



# Roche Diagnostics Philippines Sustainability Report 2020/21

The Frontlines  
of Healthcare

## Overview

“ *Sustainable healthcare is high quality healthcare, made affordable and accessible to everybody.* ”

**Lance Little**  
Managing Director,  
Roche Diagnostics Asia Pacific



Home to 60% of the world's people, Asia Pacific (APAC) is a large and diverse region with a mix of markets at different stages of their healthcare journey. But hearteningly, the region is making progress toward providing greater health coverage to citizens, improving public infrastructure and services, and making healthcare more affordable and accessible to all, particularly the marginalised communities.

While the healthcare challenges facing the APAC region are myriad, so are its opportunities. Developed, high income markets are seeing rapidly ageing populations, with rising costs increasingly becoming core concerns. Yet this can be a catalyst for the healthcare industry to innovate, adopt new and more efficient technologies, and boost preventive health programmes. For developing or low-income markets that face rapid population growth and low access to essential health services, programmes to build capacity and establish basic healthcare access, particularly in rural areas, is the first step forward. Meanwhile, in medium-income markets, their unique

circumstances call for a targeted approach to tackle high burden diseases and underserved communities to plug potential gaps in a maturing healthcare system.

The impact of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021 on healthcare systems across APAC cannot be underscored enough. The devastating effect of the pandemic not only cost nations thousands of lives but placed immense stress on hospitals and infrastructure. Overwhelmed and struggling with limited funds, many healthcare systems restricted or postponed access to essential services for patients, creating a shadow healthcare crisis that may plague the region in the years to come.

To overcome these challenges and create truly sustainable healthcare, APAC's healthcare systems must embrace both diagnosis and testing, as well as equitable access to these services. As COVID-19 has shown, identifying infections early and preventing them from spreading is the best way to protect the health of a population. These key preventive tools

raise people's overall health awareness, improve treatment outcomes, and reduce the strain on healthcare resources. In our partnerships with governments across APAC to strengthen healthcare systems, we worked to show how diagnostics can both be a powerful tool in creating better healthcare systems, as well as how it should be inclusive and accessible to all patients, including the poor, rural communities, and those at risk.

Roche Diagnostics works closely with its pharmaceuticals division to search for better ways to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases and make a sustainable contribution to society and improve patient access to medical innovations through partnerships with key stakeholders.

Health is the bedrock for societies and economies to thrive and prosper. In advocating for sustainable healthcare, we are collectively strengthening the foundation of socioeconomic growth and development, while ensuring that no patient gets left behind.



# Our Commitment to Sustainability



Sustainability has been an integral part of the Roche business for 125 years. We are now moving towards simpler, more focused sustainability goals that align with both business objectives as well as environmental, social, and governmental imperatives shared by the international community.

We have built up trust and reputation among our customers and successfully reached patients through total regulatory compliance. We can – and are – going far beyond simple compliance to proactively embrace and pursue greater impact in economic, societal and environmental areas.

We mapped our desired impacts of the business' four key pillars of sustainability – patients, society, environment, and people – to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals to ensure these objectives are fully integrated into our business strategy. Given our status as a global healthcare company, we resonate strongly with the goal of ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all.



## PATIENTS

We are always innovating for patients, ensuring quality products, increasing accessibility to healthcare with improved distribution of our solutions, furthering scientific discovery with clinical trials, and operating at the forefront of personalised healthcare.



## SOCIETY

We want to improve the societies in which we operate, meeting the highest standards of business ethics and compliance, protecting human rights, supporting communities in need with humanitarian and social projects, and being a responsible and trustworthy partner.



## ENVIRONMENT

Environmental sustainability is central to humanity's future. We seek to minimise our carbon footprint in all our operations and products, protect the climate through recycling and waste reductions initiatives, and deliver robust corporate responsibility reporting.



## PEOPLE

Making Roche a great place to work is our goal. We strive to build up our people, ensure diversity and inclusion in our workforce, champion employee wellbeing, encourage open dialogue, cultivate leadership skills and promote women in leadership roles.

## APAC: Our Impact In The Fight Against COVID-19

“ *The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the need for public and private sectors across the globe to work together. In these unprecedented times, we are more than ever committed to work in close collaboration with all global health actors to ensure that medicines and diagnostics reach the people who need them.* ”

Since the global outbreak of Covid-19 in January 2020, Roche has been at the forefront of Asia Pacific's battle against the coronavirus, working shoulder to shoulder with governments, frontliners and researchers to test, trace and contain the spread of infections.

As a partner to governments, we stepped up as a pillar of support, doing everything we could to support testing capacity by delivering a full portfolio of reliable diagnostic solutions and instruments in record time to meet urgent national needs. Together with other global pharmaceutical and diagnostics companies, we pledged to ensure that poorer countries could afford

the COVID-19 diagnostic products they need through donations and the distribution of products.

