

Description of Confirmed 2025 Pre-congress Sessions

Saturday July 19th and Sunday July 20th

Two-day session

Priorities in Immunization Economics: Reaching Zero-Dose Children and Missed Communities; Sustainability, Prioritization and Optimization

Organizer: IHEA Immunization Economics Special Interest Group

This session will bring together researchers, donors, and policy makers to showcase new evidence, align on methods, and discuss policy implications around emerging topics in immunization economics, including: 1) Cost and cost-effectiveness of reaching zero-dose and under-immunized children and missed communities; 2) Efficiency and equity trade-offs; 3) Financing, donor transitions, sustainability and optimization. The session will foster collaboration and learning among researchers, policy-makers and donors, build capacity on methods, and bridge the evidence-to-policy gap. A research agenda will be defined for the Immunization Economics SIG.

Saturday July 19th

Full day sessions

Improving financial protection in health: strengthening the evidence to policy pipeline

Organizer: World Bank

Despite the global ambition to achieve universal health coverage by 2030, there is limited progress in improving financial protection. This pre-congress session, divided into 4 modules, will bring together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to present new evidence, share country-specific experiences, and discuss policy options. The first module will highlight recent trends and new evidence, with a focus on Asia. The second module will be devoted to policy choices for improving financial protection. The third session will address high spending on medicines. In the fourth module, policymakers will discuss the challenges and successes in their countries.

Open Source Approaches to Economic Evaluation in Low- and Middle-Income Country Contexts

Organizer: Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

This one-day workshop will provide a primer on decision-analytic models for economic evaluation of health policies in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). It will cover conceptual frameworks and hands-on training on modeling Disability-Adjusted Life Years using the no-cost, open-source decision analysis platform Amua (<https://github.com/zward/Amua>). We will focus on methods to facilitate the timely and efficient development and application of models for policy decision-making in LMICs. Health economists engaged with the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative will present cost-effectiveness models developed in Amua and discuss opportunities and challenges for enhancing health economic evaluation capabilities within government health agencies.

Looking beyond the Patient: Evaluating the Broader Costs and Impacts of Infectious Disease Interventions

Organizer: STRIDE Centre for Stronger Investments for Infectious Diseases, Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales.

This session is designed to: (i) explore different methods to help capture the full impacts of infectious diseases (and interventions to address them) including discrete choice experiments, dynamic transmission modelling, and macroeconomic modelling; (ii) provide practical examples of their application to different infectious disease threats including antimicrobial resistance (AMR); HIV and bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STIs); human papillomavirus (HPV); COVID-19; and tuberculosis (TB); and lastly, (iii) establish a new global network of researchers looking to expand their knowledge and build collaborations in this field.”

Half-day sessions

Accelerating and Sustaining the journey towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through peer-to-peer learning approach

Organizer: Asian Development Bank

Countries are moving towards UHC and faster progress can be made through cross-country learning and exchange. Policy makers and practitioners in countries are interested to learn from peers in other countries. ADB has set up a peer to peer Network on UHC called UHC Practitioners and Experts knowledge Exchange and Resources (UHC PEERS). The aim of this initiative is to create “A network of practitioners and policymakers in Asia and Pacific who exchange knowledge with each other as peers and co-develop knowledge products that help them to achieve and sustain UHC”. This session will discuss UHC efforts of selected countries and benefit of peer to peer learning.

Early-Career Researcher session

Organizer: IHEA Early-Career Researcher Special Interest Group, supported by Elsevier, Springer and Wiley

This session will discuss work-in-progress papers of six early career researchers (ECRs), selected via a competitive peer-review process. Papers will be circulated in advance to session participants. Senior health economists will provide detailed feedback on each paper, along with general discussion among participants. Several journal editors will participate in the session. The focus will be on recommendations for advancing the work, addressing problems, and preparing a publication ready manuscript. All ECRs attending the session will benefit from hearing the feedback provided by senior health economists, some of which will be specific to the submitted paper, and some of which will be more general. ECRs will also have opportunities to engage directly with senior health economists and journal editors.

