



A Healthy Future

Primary Health Care and the Chronic Disease Epidemic in East Asia and the Pacific

Jakarta, January 2026



CONTENTS

1. EAP state of health

2. PHC: promise and reality

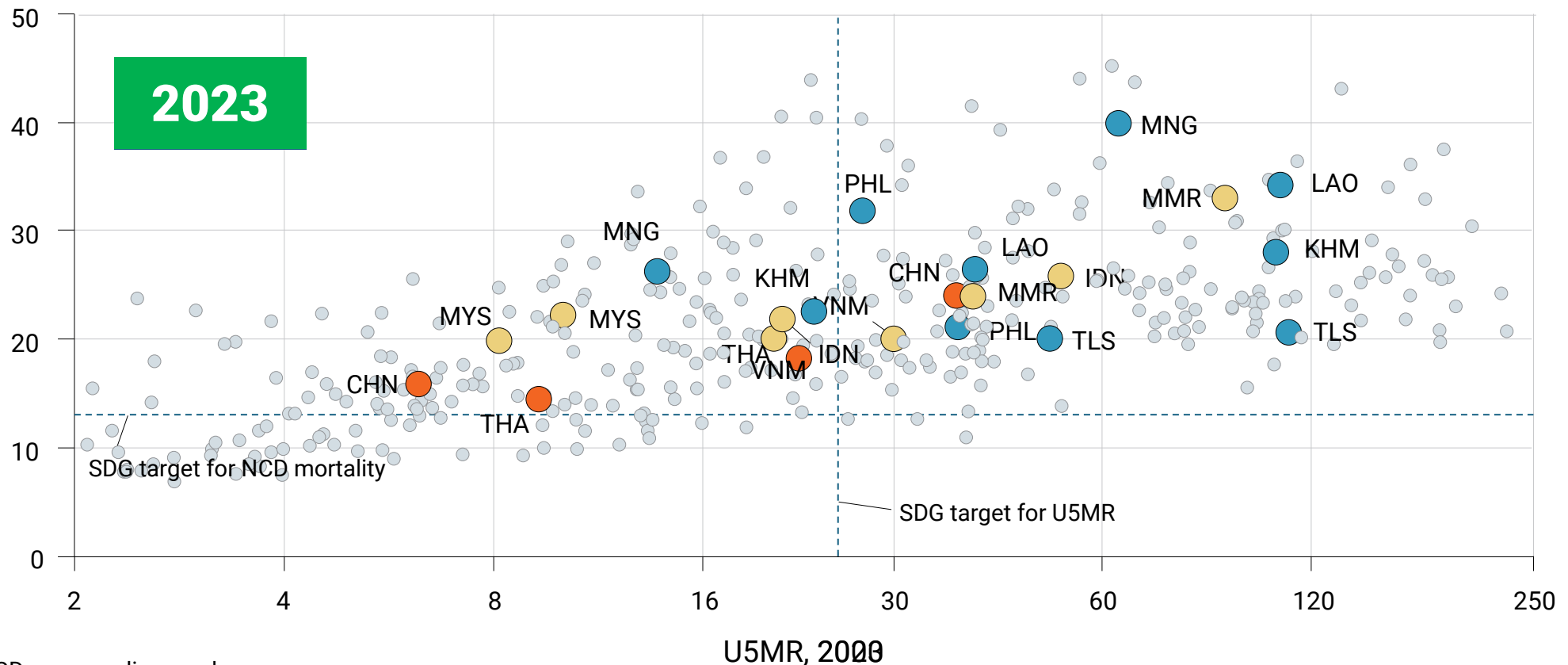
3. What needs to be done?



EAP state of health

Progress in child health outcomes; not the same for adult NCDs, East Asia

Probability of dying from four NCDs, ages 30–70, 2000 (%)

