

International League Against Epilepsy

Agenda 8.1- Annual report on monitoring progress on UHC and health-related SDGs

The WHO Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders (IGAP) was adopted by all WHO member states, including those in Southeast Asia, in 2022. In the region, organizations like the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) are working with national epilepsy societies to promote the plan's implementation.

The IGAP is a 10-year plan (2022–2031) by the WHO to improve treatment access and quality of life for individuals with neurological disorders. Its five strategic objectives aim to increase political prioritization, provide effective care, implement prevention strategies, foster research, and strengthen the public health response to epilepsy.

Countries in the Southeast Asia region have committed to adapting the plan to their national policies and improving existing practices. A key target is to increase service coverage for epilepsy by 50% by 2031.

The ILAE, along with the IBE, played a significant role in developing the IGAP. The ILAE also collaborates with regional bodies like the Asian Epilepsy Academy (ASEPA) to enhance epilepsy education and diagnostics for professionals in Asia and Oceania.

Effective implementation requires cooperation among various groups, including policymakers, healthcare providers, professional associations, and people affected by epilepsy.

Key challenges for IGAP implementation in the region:

Challenges include the low priority given to epilepsy in many lower- and middle-income countries, a significant treatment gap where many people lack access to care, particularly in rural areas, and the widespread issue of stigma and discrimination against people with epilepsy. Additionally, primary care providers in the region may lack sufficient training to manage all types of seizures.