EQ-5D in the Indo-Pacific Region

Organizer: EuroQol Group

This pre-congress session seeks to promote the use of the EuroQol suite of instruments (EQ-5D, EQ-5D-Y, EQ-HWB) in the Indo-Pacific region. Participants will be provided with an overview of the instruments and the process of valuation, and then specific case studies from the region (Indonesia, Singapore, New Zealand) will highlight applications in national health surveys, large cohort studies and electronic health records. The session, sponsored by the EuroQol Group, will additionally provide an overview of research opportunities and research expertise that is available to support health economists to undertake population health research.

The Role of Social Health Insurance in Financing Healthcare in LMICs

Organizer: KEMRI Wellcome Trust Research Programme

Social Health Insurance is gaining attention as a means to finance health systems in Africa. While challenges to implement social health insurance in LMICs have been identified, there are gaps in knowledge on opportunities to align the design of social health insurance schemes with health systems and universal health coverage goals. This session will share and engage with global evidence on the performance on social health insurance schemes in LMICs, elaborate on institutional and organizational arrangements for social health insurance schemes in Africa, and discuss case studies from countries at different stages of social health insurance implementation in Africa, including Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia. The session aims at crystalizing opportunities for enhancing the design of social health insurance schemes to mitigate fundamental challenges and enhance their performance in Africa, and other LMIC settings.

Tackling NCDs and obesity: The role of food systems and diets in Asia

Organizer: World Bank

The rapid rise in prevalence of overweight and obesity globally is contributing to a surge in noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes. These NCDs now account for a significant portion of morbidity and premature mortality. In Asia, the burden of NCDs is rising at an alarming rate – while rates of undernutrition remain persistently high in some countries -- resulting in a complex double burden of malnutrition. The objective of this session is to equip participants with the knowledge and tools to engage effectively in policy dialogue to address obesity and NCDs through a food systems approach.

An Introduction to Coincidence Analysis/ Configurational Comparative Analysis to Explore Causal Pathways

Organizer: George Institute for Global Health

This session introduces Coincidence Analysis (CNA), a powerful method for exploring complex relationships across health economics and related domains. CNA identifies bundles of causally relevant factors and maps alternative pathways leading to outcomes, even when interdependencies are subtle or nonlinear. A team of CNA methodologists will guide participants through its theoretical foundations and applications across diverse quantitative and qualitative datasets. Through conceptual foundations, illustrative case studies, and live demonstrations, attendees will gain a strong grasp of CNA's logic, its applicability to multifactorial data, and resources to independently explore its use in research, health systems analysis, policy contexts, and beyond.

Two-hour sessions

Recalibrating Post-Pandemic Fiscal Health: Fiscal Policy, Health Financing, and Sustainable Recovery in Asia and the Pacific

Organizer: World Bank

Fiscal landscapes in Asia and the Pacific have been significantly shaped by the lasting effects of COVID-19 with exacerbated public debt, slowed economic growth, and worsened inequalities. South Asia continues to grapple with high inflation and limited fiscal space, while East Asia and the Pacific face slower, uneven recoveries. This proposed session convenes health financing experts and policymakers to discuss the interplay between macro-fiscal pressures and health sector investments in the post-pandemic era, identifying key lessons from countries maintaining or expanding health spending. It will provide actionable insights on recalibrating fiscal policies and health financing strategies to bolster resilience and maintain momentum towards UHC goals.

Assessing Health Utilities of Temporary Health States in Children — Navigating Global Challenges

Organizer: Merck & Co., Inc.

This session aims to address global challenges in valuing temporary health states in young children. It will present existing approaches and challenges through a literature review of health utility studies on pneumococcal disease and research in developing countries. The session will highlight key factors impacting children's quality of life from diverse perspectives and explore innovative methods and potential applications in economic evaluations and Health Technology Assessment. An interactive discussion will engage participants on traditional and emerging methodological challenges, disparities in the available evidence on health utilities of acute pediatric diseases across countries, and approaches to enhance global evidence generation.

