May 19, 2024

Dear Health Systems Global,

I am writing this letter to express my deep desire to become a member of the board of Health Systems Global (HSG). I am grateful to colleagues who nominated me for this important opportunity, and I am humbled by the trust that was given to me.

I have been an active member of HSG since 2014, when I participated in the Emerging Voices for Global Health (EV4GH) program and attended for the first time the Global Symposium on Health Systems Research (HSR), which was held then in Cape Town, South Africa. Since then, I have been participating in HSG's diverse activities – within the EV4GH network, in other Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) that I signed up for, within the Western Pacific regional community, and in HSRs held in Liverpool (on-site) and in Dubai and Bogota (virtual).

Moreover, for the past two years, I have been deeply involved in the establishment of the TWG on Climate-Resilient and Sustainable Health Systems, which I currently chair. During my chairmanship, the TWG grew into a network with close to 200 members; a broad and diverse leadership team covering all the world's regions; numerous events, publications, and collaborations with external partners; and prominent visibility in high-level convenings such as COP28 held in Dubai last year.

Since my first HSR in 2014, I have been staunchly advocating for greater attention by the health policy and systems research community towards the biggest existential threat of our time – climate change – as well as other interrelated challenges that today shape our collective planetary health. Through our combined efforts, the TWG contributed greatly towards advancing the new nexus agenda of climate change and health systems. More broadly, HSG is now dedicating an entire HSR – the upcoming one in Nagasaki – to building health systems that put people at the center while also protecting the planet.

After two years of service to HSG through the TWG, I now aspire to continue my HSG journey by becoming a member of the board. With this new role, I will surely continue to be the champion of planetary health and climate-smart health systems within HSG. With the bigger platform that will be bestowed upon me, I also commit to share my leadership and management skills, experience in the governance of organizations and networks, and connections with the broader global health and planetary health community including funders. Through my mentorship and example, I also hope to uplift our members (and those who are yet to be recruited) who come from the Global South as well as the next generation – consistent with my advocacy to "decolonize" the fields of health and science.

Finally, I pledge to lend my unique powerful voice, as an ambassador and spokesperson, to further enhance the visibility of the health policy and systems community in the wider health and societal landscape, especially as we continue to strive for universal coverage, battle pandemics and climate threats, transition towards a post-SDG era, and navigate an increasingly complex geopolitical world.

Again, thank you, and I hope that our community will grant me this opportunity to be of greater service to our beloved society.

Ramon Lorenzo Luis (Renzo) R. Guinto, MD DrPH