WORKSHOP FOR HEALTH EQUITY MONITORING
IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

11–14 June 2024
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
WORKSHOP FOR HEALTH EQUITY MONITORING IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

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Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
MEETING REPORT

WORKSHOP FOR HEALTH EQUITY MONITORING IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Convened by:

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
11–14 June 2024

Not for sale

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July 2024
NOTE

The views expressed in this report are those of the participants of the Workshop for Health Equity Monitoring in the Western Pacific Region and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the conveners.

This report has been prepared by the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific for Member States in the Region and for those who participated in the Workshop for Health Equity Monitoring in the Western Pacific Region in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 11 to 14 June 2024.
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Data analysis / Delivery of health care / Health equity
SUMMARY

The Workshop for Health Equity Monitoring in the Western Pacific Region was attended by participants from six Member States from the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region – Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Viet Nam – as well as Ukraine from the WHO European Region.

The goal of the workshop was to support Member States in further developing their capacities in health equity measurement and monitoring. To achieve this, the workshop included presentations, facilitated Q&A sessions, practical groupwork sessions, videos and bilateral meetings to coordinate tailored support in national initiatives. Participating Member States requested follow-up workshops at the country level, committed to including a health equity monitoring chapter in their annual health progress reports, and agreed to convert draft profiles into more elaborate health equity profiles for consideration.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Meeting organization

The Workshop for Health Equity Monitoring in the Western Pacific Region was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 11 to 14 June 2024. It was attended by 37 participants from Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Ukraine and Viet Nam. The list of participants is available in Annex 1 and the programme of activities in Annex 2.

1.2 Meeting objectives

The objectives of the meeting were:

1. to strengthen participants’ capacity in health equity measurement and monitoring;
2. to increase participants’ capacity in equity-based target-setting;
3. to train participants on available WHO tools and instruments to measure health inequalities; and
4. to support participating country teams in the drafting of national health equity profiles as well as a set of recommendations for health equity monitoring.

2. PROCEEDINGS

2.1 Opening session: Setting the scene

The opening session focused on setting the scene and analysing trends in health indicators. After welcoming remarks, introductions, reviewing the agenda, objectives and expected results of the workshop, speakers reviewed the social determinants of health (SDH) and why multisectoral action is key to reducing health inequities. They discussed why measuring and monitoring health inequalities and SDH are important, and the potential impacts of falling behind in this area. Takeaways included health equity monitoring being crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for identifying who is left behind and why, and for informing targeted strategies to ensure no one is left behind. The speakers also presented related global and regional strategies and frameworks, including WHO’s Operational framework for monitoring social determinants of health equity, the Regional framework for reaching the unreached in the Western Pacific (2022–2030) from the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, and the Every Woman Every Child initiative for Latin America and
the Caribbean from the Pan American Health Organization. Participants learnt about and practised practical approaches to identifying and describing trends in health and the SDH at national level.

2.2 Deep dive into health equity measures

This session offered in-depth lessons on methodologies for measuring inequalities in health indicators. This included both basic measures and more complex measures, such as the slope index and relative slope index of inequality, as well as different ways to interpret gap metrics. Conclusions made included the importance of the measurement and monitoring of health inequalities in allowing national decision-makers to determine which subnational levels within a country are being left behind and allowing them to target their efforts accordingly to reduce health inequities within countries more efficiently. Participants received a demonstration of the “Equity Explorer for the calculation of ecosocial inequalities in health” tool and practised putting theory into practice during groupwork. The session also included a demonstration of WHO’s Health Equity Assessment Toolkit (HEAT), and connected groupwork to setting equity-based targets under the SDGs.

2.3 Preparing and communicating groupwork results

This session focused on preparing and communicating groupwork results from session two. Speakers responded to questions from the previous day regarding the interpretation of inequality measures, and participants shared their group presentations on trends, health inequalities and targets for 2030. Country groups observed overall trends in health and social indicators, as well as inequalities at the subnational level, and also identified potential entry points for action.

