

Benefits of prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases to Thai society

Saving lives, spending less, boosting economic growth



The four main noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) — cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) — are #1 killers responsible for 74% of all deaths in Thailand. NCDs increase susceptibility to COVID-19 infection and the likelihood of severe and fatal outcomes.

400 000 lives are lost each year in Thailand from NCDs. About half of them are premature, among people aged <70 years.



Target:
To reduce premature mortality from NCDs
by one-third
by 2030.

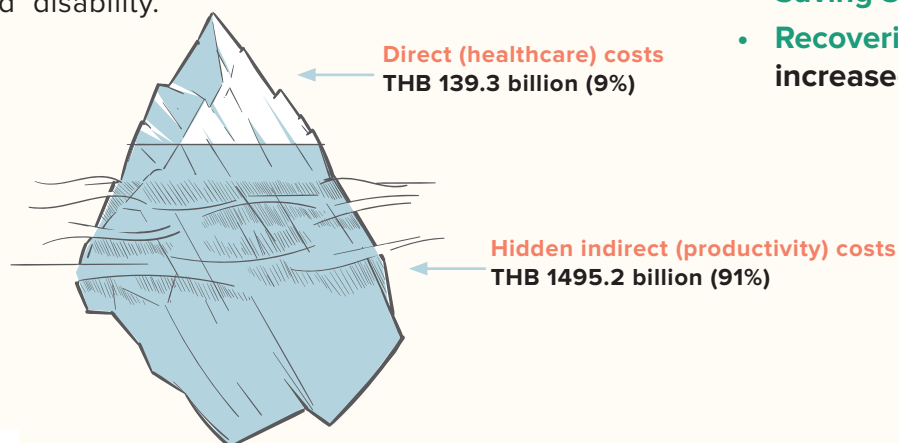
Economic burden

NCDs cost the Thai economy

THB 1.6 trillion

annually, equivalent to 9.7% of its 2019 gross domestic product (GDP).

Indirect costs account for 91% of this economic burden resulting from lost productivity due to premature deaths, sickness-absenteeism or working at reduced capacity due to NCD-related disability.



Benefits of investment

An investment of THB 211 billion in implementation of proven package of interventions over 15 years will result in:

- Preventing 574 000 cases of stroke, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic obstructive lung disease
- Gaining 7 651 644 healthy years
- Saving 310 000 lives
- Recovering THB 430 billion in increased productivity



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Recommendations



Advocate for additional increases on taxes on health-harming products and for subsidies for healthy products.



Strengthen enforcement of preventive NCD regulations and ensure accountability in all sectors and at all levels.



Implement novel policies to improve access to safe, nutritious food for all.



Address interference from tobacco, alcohol, polluting and food industries to ensure that the public interest supersedes commercial interests.



Strengthen national leadership, coordination and accountability for preventing and controlling NCDs.



Support the work of champions and agents of change.



Develop a robust method for calculating the return on investment of a policy package to reduce air pollution.

Prevention and control of NCDs is expected to have direct and indirect impacts on achievement of all the SDGs, especially on: poverty reduction (SDG 1), population health (SDG 3), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduction of inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) and strong institutions (SDG 16).



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