Data Driven Decision Making for Universal Health Coverage: Leveraging Health Insurance Claims Data

Organizer: World Bank

Large amounts of healthcare claims data are now routinely collected by health systems in many low- and middle-income countries that are available from settlement of utilization episodes. These offer real-time insights into population health but remain underutilized for policymaking. This session will highlight key quality and efficiency metrics that can be derived from claims data (e.g. length of stay, readmission rates, hospitalization rates for ambulatory care sensitive conditions), and other examples including assessing impact of heatwaves on utilization. By examining diverse global applications, this session will provide practical understanding on leveraging claims data to inform policies and improve health system performance.

Investing in the Foundations of Human Capital: Unpacking Indonesia's Success in Improving Child Nutrition

Organizer: World Bank

In 2018, just under one-in-three Indonesian children under 5 years of age were living with stunted growth, the highest prevalence of stunting among peer countries; by 2023, the rate declined to 21.5 percent. This session will feature three presentations highlighting why childhood nutrition outcomes matter for economic outcomes, the factors that drove Indonesia's progress in tackling child malnutrition, the role played by a transformative multisectoral national stunting reduction program, and challenges and lessons learnt for application of similar approaches elsewhere. The presentations will be followed by a moderated panel discussion, with live polling and Q&A to keep the audience engaged.

Tobacco Taxation Frameworks to Optimize National Health Financing

Organizer: National Committee on Tobacco Control (NCTC), Indonesia

Tobacco taxation is a proven policy tool for reducing smoking prevalence while generating sustainable funding for national health systems. This international workshop will bring together policymakers, economists, and public health experts to explore strategic tobacco taxation frameworks that optimize health financing. The session will feature distinguished speakers, including representatives from the Directorate General of Economic and Fiscal Strategy, Ministry of Finance Indonesia; health economist Dr. Abdillah Ahsan; and tobacco taxation expert Dr. Jeffrey Drope, Director of Economics for Health, US. The discussion will be moderated by Prof. Hasbullah Thabrany, Chairman of both InaHEA and NCTC. The workshop aims to produce a comprehensive policy recommendation based on lessons learned, guiding the implementation of effective tobacco taxation strategies to reduce smoking rates and strengthen national health financing.

Sunday July 20th

Full day session

Lessons from Indonesia's Strides Towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) over the Last Decade

Organizers: Ministry of Health, BPJS Kesehatan, World Bank (Indonesia Office), University of Gadjah Mada, University of Indonesia, and Erasmus University Rotterdam/Rotterdam Global Health Initiative

Indonesia introduced a bold sectoral reform, its JKN National Health Insurance program, in 2014, consolidating existing health insurance schemes to form the largest comprehensive single-payer scheme in the world. Revenue generation and pooling, core elements of the first phase of JKN reforms, were important but not sufficient. Improving quality in the provision of health services, ensuring access to quality diagnostics and medicines, and revising provider payment mechanisms are also critical in promoting a sustainable and equitable UHC system. Sustainability is particularly dependent on strengthening services at the primary health care level.

This session highlights some of the policy measures and key strategies that have been used by the Indonesian Ministry of Health and BPJS Kesehatan (the national health insurance administrator), with analytical inputs from partners including the World Bank and university-based researchers, to strengthen progress toward UHC. The session will begin with a brief overview of the JKN and related reforms, and will then focus on two key strategies used to promote UHC: quality improvement, particularly through accreditation and provision of decision support tools at the primary health care level, and in terms of medicines; and ongoing reforms in provider payment mechanisms. The final part of the session will draw together key lessons from the Indonesian experience that may assist other countries in their pursuit of UHC.

Half-day sessions

Beyond Cost-Utility Analysis: Should we consider other Value Elements?

