

Influence of EU-ASEAN health interregionalism on regional health governance

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Abstract Over the past decade, remarkable and sustainable progresses have been made in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region in the domain of communicable disease control. Nevertheless, communicable diseases remain an important public health issue in the region. In December 2009, within the framework of its Regional Programming for Asia (2007–2013), the European Union (EU) launched a Regional Program on Highly Pathogenic and Emerging Diseases (HPED) in Asia. This 4-year interregional cooperation initiative aimed at enable ASEAN to control zoonoses and to improve pandemic preparedness in the region. Assessing this interregional initiative, the main objective of this paper is to shed light on the nature and functions of health interregionalism between Asia and Europe and its influence on regional health governance. It concludes that while in the specific context of the EU-ASEAN HPED program, health interregionalism had varied functions and a substantial influence on regional health governance, this initiative did not use the full potential that interregional health mechanism may provide to influence the development of another region or to promote the EU's specific actorness in regional and global health.

Introduction

Over the past decade, remarkable and sustainable progresses have been made in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region in the domain of communicable disease control. Thus, dracunculiasis and poliomyelitis have been eradicated; leprosy has been eliminated as a public health problem; significant improvements have been realized concerning HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis morbidity and mortality; and in general, communicable disease mortality rate declined in all ASEAN Member States (AMS) (Kumaresan and Huikuri 2015).

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