2.4 From monitoring to policy action

Speakers in this session discussed ways to move from monitoring health inequalities to taking action on health inequities at the policy level. Specifically, the role of qualitative data in understanding and addressing health inequities and their determinants was discussed and examples of WHO tools and instruments were provided. Speakers presented WHO’s regional plans for the Western Pacific and progress on monitoring health inequalities. They also shared lessons learnt from the Region of the Americas on monitoring SDG 3 targets and inequalities. Country teams worked together to identify entry points or opportunities for institutionalizing health equity monitoring, practical steps and needs to act on these entry points and opportunities, as well as entry points for using health equity data to inform the policy process. Country groups shared their needs for support and next steps. A series of bilateral meetings was then conducted between individual Member States and the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific to identify specific next steps to be taken to institutionalize health equity monitoring and address health inequities.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Conclusions

During the workshop, Member State teams were equipped with the technical knowledge required to measure and monitor health inequalities; trained in the use of available WHO tools and instruments to measure and monitor health inequalities; provided a space to work together to apply the concepts, tools and instruments presented in the workshop during groupwork sessions; given a space to develop and present national profiles illustrating trends in health indicators and health inequalities; and offered the opportunity to work jointly to identify entry points, opportunities and key actions to institutionalize and take policy action on health equity monitoring and the social determinants of health.
3.2 Recommendations

3.2.1 Recommendations for Member States
Member States are encouraged to consider the following:

(1) Strengthen their national information systems to improve the collection, reporting and monitoring of data disaggregated by relevant socioeconomic characteristics, such as place of residence (rural/urban), ethnicity, sex, education, subnational unit and wealth/income.
(2) Take an intersectoral and multidisciplinary approach to health equity monitoring, coordinated by a central agency that brings all stakeholders together (for example, ministries of health, finance, economics, etc.).
(3) Incorporate the measurement and monitoring of inequalities in health indicators and their social determinants (in selected SDG 3 indicators, at a minimum).
(4) Continue with capacity-building of national and subnational stakeholders.
(5) Develop dashboards that enable the monitoring of health inequalities and institutionalize those dashboards into existing systems.
(6) Set up national committee/teams responsible for health equity monitoring.
(7) Develop annual reports to reflect changes in inequalities in health over time.
(8) Advocate for action to institutionalize the measurement and monitoring of health inequalities through political meetings and council of minister meetings.

3.2.2 Recommendations for WHO
WHO is requested to:

(1) Organize similar health equity capacity-building workshops in Cambodia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Viet Nam.
(2) Provide Mongolia and the Philippines with support towards developing national health equity dashboards.
(3) Assist Cambodia, Mongolia and Viet Nam to include a health equity monitoring chapter in their annual health progress reports.
(4) Develop draft profiles created by Member State teams into more elaborate profiles for their consideration.
(5) Support Mongolia in reviewing its vulnerability analysis and build the capacity of technical officers at the subnational level for data analysis.
ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of participants

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<th>Contact Person</th>
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## Annex 2. Programme of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 1, 11 June 2024 (Tuesday)</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 2, 12 June 2024 (Wednesday)</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 3, 13 June 2024 (Thursday)</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 4, 14 June 2024 (Friday)</th>
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<tr>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Registration of participants</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Deep Dive Into Health Equity Measures:</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Preparing and Communicating Group Work Results:</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>From Monitoring to Policy Action</td>
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<td>09:00</td>
<td>to 10:45</td>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Measuring health inequalities and their determinants: Basic measures</td>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Video: The role of qualitative data in understanding and addressing health inequalities and their determinants, and examples of WHO tools and instruments for monitoring health inequalities:</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Moving from measuring to monitoring health inequalities:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10:40</td>
<td>Measuring health inequalities: Slope Index of Inequality</td>
<td>10:40</td>
<td>- WPPO’s regional plan for monitoring health inequalities</td>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>- WHO/PAHO SDG portal</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13:20</td>
<td>Facilitated Q &amp; A from the audience</td>
<td>13:20</td>
<td>- <a href="http://www.paho.org/sdg3">www.paho.org/sdg3</a></td>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>9:50</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14:50</td>
<td>--- Coffee break ---</td>
<td>14:50</td>
<td>--- Coffee break ---</td>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>Coffee to be served during group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:10</td>
<td>Group photo/ Coffee break</td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Demonstration of the PAHO webtool</td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>--- Lunch break ---</td>
<td>16:10</td>
<td>--- Lunch ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to 12:30</td>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Group work: Putting theory into practice</td>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Communicating preliminary results: presentations groups 1-3</td>
<td>16:15</td>
<td>Series of bilateral meetings between WHO and MS teams on tailored support</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15:15</td>
<td>--- Lunch break ---</td>
<td>15:15</td>
<td>Communicating preliminary results: presentations groups 4-7</td>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>- Time slot 2 (13:40-14:00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15:35</td>
<td>Group work: Putting theory into practice</td>
<td>15:35</td>
<td>--- Coffee break ---</td>
<td>16:40</td>
<td>- Time slot 3 (14:00-14:20)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to 16:55</td>
<td>Closing of Day 2 (including plans for day 3)</td>
<td>16:55</td>
<td>--- Lunch break ---</td>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>- Time slot 5 (14:40-15:00)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Closing of Day 1 (including plan for day 2)</td>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>--- Lunch break ---</td>
<td>17:10</td>
<td>- Time slot 6 (15:00-15:20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Day 1, 11 June 2024 (Tuesday)**
- **08:30**: Registration of participants
- **09:00** to **10:45**: Setting the scene:
  - Welcoming remarks
  - Introductions of facilitating teams and participants
  - Structure of the workshop: Agenda, Objectives and expected results
  - Presentation I: What are the Social Determinants of Health and why is multisectoral action key to reducing health inequities in the Western Pacific Region?
  - Coffee break
  - Presentation II: Why measure and monitor health inequalities and the social determinants of health inequities and potential impacts of not doing so.
  - Group photo & Coffee break
  - Presentations of global and regional strategies and frameworks:
    - Global Strategy & Operational Framework for Monitoring Social Determinants of Health Equity
    - Reaching the Unreached in the Western Pacific Region
    - Every Woman Every Child for Latin America and the Caribbean—Interagency Partnership to Measure and Address Health Inequities under the SDGs
  - Facilitated Q & A from the audience
  - --- Lunch break ---

