The Korean Culture is one of the richest in the world, with history of over 5,000 years since Emperor Tangun (Dangun) walled city of Asadal (current Pyongyang), the capital of the first state in the east.

**GEOGRAPHY**

The Korean peninsula is situated in central East Asia. It is bordered by China, Russia and the Amnok and Tuman Rivers to the north and by seas to the east, west & south.

**CLIMATE**

Korea has four distinct seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The average annual temperature is around 8° to 12°C and the average annual rainfall is between 1,000 and 1,200 mm.

**KEY FACTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Pyongyang</th>
<th>Anti-Hepatitis B vaccine coverage rate (2007)</th>
<th>91.5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (2009 Census)</td>
<td>24,052,231</td>
<td>T12+ coverage rate in Pregnant Women (2007)</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Tuberculosis Prevalence per 100,000 population (2008)</td>
<td>411.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy at birth M/F</td>
<td>64.7/72.6</td>
<td>Tuberculosis Sputum Conversion Rate(2008)</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total adult literacy rate</td>
<td>100/100 %</td>
<td>Tuberculosis Cure Rate(2008)</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange rate Euro:Won (2010)</td>
<td>1.00:140</td>
<td>Total fertility rate</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality rate (IMR)</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>Antenatal care coverage (2008)</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-five mortality rate per 1000 live births (Census 2009)</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>% of skilled attendant at delivery(2008)</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCG (Anti-TB) vaccine coverage rate(2007)</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births (Census 2009)</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTP3 vaccine coverage rate(2007)</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>Acute malnutrition (wasting) in children 0-6 years (2004)</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles coverage rate (1 dose) (2007)</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>Total number of Malaria cases (2009)</td>
<td>18,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPV3 (Anti-Polio: 3 doses) vaccine coverage rate(2007)</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: - Central Bureau of Statistics, DPRK; - Annual Health Report, MoPH, DPRK.

**HEALTH SITUATION IN DPRK**

DPRK has an extensive health system & adequate number of dedicated health workers. During the sixties to early nineties, the health system achieved substantial gains. With the growing economic difficulties, series of natural disasters & years of isolation, the health institutions were not able to sustain provision of health services and several health gains were reversed.

Over almost a decade, with external humanitarian assistance, DPRK achieved plausible progress towards meeting some of the basic humanitarian health needs of the population. WHO together with other agencies are assisting the MoPH sustaining the gains in health indicators.
Maternal and Child Health
• Health and Nutrition: UNICEF, UNFPA, IFRC, other international NGOs & bilateral donors;
• Food security: WFP, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, NGOs and bilateral donors;
• Water and sanitation: UNICEF, IFRC and other international NGOs;
• Education: UNICEF

World Health Organization in DPR Korea
For more than a decade, the WHO has been working in DPRK. It is the leading international health agency & it works in close partnership with the Ministry of Public Health & in collaboration with other UN agencies, international organizations & NGOs.

WHO’ SCOPE OF WORK INCLUDES:
• Provide technical information, advice & expertise;
• Setting technical standards;
• Promotion of health policy directions & facilitate decision-making;
• Developing, applying disease control & prevention tools;
• Support management of health information & data collection methods;
• Coordination & harmonization of health sector support.

HEALTH STRATEGY IN DPR KOREA

Overall Goal
Reduce avoidable morbidity & mortality among vulnerable populations through building the capacity of MoPH in DPRK at Ri, districts & provincial levels

Strategic Priorities
1. Strengthening the health system to further develop capacity for policy and planning, and improve services delivery
2. Addressing women’s and children’s health
3. Sustaining achievements made and further addressing communicable diseases.
4. Addressing the risk factors leading to increased prevalence of non-communicable diseases.
5. Addressing environmental determinants of health.

WHO WORK IN DPR KOREA
WHO works with Ministry of Public Health and other relevant ministries and departments in addressing current health challenges through providing technical assistance, expertise & promoting health policies across several areas of health and development:

Communicable diseases & Surveillance (CDS)
In the nineties, due to economic difficulties, some CD re-emerged in DPRK. The WHO assists the MoPH to monitor, prevent & control disease outbreaks. Main areas of WHO support:
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT:
- Strengthening the capacity of MoPH in planning and management of human resource for health
- Updating knowledge & skills of staff through in-country & overseas training provision of technical assistance;
- Strengthening HH doctors through extensive training
- Supporting the development of nursing & midwifery education;
- Updating libraries of Medical University & nursing schools.

HEALTH INFORMATION, EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH POLICY
- Up-grading of health information system at all levels, its use in decision making & planning;
- Providing publications to & facilitating external exposure of the national research institutions, including research methodology, research tools & documentation of results;
- Supported the establishment of epidemiological training centre & the development of standard curriculum.

MALARIAProviding:
- Impregnated bed-nets;
- Vector control;
- Anti-malarial drugs;
- Lab equipments;
- Technical assistance & training.
- Number of cases significantly dropped from 300,000 in 2001 to 9,300 in 2006.
- Currently supported by The Global Fund.

TB
- In 1998, supported the adoption of DOTS national TB control strategy;
- 5-year plan for DOTS expansion in 5-phase to cover the whole country was completed by the end of 2003.
- Currently supported by The Global Fund.

