









REPORT ON

"DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDS): POLICY RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES FOR THE ACTIVE POPULATION AND YOUTH"

March 31, 2025
The National Assembly,
Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia

BACKGROUND

The seminar was convened in response to the rising burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Southeast Asia, particularly among the active and youth populations. NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer account for an estimated around 70% of all deaths in the region. Rapid urbanization, changes in lifestyle, and demographic transitions have further intensified the need for integrated policy responses.

Organized by Cambodian National Assembly's Commission on Public Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Labor, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs (Commission 8) and Cambodian Women Parliamentarians Caucus (CWPC), in partnership with Cambodian Association for Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD), supported by the Parliamentary Centre of Asia (PCAsia) and Asia Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (AFPPD), this seminar aimed to foster dialogue and collaboration among parliamentarians, experts, and youth representatives from AIPA (ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assemblies).

OBJECTIVES



Raise awareness among policymakers about the burden of NCDs and preventive strategies.



Share experiences and good practices among ASEAN nations.



Encourage intersectoral dialogue on policy interventions.



Develop recommendations for parliamentary action and advocacy.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Opening Session

- Event presided over by Samdech Maha Rathsapheathika Thipadei Khuon Sudary, President of the National Assembly of Cambodia, with special addresses by:
- Welcome Speech by Hon. Mrs. LORK Kheng, Chairwoman of Commission 8.
- Remarks by Mr. YI Chanprasnar (Parliamentary Centre of Asia), Dr. Marianna Trias (WHO Representative), and Mr. Farrukh Usmonov (AFPPD).
- Keynote by H.E. Prof. CHHEANG Ra, Minister of Health.

Session 1: Policy Progress and Challenges in Cambodia

Moderated by **Hon. Mr. SENG Nhak**, Member of Commission 8, with panelists of:

- H.E. Mr. LO Veasnakiri, Ministry of Health on policy implementation and challenges to prevent NCDs
- Dr. Hiromasa Okayasu, WHO Regional Office, on role of parliament in NCDs

Session 2: Regional Sharing of Experiences

Moderated by **Hon. Mr. KHOENG Noupheap**, Member of Commission 8, with the panelists:

- Hon. NHEUN Raden (Cambodia)
- Hon. MAYXAY Mayfong (Laos)
- Hon. MANUEL Raoul Danniel (Philippines)
- Hon. SERERAK Tosaporn (Thailand)
- Hon. LE Van Kham (Viet Nam)

Concluding Session

With honored presence of

- H.E. Dr. THUN Vathana, 2nd Vice President of the Senate With brief report from
- H.E. Dr. CHHEANG Vannarith, Deputy Secretary General of the National Assembly

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A high-level regional seminar on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) convened distinguished leaders from Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Phillipines, Thailand, and Viet Nam's parliaments to share national efforts, parliamentary engagements, challenges, and policy strategies in combating the escalating burden of NCDs.

The seminar provided a unique platform for knowledge exchange and underscored the critical role of political leadership, multi-sectoral collaboration, and legislative action in addressing NCDs.



OPENING STATEMENTS



I. Summary

The seminar focused on the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Southeast Asia, organized by the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Key speakers include representatives from Member of Parliaments from ASEAN countries, Cambodian's relevant ministries, WHO, PCAsia, and AFPPD. The seminar highlights the impact of NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory diseases, which account more than 70% of deaths in the region. The discussions emphasized the need for a multi-sectoral approach involving various ministries and the importance of policy implementation, funding, and accountability. The role of parliamentarians in shaping policies and promoting healthier environments is underscored. The seminar also addresses the demographic transition with an aging population and the need for preventive measures. The importance of youth involvement in policy-making and the role of development's partners in supporting regional efforts are also discussed.



II. Key Coverages in Brief

Introduction and Welcome



The seminar began with a welcome address by Chair of Commmission 8, followed by remarks from representatives of PCAsia, the World Health Organization, and AFPPD, expressing gratitude to the National Assembly of Cambodia for organizing the event. Minister of Health also keyed in strategic policy of health in the opening session.

The Speaker, Samdech Maha Rathsapheathika Thipadei Khuon Sudary, acknowledged the recent earthquakes in Myanmar and Thailand and set the stage for discussing the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Southeast Asia.

Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases

The messages brought into attention on the significant impact of NCDs in Southeast Asia, attributing roughly 74% of deaths to diseases like cardiovascular issues, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory conditions. The event highlighted the impact of urbanization, lifestyle changes, and behavioral risk factors in exacerbating the health issues.

AFPPD's Role and Regional Collaboration

AFPPD's role in supporting regional efforts to combat NCDs was on spotlight. The session emphasized the need for collaboration with civil partners and stakeholders. The contribution of national committees like the Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD) was acknowledged.

Demographic Transition and Youth Involvement

The seminar addressed the demographic transition with an aging population and the need for preventive measures. The role of youth in shaping policies and the negative impact of marketing harmful products were discussed. The importance of creating an enabling environment for healthy living is highlighted.

Role of Parliamentarians and Multi-Sectoral Approach

The importance of a multi-sectoral approach involving various ministries was emphasized. Parliamentarians were encouraged to drive policy changes and ensure accountability. Successful examples from ASEAN countries were cited, where collaboration among finance and education ministries would lead to effective health programs and taxes.

III. Perspectives- What Our Leaders Believe in?



Key Message: Parliamentary Leadership in Advancing NCDs Prevention and Sustainable Development

In her opening remarks, Samdech Maha Rathsapheathika Thipadei Khuon Sudary emphasized the urgency of addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as a development and public health priority. She highlighted that NCDs disproportionately affecting the working-age population and youth, posing a serious challenge to national productivity and sustainable growth.

She stressed the need for a "Whole-of-Society Approach", calling for cross-sector collaboration and meaningful community engagement. The President recognized the important role of parliamentarians in advancing legislative measures, promoting health education, regulating harmful substances, and allocating resources to prevention efforts.

The President also commended the regional cooperation through AIPA and development partners and reaffirmed Cambodia's political commitment to regional frameworks aimed at reducing NCDs, especially in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 3.4: **Reducing premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030.**



Calls to Action from Samdech Khuon Sudary, President of the National Assembly

Promote Regional Collaboration Through AIPA

Samdech Khuon Sudary urged AIPA parliamentarians and partners to collaborate regionally by sharing experiences, raising awareness, and jointly advancing effective responses to the NCD crisis.

Champion the 'Healthy Life, Healthy Cambodia' Vision

Samdech Khuon Sudary encouraged all stakeholders to adopt a national mindset centered around healthy lifestyles and proactive public health leadership under the banner of "Healthy Life, Healthy Cambodia."

Encourage National Multisectoral Coordination

She called on parliamentarians, ministries, and development partners to work together across sectors to integrate NCDs prevention into national development strategies.

Strengthen Legislative Measures Against Harmful Products

The President emphasized the importance of enhancing legislation to regulate tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy food, including stricter food safety standards and labeling requirements.

Raise Awareness Among Youth and Vulnerable Populations

The President stressed the importance of engaging communities, especially young people, workers, and rural population, in awareness campaigns to promote healthy behaviors and reduce NCD risk factors.

Support Implementation of National NCDs and Nutrition Strategies

She reaffirmed the need to implement Cambodia's Multisectoral National Action Plan on NCDs (2018–2027) and the National Salt Reduction Strategy (2021–2027) as part of a broader national effort to improve population health.

I urge Parliament, the Senate, development partners, and the private sector to actively promote public awareness of NCDs risks and prevention, supporting campaigns that advance the well-being and prosperity of Cambodians under the theme:

'Healthy Life, Healthy Cambodia'.





Chairwoman of the Commission on Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Labour, Vocational Training, and Women's Affairs, Chairwoman of Cambodian Women Parliamentary Caucus, Permanent Vice-chair of CAPPD

Key Message: Parliament's Role in Reducing NCDs in Cambodia Via Legislative Oversight and Grassroots Engagement

Hon. Mrs. LORK Khheng emphasized the vital role of parliamentarians in mainstreaming non-communicable diseases (NCDs) into national legislation and ensuring that policy translates into improved health outcomes. She pointed to the power of legislative advocacy to shape public health environments and support long-term prevention strategies:

Legislative Achievements

The Cambodian Parliament has taken critical steps, including enacting tobacco control laws, restricting alcohol advertising, and supporting tax reforms on harmful products.