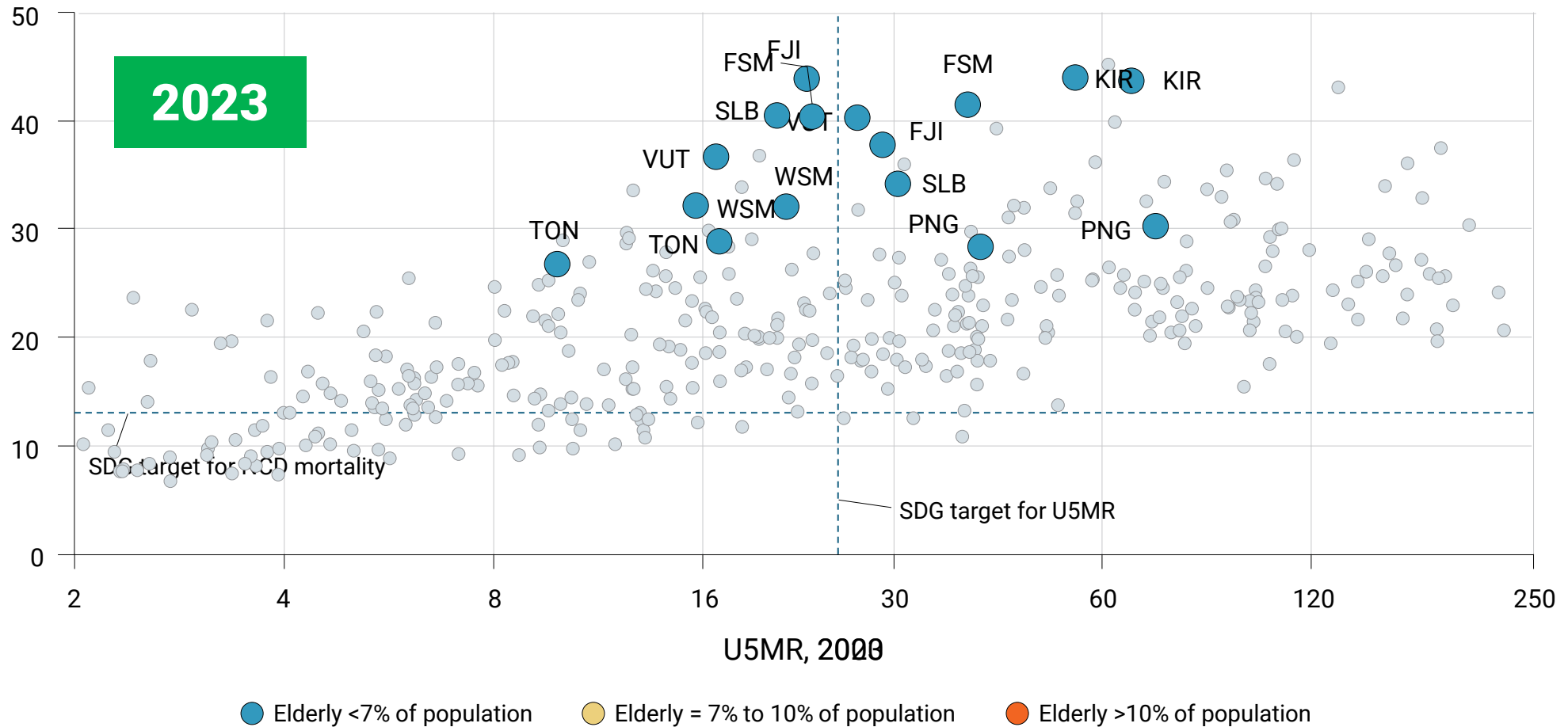


The four NCDs are: cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases

● Elderly <7% of population
 ● Elderly = 7% to 10% of population
 ● Elderly >10% of population

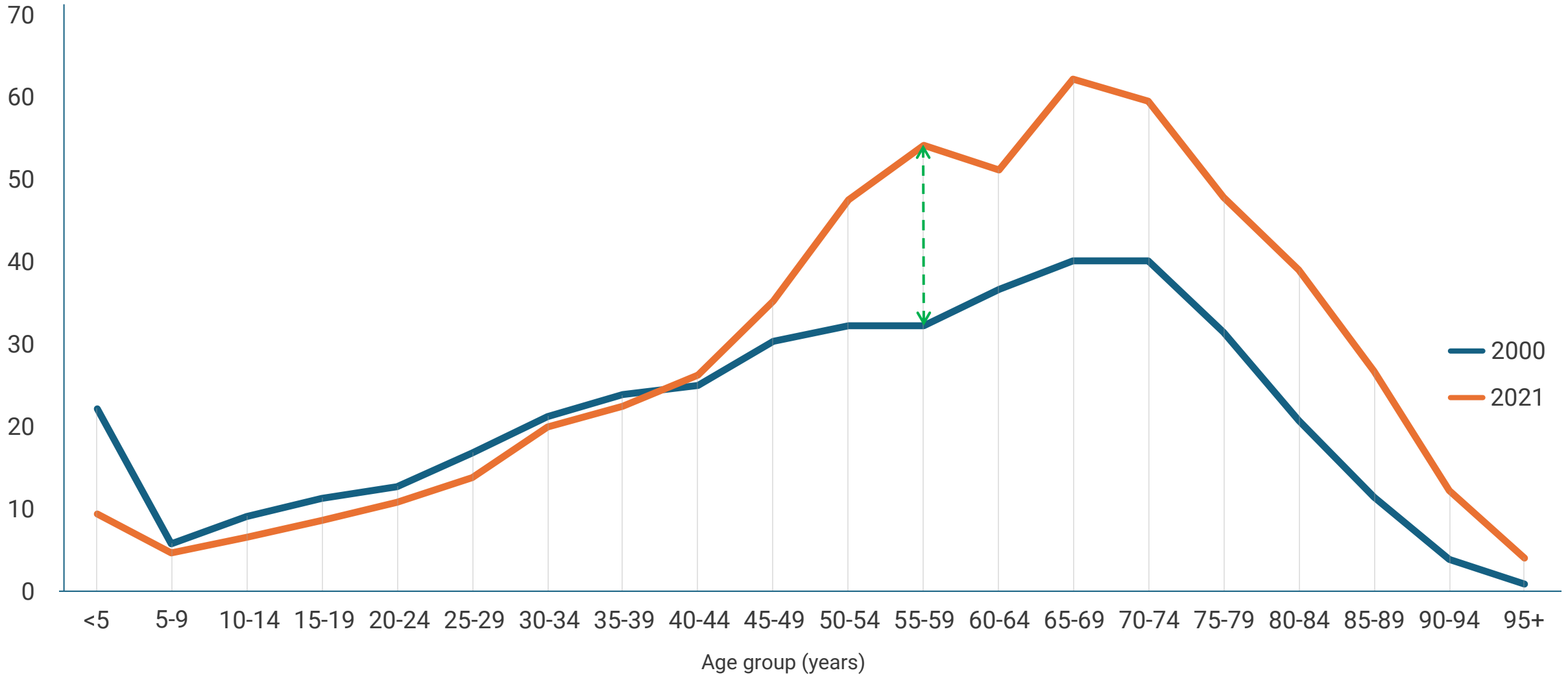
NCDs are the single biggest healthcare threat in PICs

Probability of dying from four NCDs, ages 30–70, 2020 (%)



