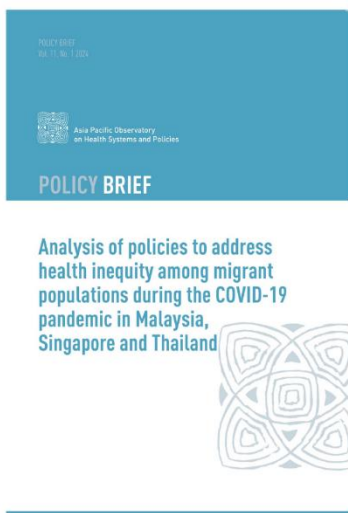


APO published the second edition of the Thailand Health Systems in Transition (HiT) Review.

The review highlights Thailand's achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) since 2002, which has significantly reduced out-of-pocket expenditure and improved financial risk protection for its citizens. It also covers the country's devolution of Subdistrict Health Centers, innovative healthcare strategies introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and challenges in addressing Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).

**Download:** <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/9789290620457>

### 4 - PUBLICATION: Policy Brief on Migrant Health



**HOT OFF THE PRESS!** APO published a Policy Brief "Analysis of policies to address health inequity among migrant populations during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand."

This policy brief highlights the barriers to healthcare access and the disproportionate burden faced by these populations in the region. Drawing on lessons from the pandemic, the brief provides national and regional policy recommendations aimed at strengthening health systems and improving health outcomes for migrant workers.

**Download:** <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/analysis-of-policies-to-address-health-inequity-among-migrant-populations-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-malaysia-singapore-and-thailand-policy-brief>



**More Publications  
in the works!**

## Upcoming APO Publications You Won't Want to Miss

By the end of October, APO will release a comparative analysis on service integration between health and social care in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Seoul and Thiruvananthapuram.

We're also drafting the first HiT reports for the Maldives and Singapore and updating the HiT for Lao PDR.

Stay tuned for these insightful publications!

## 5 - Global Thought Leadership



- **Global Learning Collaborative for Health Systems Resilience (GLC4HSR) 2024:** The APO Director delivered a keynote highlighting the crucial role of advocacy and gender equity in building more inclusive and resilient health systems at the GLC4HSR Annual Conclave.

**Watch:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUv47VwFoh8>

- **Global Health Security (GHS) 2024:** A lead researcher from the National University of Singapore (NUS) presented key findings on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), showcasing how health systems in Southeast Asia are tackling this growing challenge. This work was a collaborative effort by the APO consortium, including members from Singapore, Bangladesh, Hong Kong and the Philippines.



- **Western Pacific Regional Workshop on Models of Effective Service Delivery for Primary Health Care (PHC) and Reaching the Unreached (RTU):** APO partner institutions, NUS, The George Institute, Duke Kunshan University and Ateneo de Manila University presented their findings on status of PHC research in the WPRO region while the APO Director led the discussion on the role of health systems research in expanding healthcare access to underserved populations.
- **Bringing Evidence to Public Health Policy (EPHP):** The APO Director was a guest discussant at the Asia Pacific Dialogue on Health Governance, Policy and Institutional Frameworks for Just and Sustainable Health Systems, focusing on translating evidence into policy, implementing research and fostering new opportunities for collaboration.



**Join APO's satellite session on PHC at  
the HSR 2024 in Nagasaki, Japan!**

## Coming up next...

APO will be hosting a satellite session on **Primary Health Care (PHC) on 19 November 2024** at **HSR2024**, the 8th Global Symposium on Health Systems Research in Nagasaki, Japan.



The Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (APO), hosted by the WHO, is a collaborative initiative promoting evidence-informed decision-making in health systems across the Asia Pacific Region.

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