Budgetary Oversight

She stressed that parliamentarians play an essential role in allocating national budgets to fund effective NCD prevention programs.

Public Awareness Gaps

Despite policy progress, Hon. LORK Kheng acknowledged drawbacks in raising public awareness on NCDs, particularly to specific groups of population i.e., youth, garment workers and those lacking behind the information.

Calls to Action of Honorable Mrs. LORK Kheng

Community-Level Engagement

The Chair encouraged parliamentarians to prioritize NCDs in constituency dialogues, foster health literacy, and promote cooperation with civil society organizations to close the implementation gap and strengthen public health at the grassroots level.

Strengthen Legislative Enforcement and Constituency Outreach

Hon. Mrs. LORK Kheng called on parliamentarians to go beyond passing laws and actively participate in enforcing NCDs legislation, especially through engagement with local communities.

Bridge Implementation Gaps in Rural Areas

She urged action to address enforcement and awareness challenges in rural regions by increasing general knowledge on health and improving law enforcement mechanisms.

Prioritize Health in Budget Allocations

Parliamentarians were encouraged to play an active role in ensuring that national budgets allocate sufficient resources for sustainable NCDs prevention and control programs.

Promote Collaboration with Local Stakeholders

The Chairwoman advocated for stronger partnerships between MPs, local authorities, and civil society organizations to coordinate efforts in health promotion and ensure inclusive NCDs responses.



Prevention, rooted in accurate and transparent information, is more effective and sustainable than reactive measures. This is especially vital for national development efforts involving youth, women, and marginalized groups. As the saying goes, 'Prevention is better than cure', a principle that should guide our public health strategies.

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Executive Director, Parliamentary Center of Cambodia

Key Message: Strengthening Parliamentary Capacity for Evidence-Based NCD Policy Responses



Mr. Yi Chanprasnar addressed the growing challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the face of demographic shifts such as aging populations and evolving lifestyle patterns. He emphasized the strain NCDs place on public health systems and economic resilience, highlighting the need for timely and informed policy responses.

He positioned the seminar as an important platform for dialogue on strategic and legislative responses to these challenges and reaffirmed PCAsia's commitment to supporting AIPA Member Parliaments. A key focus of this support is enhancing the technical and analytical capacity of parliamentary staff, particularly in areas such as legislative drafting, policy analysis, and evidence-based research.

He further underscored PCAsia's inclusive approach, integrating good governance, gender-sensitive policymaking, and inter-parliamentary cooperation into its capacity-building programs. These elements, he noted, are essential to effectively addressing both the public health and socio-economic dimensions of NCDs.

Calls to Action of Mr. Chanprasnar YI, Executive Director, Parliamentary Center of Asia

Promote Evidence-Based and Data-Driven Policymaking

Mr. Yi called on ASEAN parliaments to prioritize the use of data and evidence in shaping legislative responses to NCDs, especially as demographic changes accelerate the urgency of public health reform.

Integrate Gender Equity and Inclusive Governance in Public Health Policy

socio-economic Recognizing the and gendered impacts of NCDs, Mr. Yi emphasized the importance of embedding gender-sensitive and inclusive principles into all phases of policy design and implementation.

Invest in Capacity Building for Parliamentary Staff

He urged governments and development partners to strengthen the technical capacities of parliamentary staff by supporting their professional development in policy research, legislative drafting, and analysis.

Enhance Inter-Parliamentary Collaboration Across ASEAN

He advocated for stronger cooperation between AIPA Member Parliaments to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, share best practices, and develop coordinated regional strategies to tackle NCDs.



By equipping parliamentary staff with timely skills and resources, we ensure that legislative institutions can proactively shape sustainable and impactful public health policies, benefiting not only today's working population but also future generations across Southeast Asia.



WHO Representative Cambodia

Key Message: Tackling NCDs as a Public Health and Development Priority in Southeast Asia

Dr. Marianna Trias, WHO representative, emphasized the urgent need to address the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Southeast Asia, which account for approximately 70% of all deaths in the region.