Organizer: National University of Singapore

The aim of this training workshop is to introduce the concepts of value assessment in health technology assessment (HTA) and to encourage discussions on broader value recognition in HTA. The workshop will comprise a combination of lectures, case study and group discussions: (1) lecture: theoretical foundations of cost-utility analysis, (2) lecture: neglected elements of value and the need for broader value recognition, (3) group discussion: deeper dive into value elements, (4) case study: challenges in measuring broader elements of value, (5) lecture: multicriteria decision analysis as a framework for measuring value elements and (6) group discussion: designing a measurement strategy.

Navigating Cost Sharing in Healthcare: Building Sustainable Financial Models

Organizer: BPJS Kesehatan

This session will explore cost-sharing, a financial model in which expenses are distributed among multiple parties, such as healthcare, insurance, or joint projects. In healthcare, cost-sharing mechanisms like deductibles, co-pays, and co-insurance ensure financial responsibility is balanced between patients and insurers. The Topic will delve into the principles, benefits, and challenges of cost-sharing, focusing on its application in healthcare systems. Attendees will gain insights into designing sustainable financial models that ensure equitable cost distribution.

Complex and Fragmented Financing Inhibits Innovation to Improve PHC Performance in LMICs: Evidence and Strategies for Reform

Organizer: ThinkWell Global

This session brings together cutting-edge analysis of PHC financing in multiple diverse LMICs. It will present practical definitions of “complex and fragmented financing” compilable using publicly available data sources. Presentation from country teams: two in Africa and two in Asia, will share evidence on these factors in their countries. Synthesis from these presentation will examine how these financing challenges inhibit PHC performance and effective implementation of improved strategic purchasing and financing management innovations. Participants will be invited to share their own experiences, comments, suggestions. The session will conclude with proposals on how to address these challenges in diverse settings.

The role of Digital Public Infrastructure in strengthening Public Financial Management: Applications to service delivery across Africa and Asia

Organizer: Clinton Health Access Initiative

Decision-makers rely on quality, timely, granular, and comprehensive financial and non-financial data to make resource allocation and spending decisions for effective PFM and service delivery. There are opportunities for Ministries of Health, Finance, insurance agencies, and beyond to leverage shared digital public infrastructure (DPI) to improve interoperability across systems—reducing siloes, increasing transparency and improving data quality to enhance resource management for service delivery. This session invites those interested in the role of digital systems for health financing, economics and PFM to discuss opportunities and learnings from governments and technical partners from Ethiopia, India, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Laos, and Cambodia.

Strategic Purchasing for Universal Health Coverage: Policy Enablers vs Deterrents

Organizer: Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore and Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Purchasing refers to the transfer of pooled funds to providers for the delivery of health services. In contrast with open-ended payments and budget allocations, strategic purchasing (SP) refers to evidence-based purchasing to align resources to outputs, incentivise service quality and enhance efficiency. Hosted by the Southeast Asia Regional Collaborative for Health and the Strategic Purchasing for Africa Resource Centre, in collaboration with ADB, this session will outline the principles of SP as a tool for UHC – particularly in resource-constrained contexts. Attendees will learn how SP has been used to improve resource allocation & accountability in several countries and will understand the enablers and obstacles to consider when designing purchasing arrangements.

Building capacity for conducting Systematic Reviews of Economic Evaluation

Organizer: Stellenbosch University

This session focuses on building capacity for conducting systematic reviews of economic evaluation. Participants will learn about key components, including defining the research question, developing a robust search strategy, applying explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, and critically appraising included studies using appropriate checklists. Furthermore, the session will address data synthesis of costs, outcomes, incremental cost-effectiveness ratios, and assessing uncertainty in the results. Emphasis will be placed on methodological rigour, transparency and practical application for supporting evidence-based decision-making. A real-world example will illustrate how this process supported guideline development processes in three sub-Saharan African countries.

