

**Strategies for Management of Overweight and Obesity  
2010-2019**

**1. Objectives**

**General objectives**

To develop and support the promotion and reinforcement of the system and mechanisms in the management of overweight and obesity problems in an efficient manner

**Specific objectives**

1. To support the efforts to bring about integrated management so that people will have appropriate consumption behaviors
2. To support the efforts to bring about integrated management so that people will have appropriate physical activities
3. To limit and reduce the scale and severity of the impacts of overweight condition and obesity

**2. Targets**

**Mechanism-oriented targets**

To have in place processes and mechanisms to manage overweight and obesity problems in a participatory and transparent manner based on knowledge and conducted in the public interests

**Short-term targets**

To have in place plans of action, measures, development of laws and regulations both at the national and at the local levels in the management of overweight and obesity problems

**Medium-term targets**

1. Thai infants of more than 50% are solely breast-fed for at least 6 months within 2014
2. Thai population has appropriate consumption behavior: 50% increase in the number of people receiving age-suitable energy from food, 50% increase in vegetable and food consumption, and 50% decrease in consumption of food with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium within 2014.
3. More than 80% of Thai population has adequate exercise within 2014.

**Long-term targets**

1. Thai population under the age of 15 years to have a prevalence rate of overweight and obesity less than 10% by 2019
2. Thai population of the age of 15 years and above to have a prevalence rate of overweight and obesity less than 25% by 2019

**3. Conceptual framework of Strategies for Management of Overweight Conditions and Obesity**

To effectively manage overweight and obesity problems requires a balanced strategy that covers a great variety of measures. No single measure will suffice. However, importance should be attached to measures that have been proven for effectiveness as well as cost-effectiveness. A variety of measures also means that they must be integrated at each level to ensure that they lend support to one another both at the local and at the national level. Importantly, the strategies to manage

overweight and obesity problems must consist of preventive measures as well as those designed to control, screen and treat overweight and obesity cases. They must also cover other factors related to the development of overweight and obesity. Three main factors, in particular, could be controlled: consumption behaviors, physical activities, and surrounding factors that influence an individual's consumption behavior and physical activity and may lead eventually to overweight and obesity. These factors are physical surroundings<sup>1</sup>, cultural values, socio-economic conditions, public communications, work system, education system, and health service system.

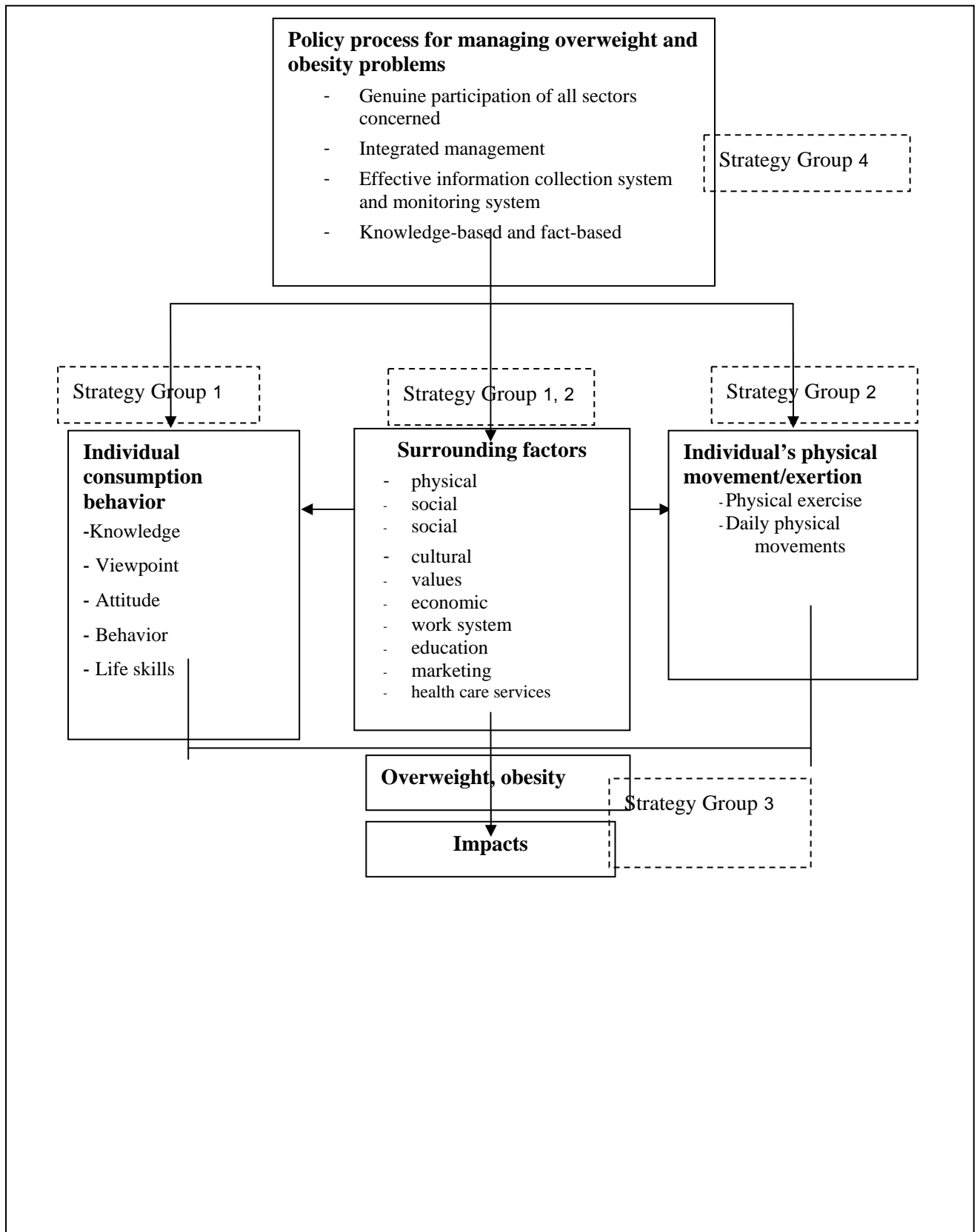
However, there are other factors of individual biological susceptibility that cannot be easily modified or controlled, e.g. genetics, age, gender and ethnicity. So they are not included in the strategies to manage overweight and obesity problems.