She highlighted that NCDs, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory illnesses, are largely driven by rapid urbanization, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, and behavioral risk factors like tobacco and alcohol use.

She continued to stress that addressing NCDs is not only critical for improving public health outcomes but also for sustaining economic growth and managing the region's demographic shift toward an aging population. Effective prevention and control strategies are needed to mitigate long-term healthcare costs and productivity losses.

Calls to Action of Dr. Marianna Trias, WHO Representative

Promote Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

She highlighted the critical role of ministries beyond health—including education, finance, agriculture, labor, youth, and environment—in forming a coordinated national response to NCDs.

Ensure Effective Policy Implementation and Adequate Funding

Dr. Trias emphasized that legislation must be backed by effective implementation, sufficient financial resources, and protection against industry interference to produce meaningful outcomes.

Drive Meaningful Legislative and Policy Change

Dr. Trias called on parliamentarians to shape and advance laws and policies that foster healthier environments and reduce NCDs risks across society.

Support School-Based Health Programs

She encouraged education ministries to continue and scale up school-based health initiatives that have demonstrated success across ASEAN countries.

Implement Effective Health Taxes

Dr. Trias recognized the value of health taxes, particularly on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary products, as a proven strategy to reduce harmful consumption and generate public health funding.

Prioritize NCDs Prevention in Aging Populations

She underscored the need to focus on prevention among older adults to reduce long-term healthcare burdens and ensure sustainable development in an aging region.

Empower and Engage Youth

Dr. Trias called for greater efforts to cultivate healthy behaviors in young people, who are especially vulnerable to the marketing of harmful products and play a pivotal role in shaping future health trends.

Encourage Regional Parliamentary Engagement

She reaffirmed WHO's support for regional platforms that enable parliamentarians to share innovations, collaborate across borders, and drive the creation of resilient, health-oriented societies.

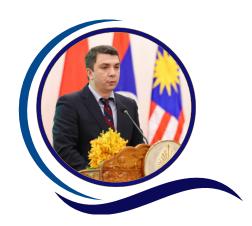






Interim Executive Director, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

Key Message: Strengthening Policy and Youth Engagement Amid Demographic Shifts



Mr. Usmonov emphasized the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDss) on development, particularly among low socioeconomic groups and youth in the Asia-Pacific region. He pointed out that NCDs not only strain health systems but also reduce workforce productivity, affecting economic growth on a macro level.

He underlined the significance of demographic transitions, where a large portion of the population now falls into the working-age group, requiring governments to ensure sustainable healthcare systems and supportive policy environments.

Youth were highlighted as key agents of change, needing both protection from NCDs risk factors and empowerment to actively shape policy. Mr. Usmonov also stressed that addressing NCDs must be inclusive of all age groups, especially the elderly, and must consider environmental, lifestyle, and socioeconomic drivers.

Calls to Action from Mr. Farrukh Usmonov, AFPPD

Create an Enabling Environment for a Healthy Population

Governments are urged to establish policies that promote health, ensure access to healthcare and social safety nets, and support population groups most affected by NCDs, especially in the context of demographic shifts.

Tailor Policies to Meet the Needs of Vulnerable Groups

Policies must be inclusive and responsive to the specific needs of the elderly, women, children, and youth, especially as societies adapt to changing population structures.

Empower Youth in Policy Development

Young people should be given platforms to voice their concerns and participate in policy processes that affect their health and futures, recognizing them as essential partners in development.

Strengthen Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Parliamentarians are encouraged to work in partnership with civil society and other sectors to create and implement evidence-based, inclusive health and development policies.



No country will deny that their hope is in the youth as they are the leaders and builders of the future. This is why the youth also deserve the best that can be offered, including good and sustainable healthcare services and healthy lifestyle.





Minister of Health

Key Message: Strategic Policy Leadership and Health System Integration in Cambodia

H.E. Chheang Ra addressed the significant burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Cambodia, where they account for over 60% of total mortality. He presented Cambodia's national strategy to combat NCDs, guided by the National Multi-sectoral Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2021–2028).



▶ Multi-Sectoral Coordination

The Minister of Health has engaged with key ministries—including Education, Transport, and Agriculture—to address the four major risk factors: tobacco use, harmful alcohol consumption, unhealthy diets, and physical inactivity.