We worked tirelessly to obtain solutions approvals within days, moved quickly to obtain assay shipments ahead of official requests, supported research around efficacy testing, rapidly installed testing instruments in public healthcare facilities, and shared expertise with the industry and government officials. Combined, these efforts contributed significantly to the creation of an effective pandemic response and timely scale up and rollout of testing, ultimately bringing the COVID spread under control and preserving the lives of thousands.

**Severin Schwan**  
CEO, Roche



# Our Approach to Sustainability

## PATIENTS

While COVID-19 efforts were front and centre from 2020 to 2021, we did not let up on our commitment to improve the lives of patients amid these challenging times. In particular, our sustainability initiatives continued to address the most pressing non communicable diseases plaguing the Asia Pacific region, particularly cancer and cardiovascular disease, often the leading causes of death in nearly every APAC market.

With our systemic approach to raising awareness of these pressing diseases and establishing partnerships with government bodies to deliver medicines and diagnostics, we helped our affiliates create stronger, more sustainable healthcare systems where patients benefit from improved testing, treatment and care.

## SOCIETY

We believe in supporting the communities in which we operate, especially the most vulnerable groups, to strengthen our connection to local communities. In 2020 and 2021 our initiatives concentrated on women, children, and the elderly, with our people rallying as OneRoche to raise funds and marshall assistance for these groups in need.

Together, these philanthropic donations and humanitarian projects helped those most in need across Asia Pacific better tide through the turbulent changes wrought by COVID-19 and emerge stronger.

## ENVIRONMENT

At Roche, environmental commitments are at the centre of our sustainability goals for the coming decades. Across the region, our offices are working to minimise waste, reduce energy intensity, and slash our carbon footprint in ways large and small.

Our offices are migrating to paperless operations, promoting waste recycling with designated waste bins, switching to sustainable catering, and eliminating single-use plastics. As climate change and environmental pollution continue to be the world's most pressing concerns, we remain determined to responsibly operate green offices and supply chains through the entire product life cycle to be a truly zero emissions company by 2050.

## PEOPLE

At Roche, we view diversity and inclusion as an engine of innovation and key to our success. As one of the first major corporations in Europe to state our diversity and inclusion goals publicly, we have made substantial progress in achieving them – particularly around female representation, which is a notable achievement for the APAC region.

To look after the wellbeing of our people, the majority of our APAC offices rolled out wellness programmes amid COVID to protect their mental and physical health. This is part of our commitment to create a workplace where each individual is given the support they need to fully contribute their skills, experiences and perspectives.



# Our Impact in Philippines

## Stepping up to spearhead the fight against COVID-19



### PHILIPPINES IN 2020/2021

Recent years have seen the Philippines make significant strides toward implementing universal health coverage, signing universal healthcare into law, and dedicating more resources to strengthening the country's health care system. The national health budget, which has increased an average of 9% in the past five years, was 176 billion pesos in 2020, the bulk of which went to the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, which received 40%, or 71 billion pesos. As of June 2020, the National Health Insurance Program covered 93.4 million Filipinos.

**A nation with a relatively young population, the top causes of death in the Philippines in 2020 were heart disease, cancer, diseases of the cerebrovascular system, pneumonia and diabetes. Rapid increases in healthcare costs are a major**

**challenge the nation is looking to tackle, as medical costs are expected to outpace general inflation by six times. Patients' overall healthcare spend has consistently grown in recent years, with over 50% of the increase financed by households through out-of-pocket payments.**

### OUR COVID-19 CONTRIBUTIONS

The pandemic has caused the Philippines to suffer its first recession in nearly three decades, increased mortality and morbidity among healthcare workers, and delayed healthcare access for patients requiring specialist care. Nevertheless, the control of the spread of COVID-19 in the Philippines was made possible in part through accurate diagnosis and testing with our COVID-19 solutions.

Our solutions were used in community surveillance studies and seroprevalence initiatives by the Department of Health, the Philippine Council for Health Research

and Development, the Department of Science and Technology, and the Philippine Hospital Infection Control Society to aid the nation in researching and responding to infectious outbreaks. In addition, we leveraged our brand equity to engage healthcare organizations, including the Philippine Society for Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, Philippine College of Physicians, the advisory board of the COVID-19 Inter-Agency Task Force and infectious disease experts, to shape health policies and national testing guidelines that enabled the nation to fight back quicker against the pandemic.

#### **EXPANDING TESTING CAPACITY TO AID THE PHILIPPINES IN COMBATING COVID-19**

Our people were actively involved in helping the Philippines contain its COVID-19 outbreak, particularly early on in the pandemic when information and resources were nonexistent. The Philippines recorded its first COVID case on January 30, 2020, which was also the world's first confirmed COVID case outside of China, while the first locally-transmitted case was reported on March 7, prompting the government to impose lockdowns a week later to prevent the spread of the virus and allow time for it to build testing capabilities.