Long-Term Care: Addressing Challenges and Shaping the Future of Care Systems

Organizer: BPJS Kesehatan

This Session will address the critical topic of Long-Term Care (LTC), which provides ongoing support for individuals requiring assistance with daily activities due to aging, chronic illness, or disability. LTC encompasses medical care, personal assistance, and social services, delivered in various settings such as homes, assisted living facilities, or nursing homes. With aging populations worldwide, the demand for LTC is rapidly increasing, making it essential to discuss sustainable solutions, funding mechanisms (e.g., insurance, government programs), and quality care standards. The seminar will also examine the emotional and financial impact on families and caregivers, offering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in LTC. This session aims to equip attendees with strategies for planning and implementing effective LTC systems.

Capacity building and experience sharing on designing strategic purchasing programs in low- and middle-income countries: towards universal health coverage

Organizer: Peking University

The session is divided in three parts: Part 1 is “framework and transferrable skills on strategic purchasing”. It introduces the overall framework of and transferrable skills useful for strategic purchasing (benefit specification, payment, etc.). In Part 2, experts and practitioners will share experiences from countries in the region regarding from Southeast Asia and China, covering innovations such as shared savings, private sector contracting for PHC in conflict affected areas, among others. In Part 3, group exercises will be organized for the participants on the relevance of the experience to their setting and try applying the theory and tools discussed in the session.

Health System Comparisons: Collaborative efforts to harness national data for global insights

Organizer: Brown University School of Public Health

There are important gaps in our knowledge about what makes health systems high-performing, resilient, and sustainable. Yet, hundreds of health systems exist - that have been designed differently - to respond to similar challenges. Several collaborative efforts exist that aim to compare health systems and determine whether they perform differently. However, longstanding challenges to comparative work slow progress, such as data accessibility, data comparability, and the lack of governance and financing structures to support collaborative, representative work across countries. This session brings together researchers engaged in cross-country comparisons to discuss approaches, share insights, and connect with others in the field.

Building Capacity for Economic Research on Tobacco Regulation in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Organizer: Cornell University

The WHO estimates that tobacco use leads to more than 8 million deaths annually. Tobacco users in low- and middle-income countries account for 80 percent of the world’s 1.3 billion tobacco users. Tobacco regulation includes taxation, place-based smoking bans, and product regulations. New products, including e-cigarettes, have been introduced worldwide. Low- and middle-income countries have adopted a range of regulatory approaches to e-cigarettes. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere do not regulate e-cigarettes, while India and some other countries ban e-cigarettes entirely. The Pre-Congress Session will review new policies, new products, and state-of-the-art econometric and applied welfare economic methods. The discussion will be led by Professor Don Kenkel (Cornell University), Professor James Prieger (Pepperdine University) and Professor Joseph Sabia (San Diego State University).

Health Policy by Design: Introducing HTA Tools and Thinking

Organizer: Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program Foundation (HITAP), Thailand, in collaboration with HTAsiaLink

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) is a multi-disciplinary approach, bringing together health economics and other considerations in a systematic manner to inform policy decisions. The use of HTA has been growing over the past decades as countries seek to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in a sustainable manner. This session invites delegates—especially those new to HTA—to explore its fundamentals and how it is used to translate evidence into policy - through a mix of lectures, hands-on group exercises, and interactive discussions.

What to expect:

- ✓ Grasp the core concepts and step-by-step process of HTA
- ✓ Learn how to turn real policy needs into research questions
- ✓ See how HTA has been used to inform policy around the world
- ✓ Connect with fellow participants through practical, team-based learning

Support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the National Science, Research and Innovation Fund (NSRF) via the Program Management Unit for Human Resources & Institutional Development, Research and Innovation, is gratefully acknowledged.

Women in Economics: Barriers and Strategies from Entry to Leadership

Organizer: Center for Global Development

This session intends to be a thought-provoking exploration of the challenges women face, the opportunities their representation has created for different policies and impacts, and their strategic insights for how to increase women's leadership. The goal is to foster a spirit of openness among women in the health economics community, encouraging them to share their experiences related to barriers hindering their progression to leadership positions. This collective sharing aims to demonstrate that they are not isolated in facing these challenges and to inspire collective efforts toward systemic improvement.