Policy Milestones

Cambodia has made notable progress with the enactment of a Sub-Decree mandating pictorial health warnings on tobacco products and the strengthening of food labeling regulations.

▶ Health System Strengthening

A major priority is the integration of NCDs services into primary healthcare, ensuring access to early detection, treatment, and referral services across all levels.

▶ Innovation in Service Delivery

Digital health platforms are being deployed to raise awareness and deliver healthcare services, particularly in remote and underserved areas.

Visionary Leadership

The Minister reaffirmed Cambodia's commitment to the WHO Best Buys and regional cooperation, emphasizing the need for strong political will and sustainable financing to ensure long-term success.

Calls to Action from H.E. Chheang Ra, Minister of Health, Cambodia

Ensure Strong Political Commitment and Sustainable Financing

He urged national leaders and partners to maintain high-level political support and allocate adequate resources to drive Cambodia's NCDs strategy forward.

Leverage Digital Health Innovations

H.E Minister advocated digital platforms to be further utilized to improve awareness, outreach, and service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach populations.

Scale Up Preventive Services and Primary Healthcare Integration

There is an urgent need to expand preventive measures and fully embed NCDs care into the primary healthcare system, with a focus on early detection and continuity of care.

Engage Development Partners and Strengthen Regional Collaboration

Development partners are encouraged to support capacity building and work together through regional platforms to address NCDs collectively and sustainably



Healthy children of today will become healthy adults of tomorrow. The investments we make now in prevention and health education will reduce future costs and create a stronger, healthier society prepared for the challenges of aging.

Composition

1ST PANEL DISCUSSION



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Progress of policy implementation, challenges, and priorities in preventing Non-Communicable Diseases against the backdrop of demographic changes.



MODERATED BY

HONOURABLE MR. SENG NHAK, MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION 8 OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CAMBODIA

PANELED BY

Hon. Dr. LO VeasnaKiri, Secretary of State, Ministry of Health

Dr Hiromasa Okayasu,

Director, Division of Healthy
Environments and Populations
World Health Organization
Regional Office for the Western
Pacific

Presentation on
"Policy Implementation, Challenges and
Priorities in Preventing NCDs"

Presentation on

"The Role of the Parliament in Prevention and Policy Advocacy in the Context of Demographic Change"

I. Summary

The session focused on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevention and policy advocacy in the context of population aging in ASEAN countries. Hiro Okayasu, Director of Health, Environment, and Populations at WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, presented the shift in disease burden from infectious to chronic diseases in ASEAN countries. He emphasized the importance of healthy aging for economic sustainability and highlighted the challenges in NCDs control due to the complex nature of health influenced by various factors beyond medical care. The presentation discussed WHO's 'best buys' for NCDs prevention, including taxation on tobacco and alcohol, and the need for a health-enabling environment. Examples of successful NCDs prevention practices in ASEAN countries were shared, and the role of parliamentarians in enacting legislation and ensuring policy implementation were emphasized. The session concluded with a call for strategic investment in NCDs prevention and collaboration across sectors.

II. Key coverage with action points

Challenges in NCDs Control & Introduction to NCDs Prevention and Policy Advocacy

Hon. Dr. LO VeasnaKiri and Dr. Hiro Okayasu, shared the stage where the first speaker covered the complexity of NCDs prevention, emphasizing that health is influenced by factors beyond medical care, such as income and living conditions. The need for long-term, multifaceted interventions was highlighted, along with the importance of creating a health-enabling environment.





The latter, **Dr. Hiromasa Okayasu** outlined the focus on NCDs prevention and policy advocacy in the context of population aging in ASEAN countries. He highlighted the shift from infectious to chronic diseases and the importance of healthy aging for economic sustainability. He also covered other dimensions such as: WHO's Best Buys for NCDs Prevention, Successful NCDs Prevention Practices in ASEAN, and Role of Parliamentarians in NCDs Prevention.