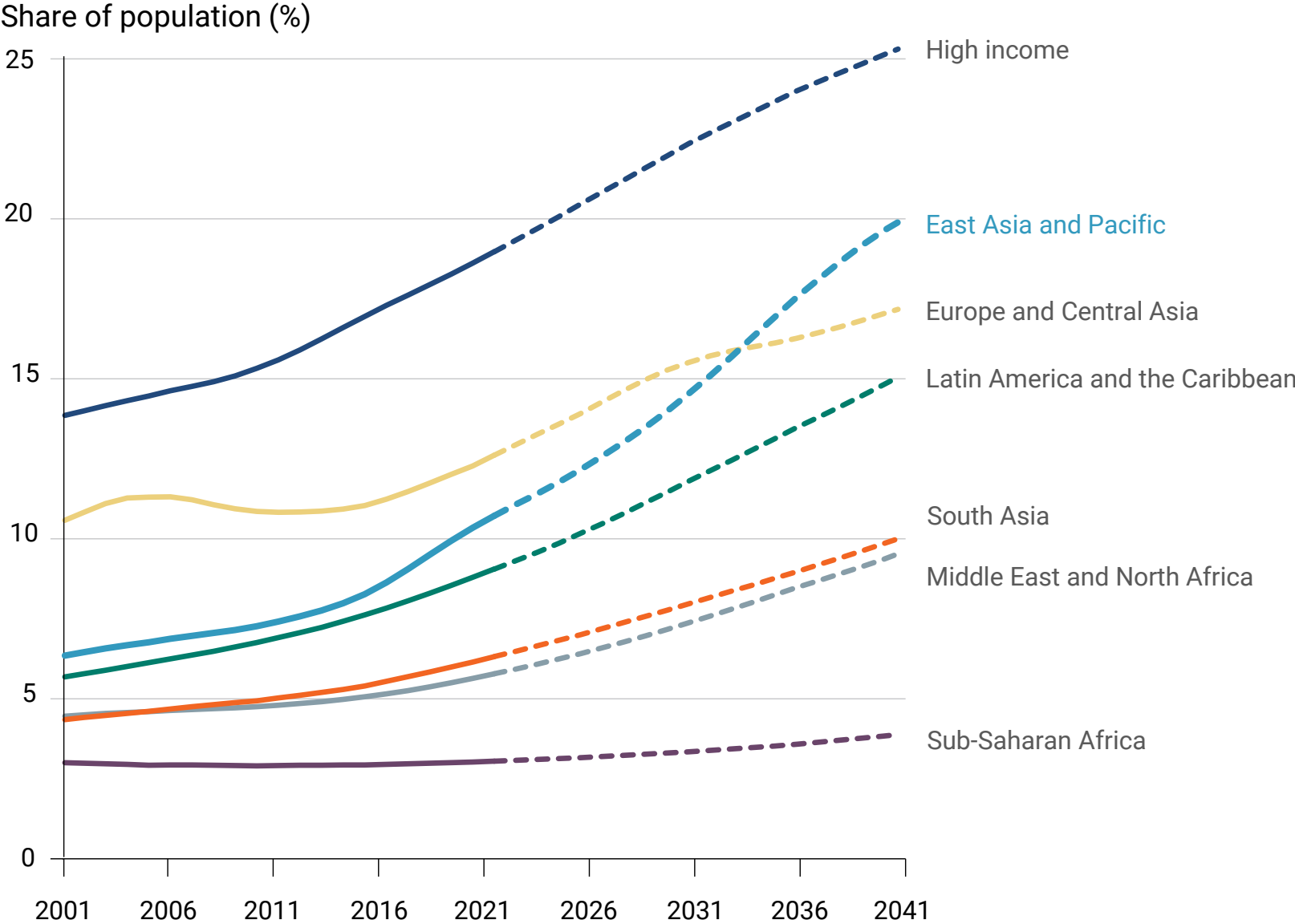
The burden of NCDs is increasing sharply among the working-age population

DALYs per 100 person-years





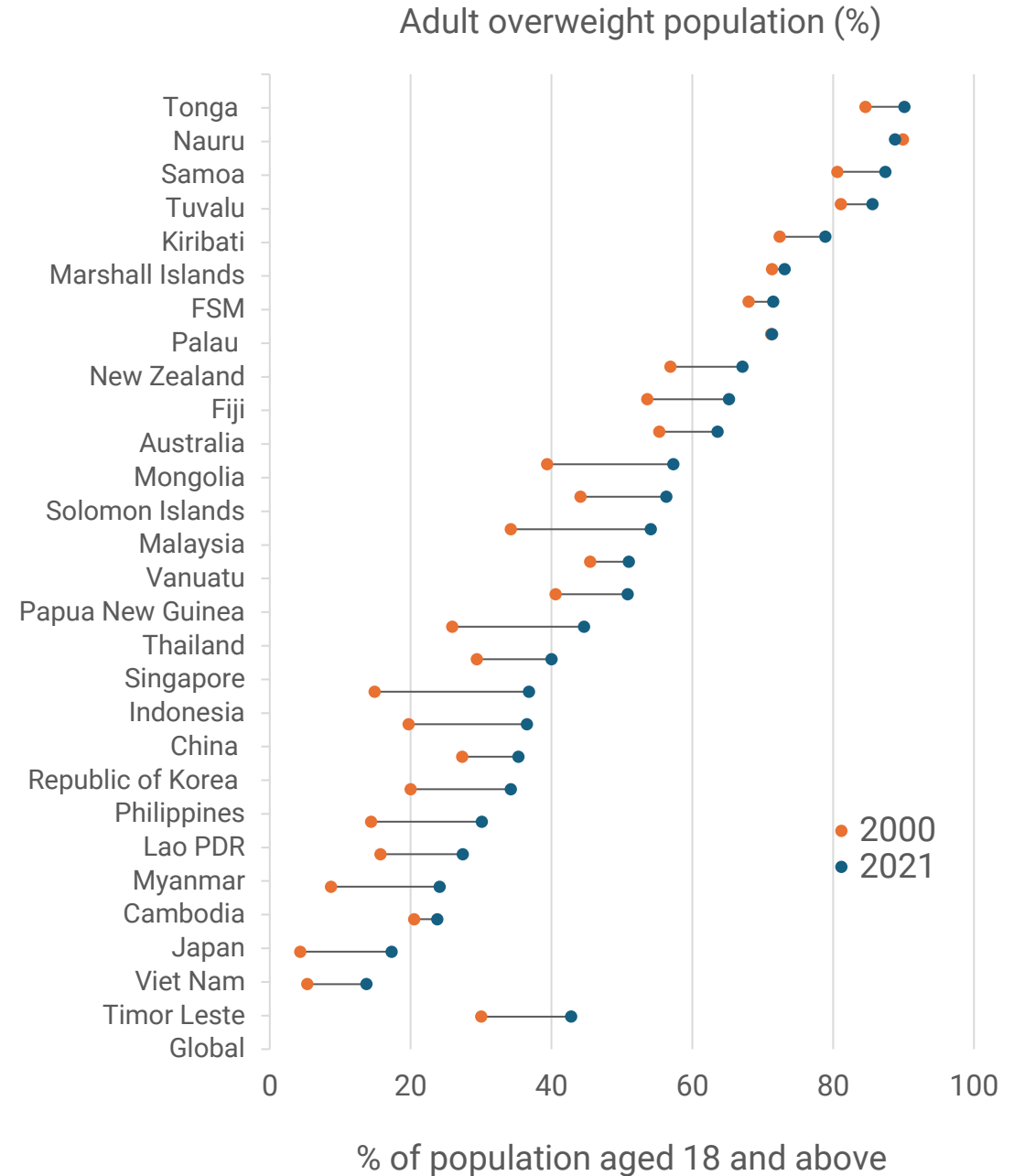
EAP is aging faster than all other regions



