

## Benefits of Tobacco Control in China

Proven interventions can reduce smoking and prevent illness, death, and economic losses to individuals and the government.

Effective tobacco control would:

- Prevent 30 million deaths among current smokers, and more than 50 million deaths in this century.
- Increase government revenue by RMB 110 billion (US\$15 billion) or more per year.
  - New revenue could be used to finance public education about the harm to health from smoking, health services for rural areas and the poor, and other social programs.
- Prevent families from falling into poverty and help families in poverty to climb out of it.

Tobacco control would increase productivity:

- International research shows that smokers miss 3 times more days of work than non-smokers,<sup>1</sup> and those who quit are 4.5% more productive than smokers. Among other reasons, smokers are less productive because they take smoking breaks.
- Fewer smokers would prevent RMB 68 billion (US\$9 billion) in productivity losses each year.<sup>2</sup>

Protecting workers and the public from indoor tobacco smoke pollution (second-hand smoke) would improve health, be highly cost-effective and have widespread popular support:

- In China, hazardous levels of nicotine from cigarettes are found in the air of nearly all restaurants, and more than two thirds of schools and hospitals, government buildings, and train stations.<sup>3</sup> Smoke-free laws reduce airborne nicotine levels by more than 80%, particulate matter by 70-90%,<sup>4</sup> and improve lung function in non-smoking workers.<sup>5,6</sup>
- Children and women are particularly vulnerable to harm from smoke pollution.
- Public approval of smoking bans is high. A 2006 China CDC survey found that more than 90% of people supported restricting smoking in schools, hospitals and public transportation, and more than 80% were in favor of making workplaces smoke-free.<sup>7</sup>
- Workplace smoke-free policies protect non-smoking employees from disease and disability due to exposure to second-hand smoke, and do not hurt businesses.<sup>8,9</sup>

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### References

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