WHO's Best Buys for NCDs Prevention

The presentation outlined WHO's 'best buys' for NCDs prevention, including taxation on tobacco and alcohol, regulatory approaches, and building healthy environments. The effectiveness of these measures in reducing NCDs and increasing revenue for health initiatives were discussed

Successful NCDs Prevention Practices in ASEAN

Examples of successful NCDs prevention practices in ASEAN countries were shared, such as smoke-free laws in Lao PDR and Cambodia's non-health sector engagement. The importance of comprehensive, multisectoral strategies were emphasized.

Role of Parliamentarians in NCDs Prevention

The role of parliamentarians in enacting legislation, ensuring effective policy implementation, and fostering multisectoral collaboration were discussed. The importance of strategic investment and collaboration across sectors to achieve NCDs prevention goals was highlighted.





Colons

2ND PANEL DISCUSSION



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Situation of policy implementation, challenges and the role of parliament in contributing to the prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases: Experiences of other countries in the region

MODERATED BY

HONORABLE MR. KHOENG NOUPHEAP, MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION 8 OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CAMBODIA

PANELED BY

Hon. NHEUN Raden, Member, Commission 8, National Assembly, Cambodia

Hon. MAYXAY Mayfong, Member of Social-Cultural Committee and Rector of university of Health Sciences, National Assembly, Laos

Hon. SERERAK Tosaporn, M.D., Chairman, Public Health Committee, House of Representatives, Thailand

Hon. Le Van Kham, Member, Committee for Culture and Social Affairs, National Assembly, Viet Nam

Hon. MANUEL Raoul Danniel, Member for Youth, House of Representatives, Philippines

I. Summary

The session centered on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and their prevention in ASEAN nations. Cambodia, gave a summary of the activities and accomplishments of Committee 8 in overseeing healthcare. Delegates from various ASEAN countries like Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos, and the Philippines, shared their experiences on how their countries are tackling non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevention and control, focusing on policy actions and healthcare funding methods. For instance, The Thai representative spoke about their successful community volunteer network. The Viet Namese representative outlined their comprehensive strategy for NCDs prevention, including rigorous enforcement of tobacco control laws. The Lao delegate spoke about their commitment to enhance policy implementation, while the Filipino representative detailed their use of tobacco tax revenue to support healthcare programs.

II. Key Coverage: National Approaches Addressing NCDs



Hon. NHEUN Raden, Member, Commission 8, National Assembly, Cambodia provided an update on the field visits conducted by Committee 8 across 25 provinces to assess the delivery of healthcare services and working conditions in factories.

Hon. MAYXAY Mayfong, Member of Social-Cultural Committee and Rector of University of Health Sciences, National Assembly, Laos

- ▶ Healthcare Access: Committed to enhancing healthcare access and policy implementation, with a strong emphasis on preventive measures and early detection of NCDs.
- Collaborative Strategies: Engaged in regional partnerships to share resources and best practices.



Hon. SERERAK Tosaporn, M.D., Chairman, Public Health Committee, House of Representatives, Thailand

- ➤ Community Initiatives: Established a robust network of over 1 million village health volunteers to facilitate community health promotion and disease prevention.
- ▶ Policy Framework: Focus on behavioral change and the establishment of NCDs-free centers to enhance local healthcare delivery.





Hon. Le Van Kham, Member, Committee for Culture and Social Affairs, National Assembly, Viet Nam

- National Program: Launched the National Program for NCDs Prevention and Control (2015-2025), targeting key health issues, including cancer and cardiovascular diseases.
- Legislative Efforts: Introduced laws to regulate unhealthy products and promote nutrition, thus improving healthcare access and outcomes.

Hon. MANUEL Raoul Danniel, Member of the House of Representatives of the Philippines

- ➤ Tobacco Tax Utilization: Uses revenue from tobacco taxes to support healthcare programs aimed at reducing NCD prevalence and promoting public health.
- ➤ Legislative Advocacy: Advocates for laws that encourage healthy diet and active lifestyle among citizens.





The session also benefited from the insightful inputs of Hon. Yuos Phanita, Chair of Committee 2 of the Senate, Cambodia when he discussed both genetic and psychological factors that contribute to NCDs, highlighting the priority of prevention over treatment. He pointed out that healthcare systems cannot solely focus on treatment without making investments in prevention.