Rapid urbanization and lifestyle changes

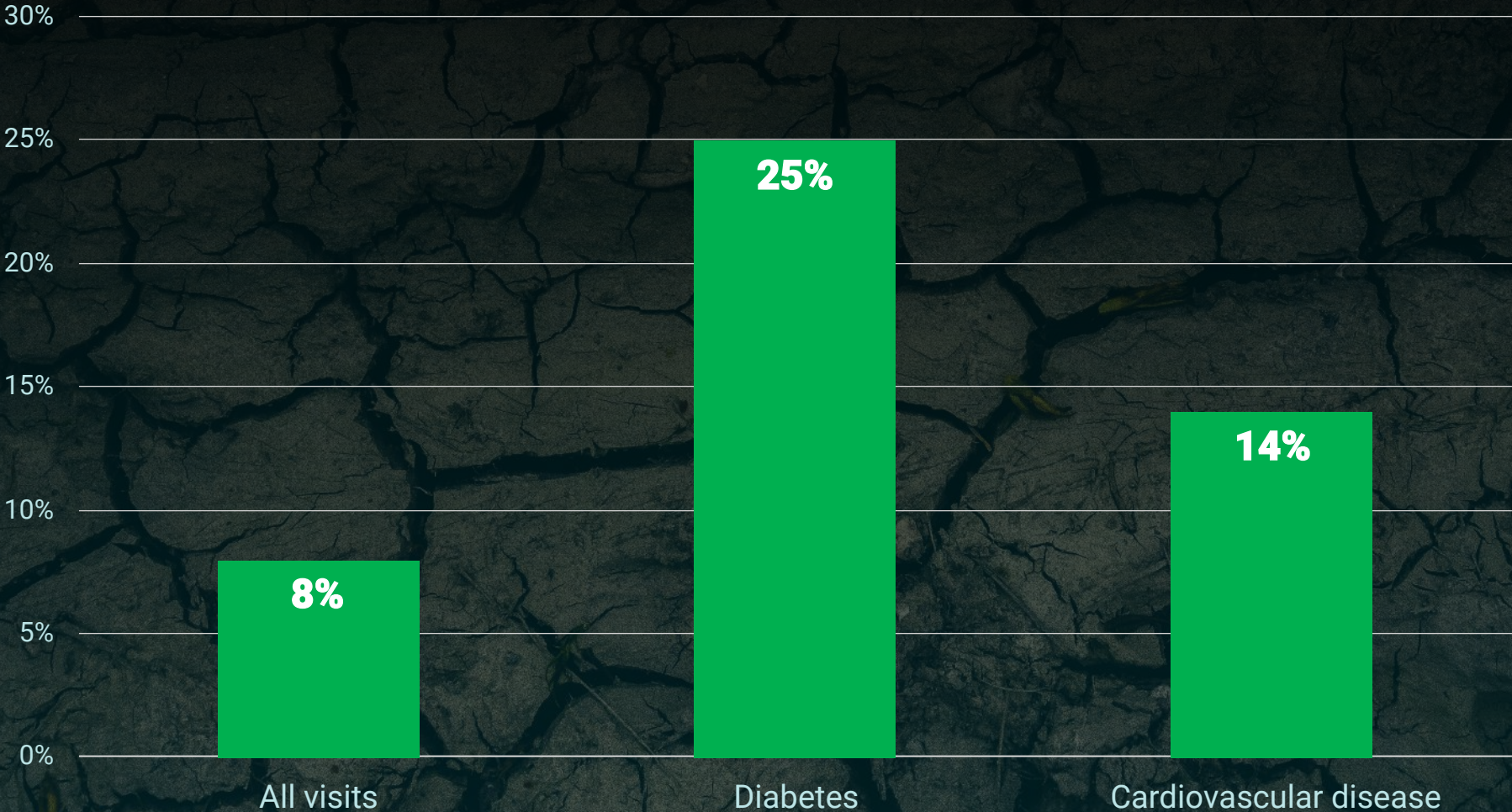


37% Share of urban population **60%**
2000 → 2023



Climate change and extreme weather conditions

Increase in health facility visits during heatwaves in Indonesia





PHC: Promise and reality

Attributes of a strong PHC system from the patient perspective

Accessibility and convenience



"I do not have to travel a long distance or spend a lot of time waiting to be seen"

Affordability



"I do not have to pay or only need to pay a nominal fee"

Comprehensive care



"A team at the facility caters to all of my PHC needs. They reach out to me after I have gone home. They also monitor what's going on in my community."

High quality of care



"The facility is well equipped, the health professionals know what they are doing, and I am happy with the care I receive."

