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**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Young Health Programme launches in Vietnam**

***A joint collaboration between AstraZeneca Vietnam and Plan International to address NCD prevention amongst youth***

***Programme aligns with Government's priority to address NCD prevention***

**19 June, 2019** – Today, Plan International Vietnam and AstraZeneca Vietnam announce the launch of the Young Health Programme Vietnam. Delivered in partnership with the National Youth Centre and the Hanoi Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the programme is a global community investment initiative from AstraZeneca, focusing on youth and prevention of the most common NCDs: cancer, diabetes, heart disease and respiratory disease.

Today, young people make up one quarter of the country's population<sup>1</sup>, the highest ever cohort of youth for Vietnam, providing the country with a unique socio-economic development opportunity. The period of adolescence is pivotal in reducing NCDs and maximizing health across all stages of life.

"It is critical that we pay attention to young people during this important period of their growth and development," said Sharon Kane, Country Director, Plan International Vietnam. "In youth, decisions are made, habits are formed, and paths chosen that can have life-long repercussions and impact across generations. Evidence shows that unhealthy behaviour patterns related to NCDs – including unhealthy diets, tobacco use and smoke exposure, physical inactivity, and harmful use of alcohol – are often initiated during childhood and adolescence. In fact, it is estimated that over half of all NCD deaths are associated with behaviours that began or were reinforced during adolescence.<sup>2</sup> To accelerate the response to NCDs worldwide, greater attention and investment is needed in the early years of life, particularly during adolescence.<sup>3</sup>"

Aligned with the Government's Vietnam Health Program (2018 – 2030) which prioritizes NCD prevention as one of its top priorities, the Young Health Programme addresses the primary NCD risk factors of tobacco use, the harmful use of alcohol, physical inactivity, poor diet and air pollution, as well as supporting the broader health and rights of young people.

In Vietnam, according to WHO estimates from 2018, there were 548.800 cases of death, in which 77% (424.000 cases) were caused by NCDs<sup>5</sup>. NCDs take a heavy toll on patients, caregivers and our healthcare system.

The Young Health Programme Vietnam is a three-year programme that aims to contribute to the improved health and wellbeing of young people between 10-24 years of age in Hai Ba Trung District and Dong Anh District of Hanoi. Specifically, it aims to ensure that young people in Hanoi have increased knowledge about risk behaviours and NCD prevention, which gives them greater capacity to make informed decisions about their health, in the context of improved health services, an enabling support system and policy environment.

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<sup>1</sup> UNFPA, Ministry of Home Affairs; National Report on Vietnamese Youth, 2015

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. (2011). Global Status Report on non-communicable diseases 2010. Geneva

<sup>3</sup> Sustaining Human Development: leveraging early life opportunities to prevent and control NCDs - The NCD Alliance, DOHaD, PMNCH, NCD Child, 2015



Plan International Vietnam and AstraZeneca Vietnam will work closely with implementing partners and other stakeholders to deliver the project.

The Young Health Programme Vietnam hopes to reach more than 46,000 youth directly with health information and NCD prevention programming in primary and secondary schools, Universities and with youth working in industrial zones. Indirectly, it is expected to reach an additional 100,000 beneficiaries in the wider community through awareness raising activities.

Globally, the AstraZeneca Young Health Programme has reached more than 3 million youth in more than 24 countries across 6 continents since it was launched in 2010.

Nitin Kapoor, Company President of AstraZeneca in Vietnam, said “We are proud that Vietnam will be the 24th country globally and the 3<sup>rd</sup> in Asia to have the YHP programme. We are delighted to bring the programme to Vietnam in collaboration with Plan International. The Young Health Program Vietnam is a prime example demonstrating our long-term commitment in aligning to Government health priorities and support the delivery of the recently launched **Vietnam Health Program 2018 – 2030**. Together we can strive towards a healthier Vietnam.”

#### **Notes:**

**About Young Health Programme:** The Young Health Programme (YHP) was founded in 2010 by AstraZeneca which is a global community investment programme focused on youth and prevention of the most common non-communicable diseases (NCDs): cancer, diabetes, heart disease and respiratory disease. Developed in partnership with Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Plan International, it aims to reduce the uptake of unhealthy behaviours in young people that can lead to NCDs later in life. These behaviours include tobacco use, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet and lack of exercise activity. <sup>(vi)</sup>

More info about Young Health Program, please go to the website:

<https://www.younghealthprogrammeyhp.com/programmes/Vietnam.html>

#### **About Plan International**

Plan International is the world’s largest girls’ rights organisation, having been working in 75 countries for the past 80 years. In Vietnam, Plan International has been established since 1993. To date, we are working to improve the lives of more than 350,000 children, their families and communities in over 131 communes in 10 provinces across the country.

Plan International Vietnam supports the vision that marginalized children and youth in Vietnam, especially adolescent girls, are able to reach their full potential in a society that protects and respects their rights. Plan International Vietnam’s goal by 2021 is to take action so that 2 million girls from 1,875 ethnic communities in Vietnam can learn, lead, decide, and thrive.

#### **About AstraZeneca**

AstraZeneca is a global, science-led biopharmaceutical company that focuses on the discovery, development and commercialization of prescription medicines, primarily for the treatment of diseases in three therapy areas - Oncology, Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolism and Respiratory. AstraZeneca operates in over 100 countries and its innovative medicines are used by millions of patients worldwide.