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विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

CIRDAP-DAKSHIN (RIS) International Online Training Programme on

Telemedicine and Digital Tools for Rural Health Care in Asia and the Pacific Region: Challenges, Opportunities, and Good Practices

DATES

1st to 3rd December 2026

VENUE

Online

TELEMEDICINE AND DIGITAL TOOLS FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION:

CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND GOOD PRACTICES



CHALLENGES

Infrastructure,
Digital Divide,
Workforce



OPPORTUNITIES

Innovation,
Accessibility,
Affordability



GOOD PRACTICES

Community Based,
Partnerships,
Sustainable Solutions



BETTER HEALTH FOR ALL

Leaving No One
Behind

Digital Health
Connecting Communities
Improving Lives




CONNECTIVITY
Bridging the
Digital Divide


DIGITAL TOOLS
Empowering Health
Workers


COMMUNITY
Engagement and
Inclusion


DATA FOR ACTION
Evidence Based
Decisions

*Stronger Together for
Healthy and Resilient Communities*

Conventional health-care systems face growing challenges in ensuring equitable access to quality services due to shortages and uneven distribution of health professionals, rising health-care costs, increasing demand for specialized care, and geographical barriers. These challenges are more serious in rural, remote and underserved communities, creating a need for innovative and digitally enabled approaches to extend health-care coverage.

Telemedicine and digital health approaches are transforming health-care delivery by expanding access to services beyond conventional facility-based models. Their evolution was initiated from the use of telephone and radio for medical communication in the early twentieth century to today's mobile networks, cloud-based platforms and artificial intelligence (AI). The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the expansion of digital health solutions and demonstrated importance in maintaining essential health services when physical access was restricted.

Within this broader digital health landscape, telemedicine and digital rural health care are closely interconnected. Telemedicine focuses on the delivery of clinical services at a distance, including remote consultation, diagnosis, treatment planning, follow-up and specialist advice through information and communication technologies (ICT). Digital rural health care encompasses a broader ecosystem of mobile health (mHealth), electronic health records (EHRs), digital referral systems, remote patient monitoring, disease surveillance, tele-education and AI-enabled clinical decision support.

These technologies are more relevant to rural communities facing geographical isolation, limited health infrastructure and shortages of specialized medical professionals. Telemedicine can connect patients and frontline health workers with distant specialists, facilitating timely consultation, diagnosis and referral while reducing travel, waiting time and associated costs. Digital tools can further strengthen rural health systems by supporting continuous professional learning, clinical decision-making, patient monitoring and access to health information.

Digital health adoption is expanding across Asia and the Pacific, with countries increasingly exploring telemedicine and other digital solutions to address non-communicable diseases (NCDs), mental health needs, geographical barriers and shortages of health professionals. Recent evidence indicates that telemedicine can improve accessibility and continuity of care, while the World Health Organization and the International Telecommunication Union has highlighted the potential of digital interventions to reduce NCD-related deaths and hospitalizations. A study by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in 2024 also emphasizes the potential of telemedicine to promote health equity across the region.

However, the benefits of digital health are not yet equally accessible. Connectivity and infrastructure gaps, affordability, digital literacy, health-worker capacity, data privacy, cybersecurity, regulatory requirements and interoperability remain significant challenges, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Connecting digital health service requires not only investment in technology but also stronger human capacity, appropriate policies, institutional support and sustainable implementation models.

Under this condition, strengthening the capacity of rural health practitioners, medical professionals, and policymakers is essential to ensure that digital technologies contribute to improved health-care access, quality, and equity. This training programme will bring together regional good practices, technical expertise, and policy experience to enhance participants' capacity to design, implement, and sustain effective rural telemedicine and digital health initiatives. It will facilitate knowledge sharing, cross-country learning, and the exchange of field-tested innovations, enabling participants to explore equitable, affordable, context-responsive, and sustainable approaches to expanding digital health services in rural and underserved communities across Asia and the Pacific and beyond.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

This training programme aims broadly to empower health professionals of Asia-Pacific region to adopt scalable Telemedicine and digital health tools and policies for low-resource rural settings.

Specifically, the training objectives are:

Enhance participants' technical and operational understanding of telemedicine, and digital health infrastructure applicable in rural settings.

Analyze successful case studies, policy frameworks, and scalable digital healthcare models implemented across the Asia-Pacific region.

Equip healthcare leaders, administrators, and policy specialists with practical tools to design, implement, and evaluate sustainable rural digital health programs.

Establish collaborative networks and knowledge-sharing partnerships among Asia-Pacific countries to address shared healthcare delivery challenges.