Empowered patients



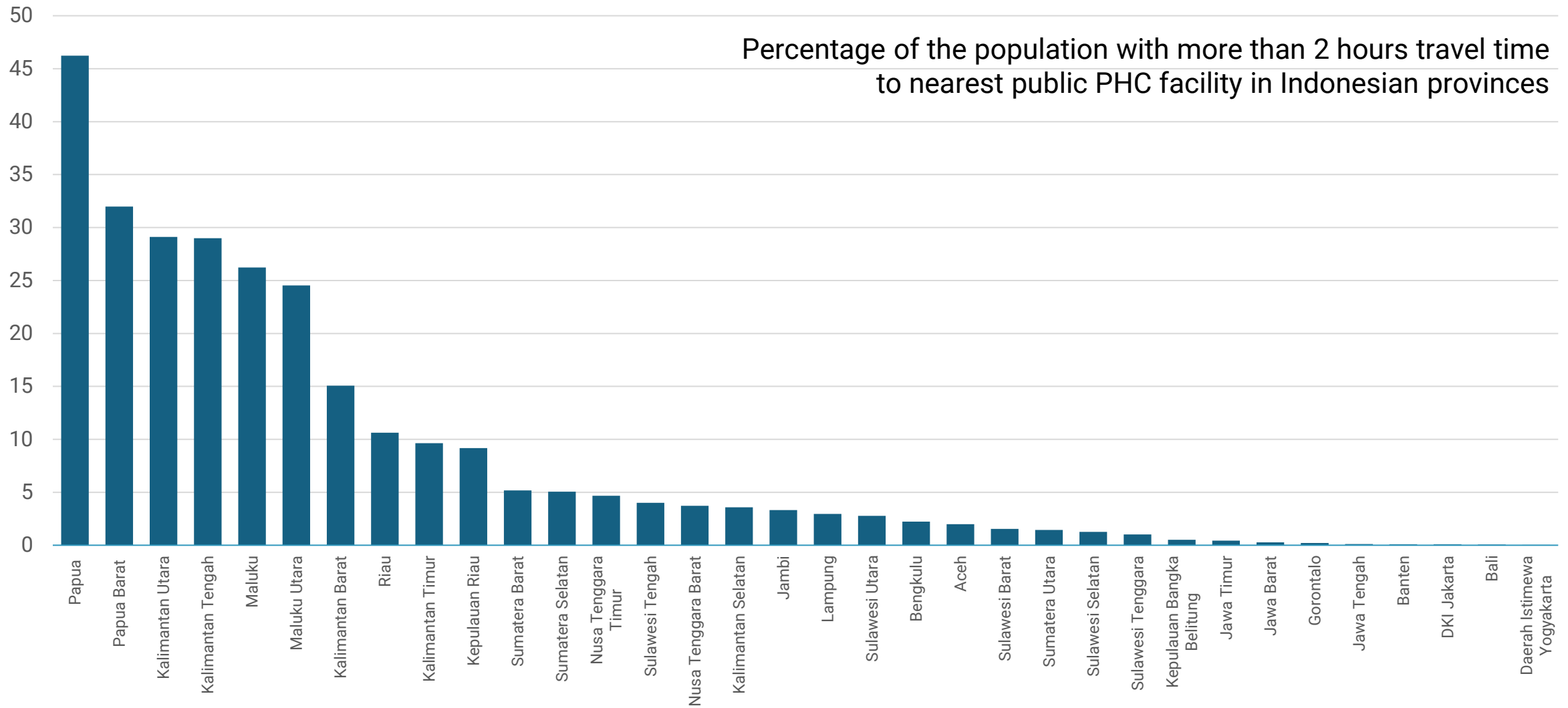
"I am empowered to take charge of my health."

Continuity of care and vertical integration



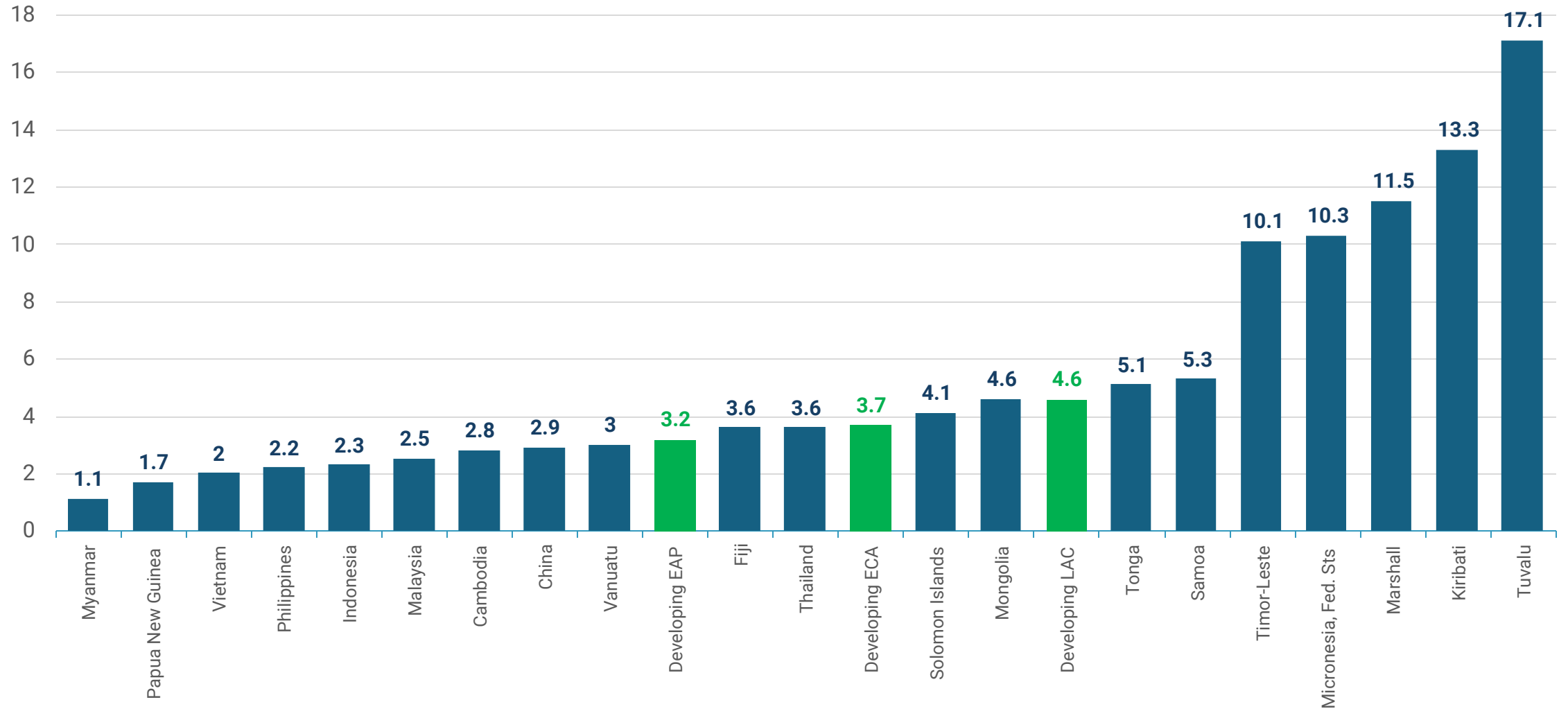
"I have a long-term relationship with my providers. They know me and I know them. For more complicated health issues, they refer me to specialist or hospitals and follow up afterward."