In addition, the process used to manage overweight and obesity problems should have the following characteristics. It must be widely participatory in nature, involving all stakeholders in every sector and at every level. It must have a coordination mechanism that can effectively link all partner networks. It must be transparent and carried out in the public interests. It must be in line with the context and conditions of Thai society and based on knowledge and technical soundness.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, food shops or food-selling points, food production cycle, equipment or tools used to promote sale of food, places used for physical exercises, and buildings.

**Figure 1: showing conceptual framework of strategies for management of overweight and obesity**



#### **4. Strategies for Management of Overweight and Obesity**

Support, strengthening and development of the system and mechanisms to deal with overweight and obesity problems are implemented through four groups of strategies: consumption promotion, promotion of physical activities, development of a system to effectively screen, control and rectify impacts, and promotion of mechanisms to effectively manage overweight and obesity problems. The four groups consist of 14 strategies as follows:

##### **Group 1: Strategies to promote appropriate consumption behaviors in the people on a continuing and regular basis:**

1. Strategy to promote breast feeding, production and sale of health-oriented foods, health-oriented snacks<sup>2</sup>, low-sugar beverages, fruit and vegetable as alternative to high-energy food.

Develop policies, measures, mechanism, and process to broadly and effectively support sole breast feeding for newborns for at least 6 months

Encourage food industry and restaurants to produce foods with low amount of fat or sugar or sodium, in order to provide choices of health-oriented foods for the people

Promote and support production cycles, transportation, and distribution of seasonal produce, organic foods and health-oriented local foods to accommodate local consumption with appropriate prices, convenience, safety, and quality

Ensure that health-oriented foods are available in educational institutions, and control foods with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium in educational institutions

Develop criteria for controlling sales and service of high fat, sugar, or sodium food within 500 meter around educational institutions. And Encourage sales of health-oriented foods to replace those with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium

Ensure that health-oriented foods are available in organizations, enterprises, and communities. Also encourage organizations and hotels to provide health-oriented meals and snacks at meetings, trainings, or seminar events

2. Strategy to control the market for infant and children foods, food products with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium

##### **2.1 Control the food product labeling, packaging, and containers**

- Establish regulations and inspection for labeling of food, beverage and health-oriented food products that are easy to understand, so that the consumers can be cautious not to over-consume. This can be done by ways of traffic-light signs according to nutritional values, warnings for trans fats, saturated fats, sugar, or sodium. Also, require declaration of nutritional facts, daily consumption amounts for fat, sugar, or sodium on the labels, packages, and containers
- Prohibit all kinds of commercial advertisements on packaging or containers

**2.2 Control the promotion of food products for infants or young children, as well as foods with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium**

- Enforce legal measures to control promotion of food products for infants or young children, with strong penalties for violations

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<sup>2</sup> Including a set menu or individual dishes prepared with at least four main food groups, with fat quantity less than 25-30% of energy distribution, with ingredients consisting of organic or local vegetable and low-fat meat free from contaminants, and with a not too sweet or salty taste.