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**Day 2, 12 June 2024 (Wednesday)**
- **08:30** to **10:20**: Coffee break
- **10:40** to **12:50**: Deep Dive Into Health Equity Measures:
  - Measuring health inequalities and their determinants: Basic measures
  - Measuring health inequalities: Slope Index of Inequality
  - Facilitated Q & A from the audience
  - --- Coffee break ---
  - Demosntration of the PAHO webtool
  - Group work: Putting theory into practice
  - Facilitated Q & A from the audience
  - --- Lunch break ---
  - Video: Demonstration of WHO tool: HEAT
  - Setting equity-based targets under the SDGs
  - Group work: Putting theory into practice
  - Facilitated Q & A from the audience
  - --- Coffee break ---
  - Report-back and Q&A
  - Closing of Day 2 (including plans for day 3)

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**Day 3, 13 June 2024 (Thursday)**
- **08:30** to **10:45**: Coffee break
- **11:00** to **12:30**: Preparing and Communicating Group Work Results:
  - Group work: Preparation of group presentations (trends, health inequalities, targets for 2030)
  - --- Coffee break ---
  - Group work: Preparation of group presentations (trends, health inequalities, targets for 2030)
  - --- Coffee break ---
  - Group work: Putting theory into practice
  - Facilitated Q & A from the audience
  - --- Lunch break ---
  - Communicating preliminary results: presentations groups 1-3
  - --- Coffee break ---
  - Communicating preliminary results: presentations groups 4-7
  - Closing of Day 3 (including plans for day 4)

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**Day 4, 14 June 2024 (Friday)**
- **08:30** to **9:50**: Coffee break
- **11:00** to **12:20**: From Monitoring to Policy Action
  - Video: The role of qualitative data in understanding and addressing health inequities and their determinants, and examples of WHO tools and instruments
  - Moving from measuring to monitoring health inequalities:
    - WPPO’s regional plan for monitoring health inequalities
    - WHO/PAHO SDG portal www.paho.org/sdg3
  - Facilitated Q & A from audience
  - Group work: Identifying entry points or opportunities for:
    - Institutionalizing health equity monitoring and key actions
    - Taking policy action on the SDH and Health inequities and key actions moving forward
  - --- Coffee to be served during group work ---
  - Presentations from group work: part I
  - --- Lunch ---
  - Series of bilateral meetings between WHO and MS teams on tailored support
    - Time slot 1 (13:20 - 13:40)
    - Time slot 2 (13:40 - 14:00)
    - Time slot 3 (14:00 - 14:20)
    - Time slot 4 (14:20 - 14:40)
    - Time slot 5 (14:40 - 15:00)
    - Time slot 6 (15:00 - 15:20)

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**End of Day 2**
- Reception

**End of Day 3**
- End of Day 3

**End of the workshop**
- End of the workshop