However, obtaining a supply of test kits was a challenge for authorities, who had yet to establish testing capacity; in the early

days of the fight against the coronavirus, samples from the Philippines even had to be sent to Australia's Victorian Infectious Disease Reference Laboratory for testing. As demand for local COVID-19 testing soared alongside infection counts, our team of seven from Roche's Diagnostics and Pharmaceuticals divisions banded together in a race against time to obtain and supply adequate tests to meet national demand.

With COVID regulations not yet fully established at the time, we met with government and private stakeholders and worked relentlessly to supply documentation for approvals for the use of our COVID-19 tests in a record two week timeframe – a process that normally takes years. This saw Roche become the first credible diagnostics company to launch COVID-19 tests in the Philippines market in March 2020, as well as an expansion in the nation's testing capacity from one national reference laboratory (the Research Institute of Tropical Medicine) to several licensed testing laboratories across the country.

To create access, we also assisted the Philippines in expanding testing to rural areas by enabling Hi-Precision Diagnostics – one of the country's largest free-standing private laboratories – to deliver diagnostic test results in one to two days, compared to the previous timeline of five days. Our cobas connection modules, which allow the connection of standalone automation







systems to analytics and post-analytics through a fast transportation system, allowed Hi-Precision Diagnostics to increase its efficiency and provide test results of 21,972 a day in 2021, compared to an average of 18,416 a day at the start of the pandemic, allowing the lab to roll out diagnostics services to patients in rural areas, which previously could not access these services.

Our efforts went beyond the provision of tests. In an admirable display of our value of “Be Caring” and the Filipino spirit of “bayanihan” (communal unity), our people took the initiative to prepare and distribute basic essentials and meals to frontline medical workers and families in need across various provinces following enhanced community quarantines. Their caring hearts ensured frontliners could focus on keeping

fellow Filipinos safe, while those who had lost their incomes from the quarantine and could not support their family would have enough to eat during this difficult time.

#### ACCURATE, TIMELY TESTING OF CARDIAC DISEASE WITH “BEAT MATTERS” CAMPAIGN

Ischaemic heart disease was the leading cause of mortality in the Philippines in 2020. Combined with other types of heart diseases, which were also among the top 10 causes of mortality, heart diseases accounted for 20.7% of all deaths in the nation in 2020, or nearly 119,000 deaths.

To obtain better outcomes for patients with cardiology-related diseases, we launched the “Beat Matters” campaign to drive awareness on diagnostic solutions and the value of accurate and timely testing for

cardiac patients. In collaboration with the Cardiology and Emergency Medicine Training Institutions, symposiums were conducted on Post Graduate Courses of Makati Medical Center and St. Luke’s Medical Center. These scientific events further enriched their knowledge on the value of NTproBNP and HS Troponin T on the diagnosis of heart failure and acute myocardial infarction enabling us to reach almost 2000 Cardiologists and ER Physicians nationwide. Together with our Key Opinion Leaders, we continue to drive the value of faster triaging of chest pain patients at the ER because every 30-minute delay between symptoms and treatment increases mortality by 7.5%.

As of June 2021, 53,670 patients have been diagnosed with our cardiac testing solutions, enabling us to expand our reach to 105,875 patients by end 2021, a 15% increase from 2020. Moving forward, we will collaborate with patient groups to increase awareness of cardiac diseases and the value of regular doctor visits for early diagnosis. As the government empowers the Primary Care Physicians as frontliners in its rollout of Universal Healthcare Law, we will build partnership with their group to fully equip our Primary Care Physicians on the available diagnostic tests for Heart Failure and Acute Myocardial Infarction.

## Highlights *in Numbers*

### PATIENTS



37.5 million

tests conducted with Roche products from Jan 2020 to Jun 2021

5.3 million

pesos donated to healthcare causes

### PEOPLE



5,313

new jobs created

51%

female employees, 44% female leaders



## What's Next

*There is still much more that can be done before sustainable healthcare becomes a reality for each APAC citizen. We know this is a huge undertaking that cannot be achieved alone. That is why we have always partnered with stakeholders and engaged in open, constructive dialogue with industry and peers to collectively advance innovation, refine processes, and make progress.*

Partnership is at the heart of our sustainability strategy. Our strong and deep relationships with governments, public healthcare institutions, industry associations, research partners, and non-governmental organisations have seen us co-create frameworks for sustainable healthcare and strengthen national health systems. As the world emerges from COVID-19, now more than ever do we need public and private stakeholders to work together to ensure healthcare access for all, and good health and wellbeing for every person a reality, both now and in the future.

Together, we can craft solutions crucial to closing inherent gaps in the standard of care in the APAC region, and help it address its most pressing challenges, without sacrificing the interests of the planet or people.

*Join us in doing  
now what patients  
need next.*





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