Accessibility is good in urban areas, poor in rural areas



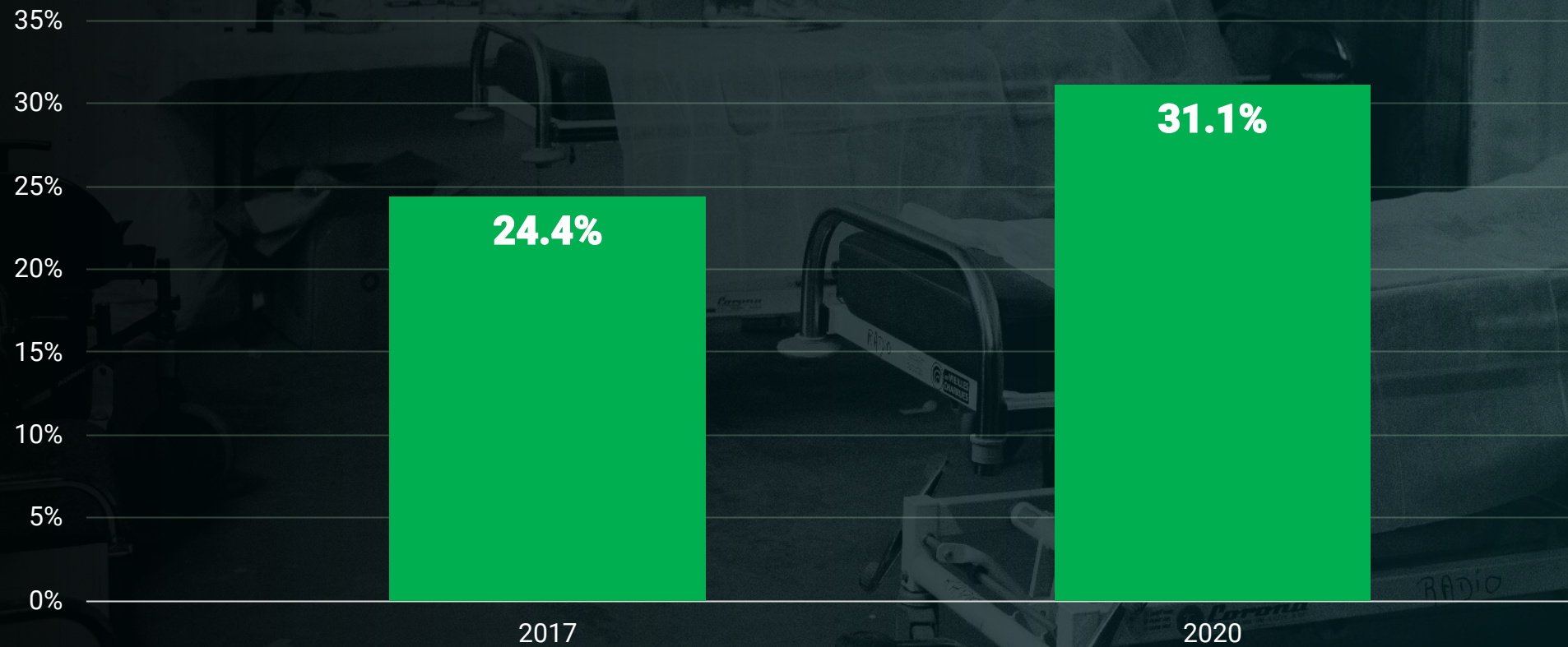
Not enough resources

Public health spending share of GDP (%)



