

4. Health through the lens: the new multimedia library

“A picture is worth a thousand words” is an expression that first appeared in print in the early 20th century. And today, despite a constant bombardment of images from television, movies and the Internet, striking photographs continue to have a powerful and long-lasting impact. Indeed, great photographs evoke strong emotions, engage the viewer and can help to disseminate key public health messages.

While there has been ample health-related photography in recent decades, the Regional Office for the Western Pacific lacked images specifically illustrating WHO work in countries and the health re-

alities and diversity of the Region. In order to create a visual institutional memory, the Regional Office engaged professionals to take health-related photographs across the Region – from the mountains in Mongolia to the far-flung islands in the Pacific. More than 1000 images have been captured in collaboration with country offices and Member States.

In the age of social media, photos are shared on mobile phones and tablets, using applications such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. However, these platforms cannot serve as an institutional database and do not meet the Organization’s need for a permanent archive.

In order to preserve and provide free access to these images, the WHO Western Pacific Region Library established a new multimedia library that can be accessed online by all.

The multimedia library will continue to be populated with new images and videos from across the Region, as well as historical images. This collection constitutes the visual institutional memory of the Organization and will be used over the coming years to illustrate the work of WHO in supporting Member States and the diverse health challenges in the countries of the Region. ■

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region
Multimedia Library

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The multimedia library puts high-quality, health-related photographs and videos at your fingertips.