How can countries overcome bottlenecks to Primary Health Care (PHC) provider fund flows and provider autonomy in LMICs? – Experiences from members of the Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN)

Organizer: Results for Development (R4D) Institute

Adequate funding is a key lever of the WHO operational framework for Primary Health Care (PHC) and a crucial component for effective PHC reforms. While PHC resources are rarely sufficient in LMICs, their flow to PHC providers is often constrained by multiple bottlenecks. This participatory session will share experiences and lessons on PHC resource allocation, provider payment mechanisms, and provider autonomy in LMICs. Practitioners from four JLN member countries will share ways they are overcoming barriers to fund-flows and delivering high-quality PHC care. In break-out groups, participants will discuss practical experiences and lessons on feasible approaches to improving PHC resource flow and use for enhancing PHC service delivery.

Two-hour sessions

Strengthening capacity in health economics through global health research programmes: lessons and opportunities

Organizer: UK National Institute for Health and Care Research

Funded research programmes provide great opportunities to strengthen capacity in health economics. Sometimes these have formal training positions (Masters, PhD or post-doc); others are more informal, with technical skills acquired through learning-by-doing and mentorship.

This session aims to bring together people who have experience with training and capacity strengthening through research programmes to learn what has worked well, what less well, and where new opportunities might sit in a changed global health funding environment. We will share experience, identify opportunities and challenges. Together we'll develop some guidance that can be shared with research funders and applicants.

This is an open session, sponsored by the UK National Institute for Health and Care Research, but you do NOT have to be NIHR-funded to attend – all are welcome.

Evaluation and Implementation of Artificial Intelligence within Learning Health Systems

Organizer: Mayo Clinic

Over the past few years, artificial intelligence (AI) has exploded in health care. Unlike drugs or devices that are presented to the health system as fully tested user applications, AI by nature evolve within the health system, and the evaluation and implementation require a much shorter timeline and additional considerations. The session invites distinguished faculty from prestigious academic and medical institutions, providing diverse perspectives from data science, human-AI interaction, pragmatic trials, economic evaluation, and implementation science to offer state-of-art deep thoughts on AI evaluation and implementation to drive positive systemic change in learning health system.

The Value of Vaccines Beyond Healthcare Savings – A Case Study on the Macroeconomic Impact of Dengue and why Vaccine HTA Should Reflect the Broad Value of Vaccines

Organizer: PT. Takeda Innovative Medicines

Vaccines have long been recognized as one of the most cost-effective public health interventions, significantly reducing morbidity and mortality worldwide. In addition, vaccines' value extends far beyond direct healthcare cost savings as infectious diseases often have broad economic impact at the population level. Using dengue as an example, a disease that is endemic in many low- and middle-income countries, its impact goes far beyond the healthcare sector as it affects workforce productivity, economic stability, and tourism sustainability. This session aims to highlight the often-overlooked broader benefits of vaccines in HTA assessment and how we can engage different stakeholders to transform the way vaccines are evaluated and funded. This session will:

- Expand the dialogue on the value of vaccines – Shift the conversation beyond traditional cost-effectiveness metrics to include broader economic benefits.
- Use dengue as an example to illustrate the broader macroeconomic impact of infectious diseases, therefore, the broad benefits of vaccine prevention.
- Engage policymakers and stakeholders – Provide insights that can inform policy decisions, funding mechanisms, and national immunization strategies.

Bridging Theory and Practice: Launch of Health Financing in Low and Middle Income Countries: the Path to Universal Health Coverage – a new resource for the health economics community

Organizer: International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

The session introduces a new book on health financing, designed as a learning tool for health economics Master's, PhD students, researchers and professionals in LMIC. The session begins with an introduction by the editors, followed by an interactive panel discussion with chapter authors. Panelists will highlight key concepts from their chapters, illustrate their empirical application through real world country case studies, and address questions from the audience. Participants then break into small groups to explore chapter-specific topics in more depth and relate them to their contexts. The session concludes with key takeaways and reflections from the editors and panel ists.