- Establish criteria, definitions and categorization of food products with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium based on the amounts or proportion in different kinds of foods
- Categorize food products with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium as "Control Food Products" according to the Food Control Act, BE 2522
- Establish regulations to control promotion of food products with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium in educational institutes
- Advocate for application of criteria according to the Announcement of Department of Public Relations on Criteria and Duration of Advertisement and Business Services on Broadcasting Media that Affect Children
- Advocate for application of "Department of Health Announcement on the Criteria for Accreditation of Food Products with Reduced Amount of Sugar, Fat, Sodium" to encourage food producers to produce health-oriented food, low-sugar beverages through tax and price incentives
- Advocate for declaration of food energy on food menus in hotels, restaurants, and food outlets for the benefit of consumers

### 3. Strategy for public campaign, information, education, and continuous awareness of the effects of obesity

- 3.1 Campaign on public media and local media to educate and raise awareness on the importance of breast feeding, effects of overweight conditions and obesity, as well as the appropriate consumption
- 3.2 Promote, encourage, and create values for breast feeding, consumption of food consisting of fish, vegetables, fruits, local herbs, and organic produce<sup>d</sup> as major ingredients, and local health-oriented foods, and create values for consumption of roasted, steamed, and boiled foods.
- 3.3 Promote the roles of health care services for maternity, health personnel, and role models to educate and advocate breast feeding for at least 6 months, education on nutrition for good nutritional conditions for mothers and children
- 3.4 Promote mechanisms to develop efficient life skills for youths in all educational levels, to provide knowledge and attitudes to keep pace with social values and marketing strategies, in order to have appropriate consumption behavior. Also avoid rewarding with food products with high amounts of fat, sugar, or sodium
- 3.5 Promote the development of a variety of media to provide knowledge about health-oriented food and snacks, low-sugar beverages, and information about food products causing overweight conditions and obesity
- 3.6 Mobilize the development of policies, approaches, and activities within public and private organizations to promote appropriate consumption

- 3.7 Promote and encourage communication and exchange mechanisms among stakeholders within policy processes for public interests

**Group 2: Strategies to promote appropriate physical activities on a continuing and regular basis:**

2. Strategy to increase opportunity for physical exercise by encouraging the community and offices to have places and create opportunity for physical exercise and other physical activities for the people, making sure that such places are adequate, safe, easy to get access to, and appropriate to the local contexts, community and offices concerned.
3. Strategy to improve transport by promoting commutes that encourage physical activities, such as, walking, riding bicycles and using public transport both in Bangkok and upcountry.
  - 3.1 Encourage construction and maintenance of bicycle lanes, bicycle docks and foot paths to provide convenience and safety and access to other transportations
  - 3.2 Improve the mass transit and services to be efficient, adequate, clean, and affordable
4. Strategy to prepare school curriculums and extra-curricular activities designed for physical exertion, physical exercise, and sports recreation for children and youth. Avoid creating bad attitudes against exercise, for example to penalize students with exercises.
5. Strategy for campaigns to inculcate in the people the importance of physical activities and to increase opportunity for adequate and appropriate physical activities in order to provide protection for those whose lifestyles are characterized by little physical movement.

**Group 3: Strategies to develop and strengthen the management for overweight conditions and obesity as well as their health impacts:**

6. Strategy to develop systems designed to screen and provide counseling on education, behaviors, and factors that have an impact on behavior, including nutrition and vulnerability to overweight and obesity in the health system, especially in primary healthcare, as well as to encourage the people concerned to develop guidelines and screening tools by themselves.
7. Strategy to develop an information collection system that serves as database for overweight and obesity and other related disorders, such information system being uniform nationwide, sustainably connected, and integrated into the existing health information system.
8. Strategy to prepare and keep up the capacity of health personnel in the management of overweight and obesity problems.
9. Strategy to develop a system and guidelines for treatment of overweight and obesity and their impacts, in a manner that is effective, cost-effective, safe, comprehensive, and suitable to the patients and conditions of the locality.
  - 9.1 Develop care system for overweight conditions and obesity to be cost effective in terms of public health economics, focusing on expanding and strengthening the network
  - 9.2 Study and develop treatment approaches and evaluate technologies
  - 9.3 Develop and strengthen the mechanism and process of communication between health personnel and the public to be easy to understand, avoiding misuse, and based on knowledge and ethics

**Group 4: Strategies to strengthen the process of managing overweight and obesity problems:**

10. Strategy to work together in an integrated and sustainably continuing manner through participation, with a sense of joint ownership, and cooperation from all people concerned, all sectors and at all levels, including the families and communities, by integrating the guidelines and efforts to be in line with the existing roles, functions, responsibilities, and culture of each sector or agency.
11. Strategy to promote knowledge management, develop information system, and research and development in order to develop a body of knowledge needed to manage overweight and obesity problems at every level and to ensure the work is carried out in a knowledge-based manner, as well as to develop knowledge, work process and personnel on a regular basis.
12. Strategy to promote the development of a monitoring and assessing system covering the situation of the problem, related factors, and effectiveness of the problem-management system, as well as to report to the stakeholders of every sector.