

# APIA OUTCOME

TENTH PACIFIC HEALTH  
MINISTERS MEETING  
2–4 JULY 2013





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## PREFACE

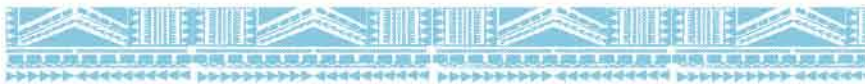
The Tenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting was hosted by the Government of the Independent State of Samoa. Since their inaugural meeting in 1995 in Yanuca, Fiji, Pacific Ministers of Health have met every two years to discuss public health issues that concern all our island states and to agree on common approaches so that together we have a greater impact than any of us would have alone.

We all believe that the Healthy Islands vision is as relevant today as it was when we first developed it in 1995. However, the noncommunicable disease (NCD) crisis—declared in the Pacific in 2011 following our meeting in Honiara, Solomon Islands—is a major obstacle to realizing that vision. We acknowledge the challenges in controlling and halting this crisis, and we realize it requires long-term investment to achieve a lasting impact. While understanding the enormity of our task, it is encouraging to see our resolve has not lessened. We identified many actions—from declaring a goal of a Tobacco Free Pacific to developing regional and national multisectoral NCD accountability mechanisms—that will start to turn the tide of the NCD crisis. We can control this crisis with the continued support of both our health development partners, including the governments of Australia, Japan and New Zealand, and the technical agencies that have helped countries take meaningful action.

Pacific Ministers addressed many other topics at their July 2013 meeting in Apia, Samoa, following up on the priorities set in Honiara. Such an approach in the agenda has helped build continuity and allowed us to take a more in-depth look over time at such issues as human resources for health, health information systems, the social determinants of health, mental health, outbreak response and neglected tropical diseases.

Ministers also considered the health agenda in the post-2015 development context.<sup>1</sup> In addition to maintaining the inclusion of Millennium Development

<sup>1</sup> This discussion was based on *A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development. The report of the high-level panel of eminent persons on the post-2015 development agenda*.



Goals 4, 5, and 6 they supported the inclusion of NCDs and neglected tropical diseases in the United Nations' proposed goals and targets for the post-2015 agenda and highlighted the need to include mental health.

The meeting followed the new format for the Pacific Health Ministers Meeting first employed in Honiara in 2011. However, the Apia meeting was the first to incorporate a closed session for ministerial discussion. The Ministers appreciated this opportunity to discuss strategic matters among themselves, and we hope to continue to be innovative in organizing these biennial meetings in order to better support country needs.

The Government of the Independent State of Samoa, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the World Health Organization are pleased to present the outcomes of the Tenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in this document. The success of the meeting was due to the leadership of the Ministry of Health, Samoa, and the excellent preparations by the staff, as well as the active engagement of all the Pacific Ministers of Health. The organizing committee acknowledges the generous support of the Government of Japan for the Apia meeting.

We look forward to meeting again in 2015 to celebrate 20 years of the Healthy Islands vision and to review progress made on the recommendations we agreed upon in Apia.

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for the Western Pacific

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Pacific Community



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first meeting of Pacific Health Ministers was convened in Yanuca, Fiji, in 1995. Subsequent biennial meetings have further addressed key health issues in the Pacific. The Tenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, jointly organized by the Ministry of Health of the Independent State of Samoa, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and World Health Organization (WHO) was convened 2–4 July 2013 in Apia, Samoa. Forty representatives, including 11 ministers, from 19 Pacific island countries and areas participated in the meeting. Additionally, representatives from more than 15 United Nations offices, specialized agencies, and other development partners and donors were in attendance.

Ministers of Health for the Pacific island countries and territories reaffirmed their support for the vision of Healthy Islands, enunciated in the 1995 Yanuca Island Declaration, as the unifying theme for health development in the region. Ministers supported the need to refocus the vision from healthy settings to people-centred actions. There was agreement on the need to take effective action at the national level to promote further the Healthy Islands vision.

Priority topics as identified by the Ministers for discussion included the Pacific noncommunicable disease (NCD) response, improving data for policy by strengthening health information and vital statistics, the Pacific mental health response, action on the social determinants of health in the Pacific islands, neglected tropical diseases, outbreak surveillance and response priorities for

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