As overall outputs, the panel outlined the solid focus on the escalating burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) across member nations, with essential coverages, such as:

Key Highlights

- NCDs Prevalence: NCDs account for approximately 80% of deaths in ASEAN countries, with 40% of these being premature, significantly impacting the region's health systems and economies.
- Leading Causes: Major contributors include cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and mental health disorders, indicating a critical shift from infectious diseases.

Q Challenges Identified

- ► Healthcare Accessibility: Limited access to essential screening and treatment services, particularly for cardiovascular diseases.
- Lifestyle Factors: High-risk behaviors, including poor dietary habits and physical inactivity, continue to drive NCDs rates upward.
- Funding Constraints: Insufficient financial resources hinder efforts to expand preventive services and public health campaigns effectively.

Prospecti

Prospective Recommendations

- ➤ Legislative Strengthening: Enhance laws and enforcement mechanisms related to NCDs risk factors across member states.
- ▶ Increased Investment: Allocate more resources to prevention, early detection, and treatment initiatives to alleviate the long-term burden on health systems.
- ➤ Regional Collaboration: Foster partnerships for sharing best practices, technical expertise, and resources among ASEAN countries.
- ▶ Public Awareness Campaigns: Develop comprehensive campaigns to promote healthier lifestyles and encourage community involvement in NCDs prevention.

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CLOSING SESSION



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UNDER HONORARY PRESENCE OF



H.E. MR. THUN VATHANA

 $2^{\rm ND}$ VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA



Brief Report



Dr. CHHEANG Vannarith, Deputy Secretary General, wrapped up the entire event as a brief report to the seminar, emphasizing the collaborative nature of the meeting, which included stakeholders from multiple sectors. He thematized the Seminar's Strategic Solutions to address the NCDs as ABC:

A. Awareness and Action (A2):

- Knowledge Dissemination: The need for increased awareness about health issues, particularly NCDs, is stressed.
- *Call to Action:* The speaker encourages attendees to not only understand the issues but also to take proactive steps in addressing them.

B. Behavior Change and Budget (B2):

- Lifestyle Modifications: Emphasizes the significance of changing daily behaviors to mitigate health risks associated with NCDs.
- *Financial Support:* Highlights the necessity for budget allocation to sustain health initiatives, ensuring they are impactful and long-lasting.

C. Communication and Coordination (C2):

- *Public Engagement:* Calls for improved communication between the government and the public to ensure that health messages are effectively conveyed.
- *Intersectoral Collaboration:* Stresses the importance of coordinating efforts across various sectors to tackle health issues comprehensively.

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Closing Remark

H.E. Dr. THUN Vathana, 2nd Vice President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia addressed his closing remarks by providing his selected insights on:



Rising Health Concerns:

• referencing the alarming trends in NCDs concern, such as the increasing rate of diabetes in the country, indicating a need for urgent action

Nutritional Issues:

• showcasing dietary changes among Cambodians, emphasizing the need for better nutritional education to combat health problems, and thereby necessitating the concrete policy on human capital that embraces both education and health.

Regional Cooperation:

• acknowledging the benefits of learning from neighboring countries, such as Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos and the Philippines, to enhance health strategies and interventions.

The 2nd Vice President concluded with a strong call for unity among all stakeholders to confront NCDs, reiterating the importance of collaborative efforts and parliamentary engagement in promoting a healthier future as "One Health" for Cambodia and for all.

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It is with great attention for distinguished participants and policymakers to acquire the NCDs' overview with highlights on key themes, challenges, and insights to address the concern. With these, a list of well-rounded policy responses could be taken into accounts, but not limited to:

>>> Intersectoral Collaboration

 Foster partnerships among government bodies, NGOs, and community organizations to enhance public health initiatives.

>>> Sustainable Funding

 Advocate for increased budget allocations towards health initiatives to ensure ongoing support and effectiveness in addressing NCDs.

>>> Educational Initiatives

 Develop programs focused on nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and the importance of regular health check-ups.

>>> Public Awareness Campaigns

 Launch comprehensive campaigns to educate the public about NCD risks and promote healthy behaviors.

>>> Youth Engagement

Create platforms for youth to participate actively in health discussions and initiatives, empowering them to be health ambassadors in their communities.

These points forward provide comprehensive actionable recommendations for

addressing non-communicable diseases in the region.

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