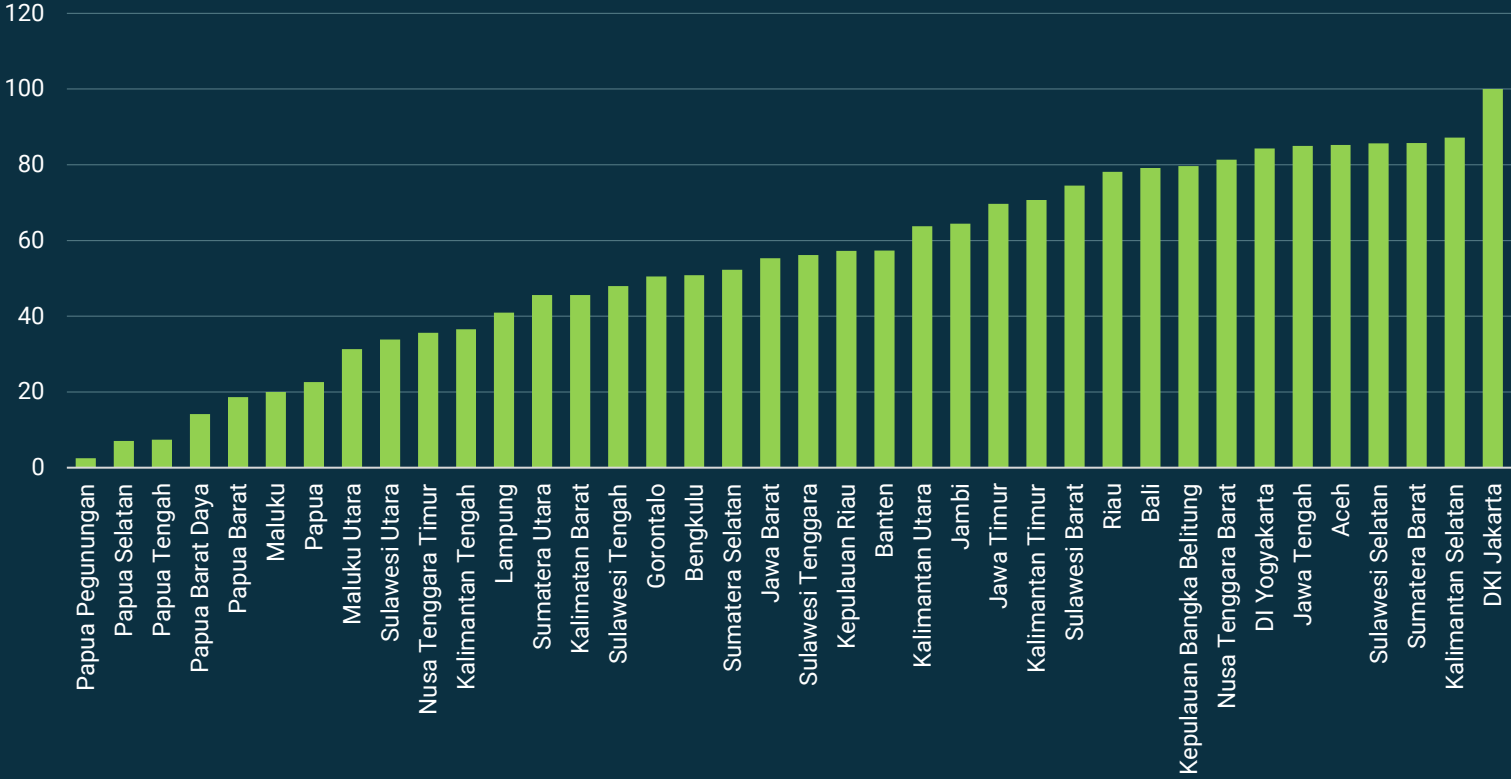
And resource misallocation

Spending on preventable hospitalizations in Vietnam



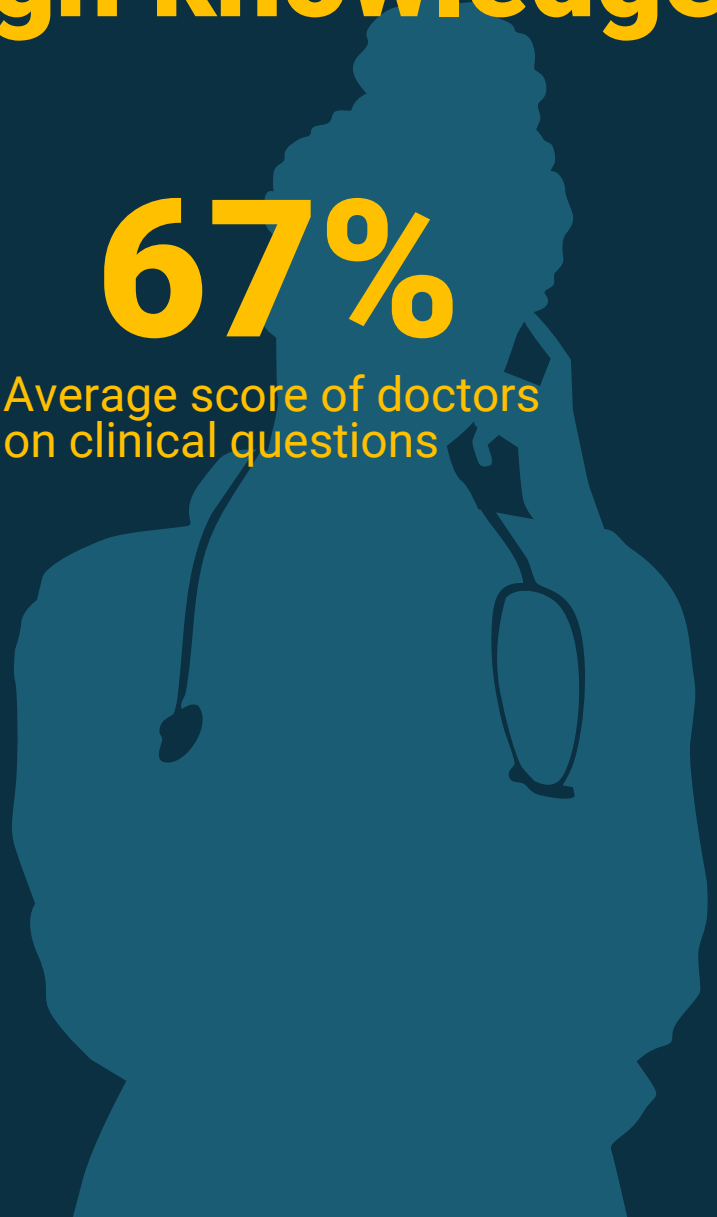
Not enough workers, **not enough knowledge**