Identify and adapt emerging digital health solutions to improve healthcare access and equity in underserved rural communities.

The target participants will be from CIRDAP Member Countries. Apart from member countries, interested health professionals from other countries are encouraged to participate.



The training particularly focuses on:



TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The training programme will adopt an interactive learning approach comprising expert presentations, practical case studies, question-and-answer sessions, and experience sharing among participants. Presentation materials and relevant reference documents will be shared electronically with participants after each session.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Topic and Day	Resource Person(s)
1st December 2026 Theme: Foundations, Global Trends, and Rural Digital Infrastructure	
Training Session Session 1. i 9:00 AM-10:30 AM Telemedicine and Digital Health: Concepts, Global Trends, and the Asia-Pacific Landscape: framing telemedicine within the broader digital health ecosystem, and mapping maturity levels and common challenges across participating countries. Session 1. ii 10:30 AM-12:00 PM Building Blocks of Population-Scale Rural Digital Health: From Connectivity to Care The eSanjeevani experience in Infrastructure, Interoperability and Last-Mile Access	 Dr Medha Wadhwa, Ast. Prof. Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar, Delhi, India/ Public Health Foundation, India  Dr Sanjay Sood, Project Director, eSanjeevani - National Telemedicine Service
2nd December 2026 Theme: Best Regional Practices and Clinical Service Delivery Models	
Session 2.i 9:00 AM-10:30 AM Good Practices and Country Case Studies from the Region: Comparing successful rural telemedicine and mHealth models across global south countries, with emphasis on design choices that are replicable in other low-resource settings Session 2. ii 10:30 AM-12:00 PM Clinical Service Delivery Models for Rural Telemedicine Teleconsultation workflows, task-shifting to frontline health workers, and the role of clinical decision support systems in maintaining care quality remotely.	 Dr Monika Kochar, Advisor (Health), Global South Centre of Excellence DAKSHIN, India  Dr Mona Duggal, Director, National Institute for Research in Digital Health (NIRDH), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) New Delhi, India.
3rd December 2026 Theme: Policy, Governance, and Sustainable Scaling through Regional Cooperation	
Session 3. i 9:00 AM-10:30 AM Policy, Regulatory, and Institutional Capacity for Digital Rural Healthcare Licensing, cross-border and cross-jurisdictional considerations, data governance, and building institutional readiness within health ministries. Session 3. ii 10:30 AM-12:00 PM Regional Cooperation, Financing, and Sustainability Moving from pilots to scaled national programmes, and financing mechanisms.	 Dr Amit Das, Advisor (Digital), Global South Centre of Excellence, DAKSHIN, India  Mr Maulik Chokshi, Global Director- Health Systems Research and Policy, ACCESS Health International

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Six online training sessions delivered and participants trained on telemedicine and digital tools.
- Regional good practices on telemedicine and digital tools for rural healthcare documented.
- Expert knowledge articles on telemedicine and digital tools for regional rural healthcare developed and published.
- Network and a roster of Asia-Pacific digital health and rural development practitioners established.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Enhanced rural healthcare leadership's understanding, technical competency, and operational readiness in telemedicine and digital tools.
- Strengthened cooperation and networking, improved healthcare equity, and helpful to reduce rural-urban health gaps.
- Participants capacitated to identify policy gaps and reform priorities to strengthen gender inclusion.
- A complete set of training modules and articles generated in book form on Telemedicine and Digital Tools for Rural Health Care.

REGISTRATION

FREE

Participation in this CIRDAP - DAKSHIN (RIS) international online training is fully free

PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE(FREE):

<https://forms.gle/ZPdYigWbZuir8wX77>

LAST DATE TO REGISTER:

20 November 2026

DURATION:

3 days, 2 sessions/day, 1.5 hrs each

VENUE:

Online

CONTACT • COURSE DIRECTORS

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CIRDAP and DAKSHIN (RIS) ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

This international online training programme is jointly organized by **Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP)** and **DAKSHIN, India** to empower health professionals of Asia-Pacific region to adopt scalable Telemedicine and digital health tools and policies for low-resource rural settings.

CIRDAP is a regional, intergovernmental and autonomous organization, established in 1979, Mandated for Promoting & Strengthening Integrated Rural Development Systems for 15 Asia-Pacific Countries; Namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand & Vietnam. The Centre works on felt needs of member countries for promoting integrated rural development in the region.

DAKSHIN - Global South Centre of Excellence (RIS), was announced by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 1st Voice of Global South Summit in January 2023. It serves as a Global South Centre of Excellence designed to help stakeholders identify and implement scalable, sustainable solutions to transform economies and societies across the Global South.

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