



World Health
Organization

Western Pacific



Health leaders endorse action plan to end TB in the Region

29 October 2021 | News release

HIMEJI, Japan | 29 October 2021 – On the final day of their annual meeting, health leaders of the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region adopted a resolution to reduce the burden of tuberculosis (TB).

Achieving 2030 goals to end TB

Delegates today endorsed the Western Pacific Regional Framework to End TB (2021–2030), which provides strategic guidance and context for countries in the Western Pacific to achieve the 2030 global goals to reduce the burden of tuberculosis.

In this Region, an estimated 1.8 million people fell ill and 90 000 died from TB in 2019. Experts estimate that 20% of all TB cases remain undiagnosed or unreported.

There have been significant improvements in recent years. TB incidence and deaths in the Region declined by 6% and 17%, respectively, between 2015 and 2019. But progress is too slow to reach the 2025 targets of the End TB Strategy: 75% reduction in TB deaths and 50% reduction in new TB cases compared with 2015, and zero catastrophic costs due to TB.

“Many people with TB face challenges in reaching quality services. This is especially the case for vulnerable and marginalized populations,” said Dr Takeshi Kasai, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific. “TB programmes need to be prepared for the future. In our Region, urbanization, population ageing and the growing burden of noncommunicable diseases add unique challenges, and COVID-19 has stressed health systems and disrupted services, including TB prevention and care. But the pandemic has also created opportunities to develop innovative strategies to ensure continuity of TB services and, ultimately, strengthen TB care, prevention and control,” he added.

Under the Regional Framework, WHO will support countries to develop and implement national strategic plans with the vision to end TB by 2030. Programmes must work backwards from this goal and identify steps that need to be taken to reach the target. Governments will need to have forward-looking, long-term plans suitable for their contexts and based on local successful approaches.

Closure of the session

This year's session of the Regional Committee concluded today with delegates agreeing on the time and place of the seventy-third session, to be held in China from 24 to 28 October 2022. The seventy-fourth session will be held in Manila, Philippines in 2023.

Notes to editors:

A livestream of the Regional Committee proceedings, official documents, fact sheets and videos on the issues addressed this week can be accessed here: www.who.int/westernpacific/about/governance/regional-committee/session-72

For updates, follow @WHOWPRO on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) and the hashtag #RCM72.

Working with 194 Member States across six regions, WHO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for public health. Each WHO region has its own regional committee – a governing body composed of ministers of health and senior officials from the region's Member States. Each regional committee meets annually to agree on health actions and chart priorities for WHO's work.

Last year, because of COVID-19, regional committees were held virtually for the first time. This year, the Western Pacific Regional Committee will meet in a hybrid format for the first time, with some delegates traveling to Himeji, Japan, to attend the meeting in person, while others connect via videoconference.

Cooperation between countries is essential to address public health challenges such as COVID-19. Member States have acquired profound experience responding to the virus over the past 21 months. While the pandemic continues, the hybrid Regional Committee is an important opportunity to exchange experience, further strengthen cooperation and enhance countries' responses.

WHO is working closely with the Government of Japan and Himeji City on logistics and other arrangements. Stringent risk mitigation measures are being implemented to ensure the safety of all participants in the meeting and the host community. During the meeting and all associated events, the highest standards of infection prevention and control will be observed.

The WHO Western Pacific Region is home to more than 1.9 billion people across 37 countries and areas in Asia and the Pacific: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, France (which has responsibility for French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna), Hong Kong SAR (China), Japan, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Macao SAR (China), Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (which has responsibility for Pitcairn Islands), the United States of America (which has responsibility for American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam), Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

Related link:

- Tuberculosis [fact sheet](#); [video](#).
- People of the Western Pacific: [Josephine Jim, Papua New Guinea](#)

Media contacts:

Media, please contact: wprocom@who.int

Japanese-speaking media, contact: beppum@who.int

News release in other languages:

[卫生领导人批准了本区域终止结核病行动计划](#)

[Les responsables de la santé approuvent le plan d'action visant à mettre fin à la tuberculose dans la Région](#)

[地域における結核撲滅に向けたアクションプランを](#)