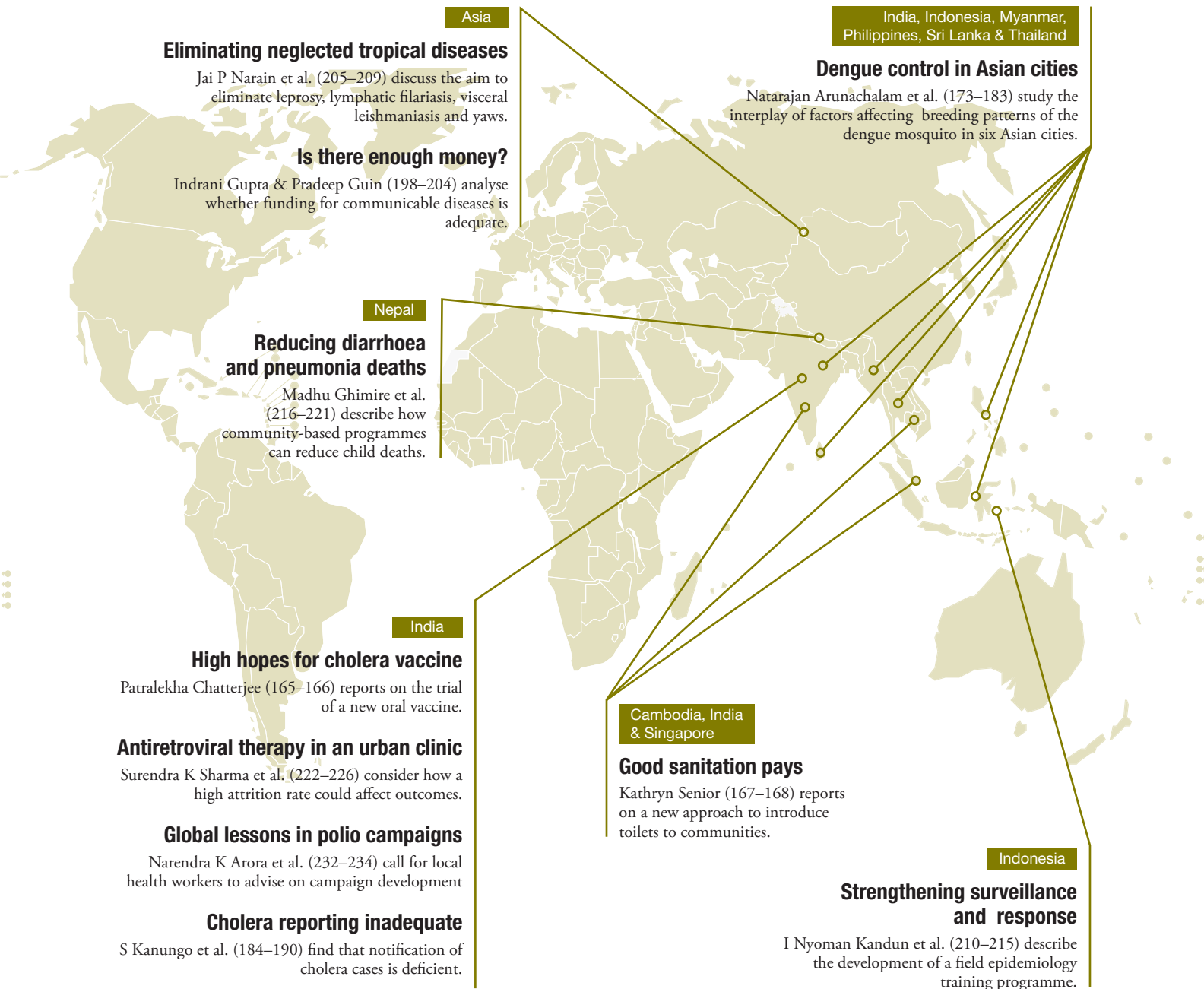


Many papers in this issue address the **special theme of communicable diseases in the South-East Asia region of the World Health Organization**, which comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

In the lead editorial, Jai P Narain & R Bhatia (162) provide an overview of the challenges this region faces in dealing with communicable diseases. In a second editorial, Jacob Kumaresan & Nalini Sathiakumar (163) predict the impact that climate change will have on health in south-eastern Asia. A third editorial by Nani Nair et al. (164) discusses the challenges of tackling tuberculosis in this region.

In an interview, Prabhat Jha (171–172) tells why accurately counting the world's dead is of great importance to public health. G Balakrish Nair & Jai P Narain (237–238) discuss the public health classic by De & Chatterje, published in 1953, that culminated in the discovery of the cholera toxin.



Eliminating neglected tropical diseases

Jai P Narain et al. (205–209) discuss the aim to eliminate leprosy, lymphatic filariasis, visceral leishmaniasis and yaws.

Is there enough money?

Indrani Gupta & Pradeep Guin (198–204) analyse whether funding for communicable diseases is adequate.

Dengue control in Asian cities

Natarajan Arunachalam et al. (173–183) study the interplay of factors affecting breeding patterns of the dengue mosquito in six Asian cities.

Reducing diarrhoea and pneumonia deaths

Madhu Ghimire et al. (216–221) describe how community-based programmes can reduce child deaths.

High hopes for cholera vaccine

Patralekha Chatterjee (165–166) reports on the trial of a new oral vaccine.

Antiretroviral therapy in an urban clinic

Surendra K Sharma et al. (222–226) consider how a high attrition rate could affect outcomes.

Global lessons in polio campaigns

Narendra K Arora et al. (232–234) call for local health workers to advise on campaign development

Cholera reporting inadequate

S Kanungo et al. (184–190) find that notification of cholera cases is deficient.

Cambodia, India & Singapore

Good sanitation pays

Kathryn Senior (167–168) reports on a new approach to introduce toilets to communities.

Indonesia

Strengthening surveillance and response

I Nyoman Kandun et al. (210–215) describe the development of a field epidemiology training programme.

Republic of Korea: high-tech health care

Lee Ji-yoon (169–170) reports on how health care has improved significantly in the past 30 years.

Reduction in maternal mortality

Buyanjargal Yadamsuren et al. (191–197) discuss reasons for a 47% reduction over seven years.

Afghanistan: boost in family planning

Douglas Huber et al. (227–231) discuss how community health workers rapidly increased contraceptive use.

Ethiopia: *khat* chewing and road accidents

William Eckersley et al. (235–236) call for more research on the effects of the stimulant on drivers.