



7 April 2025

Statement on World Health Day – 2025

World Health Day, observed annually on 7 April, is an opportunity for people and communities around the world to reflect on and discuss the opportunity to reach and maintain the highest attainable level of health for all. As we observe World Health Day today, we affirm once again the significance of manifold parameters of health, which is not merely considered the absence of disease but the wholeness—physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. This year's theme, *'Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures'*, calls for urgent action to protect maternal and newborn health, recognising the critical need to reduce preventable deaths and ensure that women and children thrive in every part of the world.

Across Asia and the Pacific, progress towards sustainable health remains uneven. While there have been efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality, significant gaps persist. In 2023, the region was on track to achieve only one-third of the necessary progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, with only 17% of targets attained. Much effort is still needed to improve the health and well-being of mothers and newborns; their health is central to building healthier families and communities.

Various statistics highlight the interconnectedness of maternal health and mental well-being. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach to health, including access to quality maternal care, proper nutrition, and mental health support, ensuring the needs of both mothers and newborns are fully met.

Faith, health, and healing are deeply interwoven in our Christian understanding of wholeness. Healing is not solely a medical outcome but a sacred journey of restoration—one that calls upon the Church to advocate, support, and walk alongside those struggling with health challenges, including mental health.

As stewards of God's creation, Churches in Asia must deepen their commitment to health and healing through a holistic approach. This includes prioritising the health of mothers and newborns by advocating for accessible health services, providing safe spaces for communities, and equipping faith communities with the tools needed to engage in health promotion and policy advocacy. Mental health must be an integral part of this effort, ensuring that mothers receive the emotional and psychological support they need to thrive and care for their children. As we work towards a future free of preventable maternal and newborn deaths, we must ensure that every mother's health—mental, physical, and emotional—is safeguarded, and every child is given the best possible start in life.

The Church has a mandate to be a place of healing and renewal. On this World Health Day, let churches in Asia commit themselves to upholding the dignity, health, and hope of all, ensuring that every new life is nurtured in a community that embodies Christ's love and care.

Dr Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary, CCA