

The right thing when eradicating poverty is to prevent chronic diseases



"Helping people overcoming poverty secures our common future"
- UN Secretary General Ban Ki - Moon

IOGT International, on International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, calls on decision-makers worldwide to step up efforts to eradicate poverty.

"The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Number 1 is 'To Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger'. But eleven years into the new Millennium a tremendous rate of poverty continues to be a threat to people's freedom and dignity," says Mr. Sven-Olov Carlsson, the President of IOGT International.

According to the United Nations Development Program, the world has made progress towards achieving the MDGs, yet some countries are lagging and many of them may not be able to reach their goals. ^[1]

"That's what IOGT International's call today is all about: to look closely at the facts and reasons why the global community is failing to eradicate poverty: a key problem that went unnoticed for too long is Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their risk factors like alcohol or tobacco use," emphasizes Mr. Carlsson.

The World Health Organization does not leave a doubt that NCDs (cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, cancers) and their risk factors are closely linked to poverty, contributing to underdevelopment, lack of resources, hunger. ^[2]

NCDs are a threat to socio-economic development, especially in developing regions, both at household and at

macro-economic level. 60% of all deaths in the world are caused by NCDs. People living in developing countries die much younger from NCDs than in developed countries, because risk factors like alcohol or tobacco use have a proportionally bigger impact. Money spent on alcohol, often means there is no money left to be spent for the most basic goods for a free life in dignity.

The World Economic Forum "Global Risks 2011" report pointed out that NCDs are the 4th most severe risk in impact and John Dalli, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy very recently highlighted that the "staggering €34 trillion NCDs are costing the world economy, gives all the more reason to commit ourselves to doing the right thing". ^[4]

"The political processes in 2011 have created momentum to tackle the issue of NCDs and in doing so to make big leaps in eradicating poverty, to improve the standard of living of people all over the world," says Mr. Carlsson, President of IOGT International.

"Decision makers need to harness this momentum in their efforts to eradicate poverty, to improve the global economy and to give people all over the world hope for a better future, with more freedom and dignity. The right thing to do is to prevent harm from risk factors of NCDs. That saves lives and improves lives and that's what the day of Poverty Eradication is all about."

[1] [2] [3] [4] See: www.iogt.org