HIV/AIDS
- HIV/AIDS is, so far, a limited problem in DPRK;
- Emphasis & support provided to the preventive activities:
  - Raising awareness;
  - Injection safety & quality of blood transfusion services.

CD SURVEILLANCE
Building the capacity in:
- CD surveillance system, reporting, notification, verification;
- Effective response to disease outbreaks;
- Upgrade the public health laboratory;
- Upgrading skills & knowledge of health staff.

Health Promotion & Non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
DPRK is experiencing increasingly high morbidity & mortality attributable to non-communicable diseases. Cancer, cardiovascular diseases & diabetic mellitus mainly due to the unhealthy lifestyle & behaviors such as smoking, drinking, unsafe driving, etc. WHO main areas of assistance are:

TOBACCO CONTROL
- Smoking prevalence in male adults was 57.5% in 2006;
- Support is provided to the MoPH to:
  - Implement policy;
  - Conduct research;
  - Raise community awareness.

INJURY CONTROL
- Providing assistance to:
  - Develop national policies to prevent violence & injuries;
  - Build the capacity on management of disabilities caused by violence & injuries;
  - Strengthen rehabilitation services

CD SURVEILLANCE
- Building the capacity in:
  - CD surveillance system, reporting, notification, verification;
  - Effective response to disease outbreaks;
  - Upgrade the public health laboratory;
  - Upgrading skills & knowledge of health staff.

FOOD SAFETY
- Providing national guidelines & standards;
- Building capacity on food safety like proper storage & transportation of food items.

RESEARCH POLICY
- Supporting the establishment of epidemiological training centre & the development of standard curriculum.

Health Systems Strengthening
Strengthening the existing health system to effectively & equitably provide a quality health service to the population. WHO bases its interventions on the existing strengths of the system like the adequate number of committed health staff, large number of health facilities that serve even the most remote rural area, extensive network of household doctors that reach all families in the country, institutionalized care of pregnant women & the 100% literacy of the DPRK population.

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5/9/2011
HEALTH SYSTEM POLICIES AND SERVICE DELIVERY

- Since 2006 supported upgrading of county hospitals covering about 50% of the country’s county hospitals by the end of 2010;
- Strengthening the health services at the ri level including basic medical equipment, household doctors’ bags as well as consumables with the aim to improve the quality of basic health care at community level;
- strengthening the referral system including transportation;
- Building techno-managerial capacities of health providers and managers.

ESSENTIAL MEDICINE:

In collaboration with other international agencies, WHO:

- Developed & updated the list of essential medicines in order to promote optimal provision & rational use;
- Supporting the MoPH to strengthen the National Regulatory Authority, National Control Laboratory & Good Manufacturing Practices as the prerequisite for revamping the domestic production of essential medicines;
- Facilitated establishing of a Traditional Medicines Research Centre.

BLOOD SAFETY:

To ensure access to safe blood transfusion services, WHO rehabilitated & equipped the National Blood Centre in Pyongyang, 9 Provincial Blood Centers and 20 county hospitals, more interventions are planned. WHO is also focused on improving the technical quality & training of personnel.

Family & Community Health

To reduce maternal and child mortality in collaboration with partner organizations through implementation of maternal and child survival strategy with focus on system strengthening including infrastructure up-gradation, capacity building, promoting evidence based guidelines and practices, IEC/BCC activities for better involvement of families and communities.

MAKING PREGNANCY SAFER & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- Advocacy for evidence based practices & development of standardized competency based training for skilled attendance & newborn care, Emergency obstetrics care, safe abortion services;
- Rehabilitating and equipping health facility for quality reproductive, maternal and child health services;
- Promoting & supporting the standards & guidelines for FP methods.

CHILD & ADOLESCENT HEALTH

- Implementation of Child Survival Strategy with thrust on Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) both in pre & in service;
- Training & initiating work for improved referral care.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

Assisting the national prepare a health sector plan & to manage. Moreover, the WHO support to the MoPH:

- To manage the causalties resulted from the big train blast of 2004, technical advice to the health personnel, worked with local authorities to outbreak of infectious diseases & to establish a proper surveillance the aftermath of the disaster;
- In collaboration with UNICEF & IFRC responded to the government call for assistance facing the measles outbreak in 2007, through providing technical assistance & supporting 2 large scale measles campaigns;
- In response to the 2007 floods, the WHO lead the Health/Nutrition Cluster, coordinated the donors’ appeals & interventions, concluded lessons learned & prepared the country preparedness plan.

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NUTRITION HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT

- Assessment, prevention, & control of major micronutrient deficiency in partnership with other agencies;
- Promoting infant & young child feeding;

IMMUNIZATION

- Substantial improvement in immunization coverage & Polio eradication was achieved thanks to the high priority given by the government;
- Supported the establishment of the National Polio Laboratory & polio eradication activities;
- In collaboration with UNICEF, the WHO is regularly strengthening the regular immunization & the cold chain.

HUMANITARIAN

capacity to preparedness emergencies, provided

provided prevent system in
## CONTACT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO DPR Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Tel: + 850 2 3817920, 7914, 7913</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +850 2 3817916</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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World Health Organization
Country Office for DPR Korea