

# Preface

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The main threats to health for most people in the world come from fast-spreading communicable diseases and pandemics. Death and illness linked to poverty, unsafe environments and the displacement of peoples are also the other primary causes of ill-health. And in the past ten years, ASEAN has been the epicentre of several outbreaks of infectious diseases that caused loss of human lives, and resulted in negative social and economic impacts.

In response to these public health threats, the ASEAN Member States have developed a comprehensive set of mechanisms, strategies and approaches, and together with the Plus Three countries (China, Japan and the Republic of Korea) have accumulated rich field-based experiences on managing infectious diseases. They have also developed effective strategies for disease prevention and control relevant to their own contexts and situations. However, the sharing of these good practices is still minimal across the region, partly because most of these strategies are not well-documented.

Through the initiative of the ASEAN Plus Three Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID) Programme of the ASEAN Secretariat, and within the framework of the **Communication and Integration Strategy for Emerging Infectious Diseases**, we would like to share with you a collection of these good practices implemented by the ASEAN Ministries of Health in managing public health challenges at the national level. We hope that this publication would be the initial step towards a sustained proactive sharing of effective strategies that can be adapted based on individual country contexts.

The ASEAN Charter mandates the Member States to work together as a team. In the spirit of regionality, we hope to continue developing strategies to identify common problems and to work together to address these challenges through regional arrangements and agreements, sharing of information, experiences and best practices, capacity-building, and sharing of resources.



I personally commend all the contributing authors from the Ministries of Health of the ASEAN Member States and Plus Three countries for selflessly sharing their good practices and success stories so that others may learn from their experiences. My deep appreciation goes to the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand for taking the leadership role in this initiative. I also extend my gratitude to the Australian Government, through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), for the financial support extended to this project through the ASEAN Plus Three EID Programme.

This publication is dedicated to all the peoples of ASEAN - the core of the ASEAN vision - as we aim to build a community of caring societies, secure from threats of diseases and poverty and social ills.



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