

a nationwide campaign, This Girl Can, which aims to address the gender gap by “getting women and girls moving, regardless of shape, size and ability” was launched in 2015 and is already showing signs of success.¹⁰ National mass media campaigns like this, as well as initiatives by the IOC and the UN, which aim to support gender equality and greater sports participation by women, may play a part in achieving the WHO’s goal of a 10% reduction in the prevalence of physical inactivity across the world by 2025.¹¹

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We declare no competing interests.

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Renewing commitments to physical activity targets in Thailand



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The *Lancet* 2016 Series on physical activity provides global evidence on how physical activity contributes to healthy nations through primary prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), a growing epidemic.^{1–4} The Series presents compelling evidence on the benefits of physical activity not only for health, but also for social, environmental, and economic outcomes.^{2,5}

Prevention and control of NCDs are global commitments through the UN’s Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases⁶ and the Sustainable Development Goals.⁷ Global targets, indicators, and a monitoring framework of NCDs have been agreed.⁸ WHO member states have committed to a “10% relative reduction in prevalence of insufficient physical activity” by 2025.⁸

NCDs cause 71% of total mortality in Thailand and account for a large proportion of health expenditure.⁹ The country’s prevalence of insufficient physical activity was 19% in 2014.¹⁰ Thailand’s challenges to increase

physical activity and decrease NCD mortality risk lie in how to address the “know-do” gaps—that is, the lack of implementation of what is known to be effective.

Some actions on physical activity have been taken in Thailand during the past decades. National focal points were established in the Department of Physical Education in 1934, first under the Ministry of Education and later in the Ministry of Sport and Tourism; the scope of this policy is limited to promotion of sports in school and other institutions.¹¹ In 1990, the Exercise for Health Unit under the Division of School Health in the Department of Health of the Ministry of Public Health was founded, and upgraded to the Division of Physical Activity and Health in 2002. The division has a broader mandate on “social mobilisation for physical activity” through intersectoral coordinated actions, producing guidelines for different age groups and settings and convening public campaigns.¹² Alongside this work, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, established in 2001, shares the goal of promoting physical activity. It

Published Online
July 27, 2016
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)30929-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)30929-1)

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