Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and chronic respiratory diseases, are the leading cause of death and disability in the Western Pacific Region, causing an estimated 12 million deaths in 2019.

Despite progress in reducing premature deaths due to NCDs from 2000 to 2010, new risk factors and changing environments have reversed progress in some countries over the past decade.

Treatment costs, loss of employment and premature death due to NCDs are expected to result in cumulative economic losses of US$ 47 trillion by 2030.

WHO response

WHO has worked alongside Member States, stakeholders, partners and experts to develop the Regional Action Framework for Noncommunicable Disease Prevention and Control in the Western Pacific, aimed at turning a “sick system” into a “health system” to end the NCD epidemic. It calls on Member States, partners and stakeholders to:

- Strengthen mechanisms for collection and use of data and information for planning, monitoring progress and evaluating NCD policies and programmes.
- Develop policies that go beyond the health sector to enable health-promoting environments and address social determinants of health at national and subnational levels.
- Screen populations for major NCDs: cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases.
- Strengthen primary health care to provide person-centred NCD management.
- Empower patients for self-management and adherence through health promotion, prevention and individualized data.

The framework provides an integrated, cross-sectoral and pragmatic approach that builds on existing capacities, strengths and initiatives.

WHO supports countries in adopting new solutions to the NCD epidemic through a regional “grounds-up” arrangement, in which the Regional Office or country offices identify common problems and help Member States develop customized solutions based on their local contexts.