Communicable diseases in south-east Asia: call for papers

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The WHO South-East Asia Region has been undergoing rapid economic development over the past few decades. While this has worked in favour of combating communicable diseases in terms of greater financial resources and priority given to health, it has had profound impact on communicable diseases in the context of globalization. The ease of international travel, population movement, urbanization, unplanned and unregulated developmental activities are all facilitating the spread of diseases, both within and across borders, thus threatening international health security. Furthermore, the economic growth has not been equitable and poor health is both a cause and consequence of non-inclusive growth.6

Innovative strategies are being implemented in the region to address these issues. The social insurance scheme in Thailand, national rural health mission in India, partnerships between the government and nongovernmental organizations in Bangladesh are just a few example of initiatives that governments are taking to address the concerns of the poor and to ensure equity and social justice in the health area. Core capacity is being built for early detection and rapid response to new pathogens in the context of the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005).

Developing robust health delivery mechanisms is a key area for policy and research. WHO’s South-East Asia Region has a vibrant private health sector, including advanced pharmaceutical and biotechnology research, development and manufacturing capacity, which can be engaged towards further strengthening health services. Existing infrastructure can be used as a foundation to allow appropriate components of communicable disease control to be managed by primary health care.

A theme issue of the Bulletin will provide a forum for sharing the region’s successes, and its future opportunities in disease control and research. The issue aims to foster greater international collaboration and partnership. Since the region has such a high communicable disease burden and risk, greater investment and collaboration will benefit not only the communities it serves but the entire world.

The deadline for submissions to this issue is 1 June 2009. Manuscripts should be submitted to: http://submit.bwol. org and should respect the Guidelines for Contributors, available at: http:// www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/84/current_guidelines/en/index.html. They should be accompanied by a cover letter mentioning this call for papers. All submissions will go through the Bulletin’s peer review process.

References
3. Health situation in the South-East Asia Region. WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia; 1998-2000, Annex 8; Fig 26.

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