Percent of fully staffed public primary care facilities in Indonesia, April 2025



67%

Average score of doctors on clinical questions



Even with knowledge, **not enough effort**



81%

Correct management knowledge



36%

Correct management
in practice

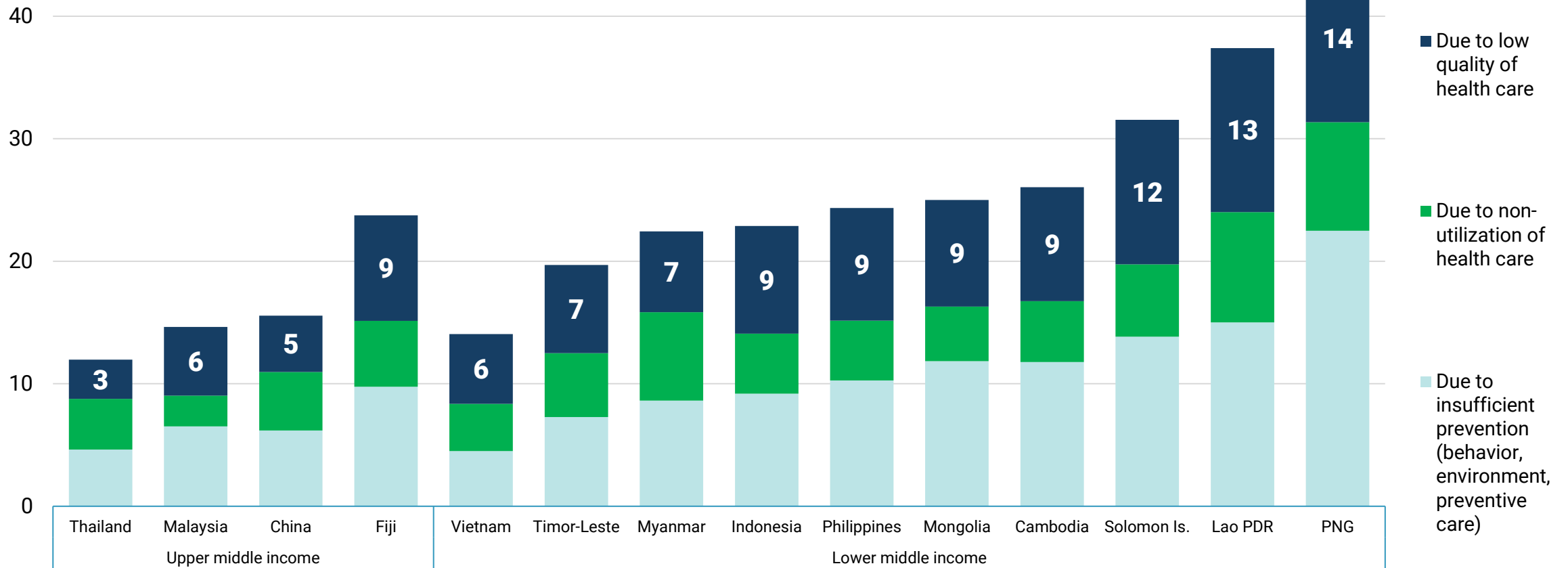


**Poorly
motivated
population
does not
prioritize
prevention**



High avoidable mortality due to poor prevention and poor quality of care

Excess deaths per 10,000 population



What needs to be done?

Technology and reform for transformation

Reform directions to reorient PHC towards the evolving needs





Use technology to widen access for NCD related services

Telemedicine



Connect PHCs with specialized services in hospitals





Bring services to where people can or choose to access them

Mobile medical clinics



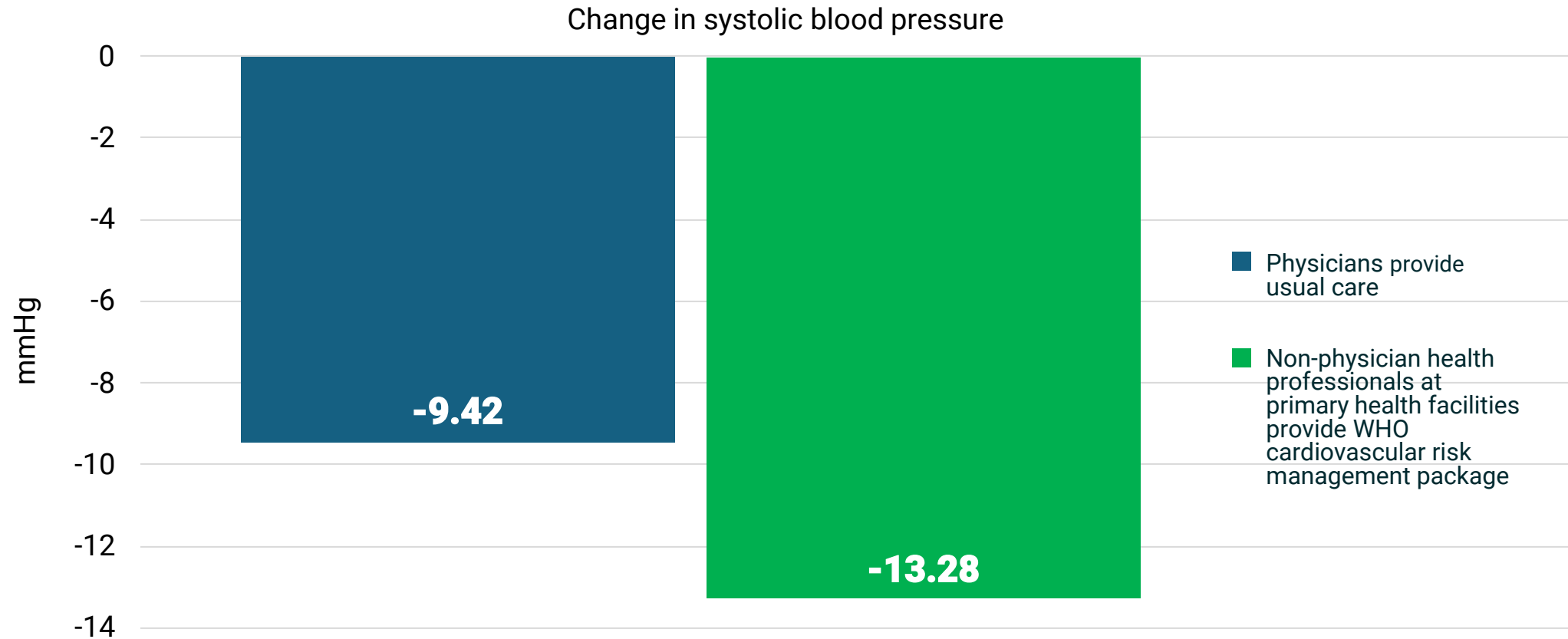
Outpatient departments of hospital





Address workforce shortages through task shifting and task sharing

Non-physician health workers can be as effective as physicians

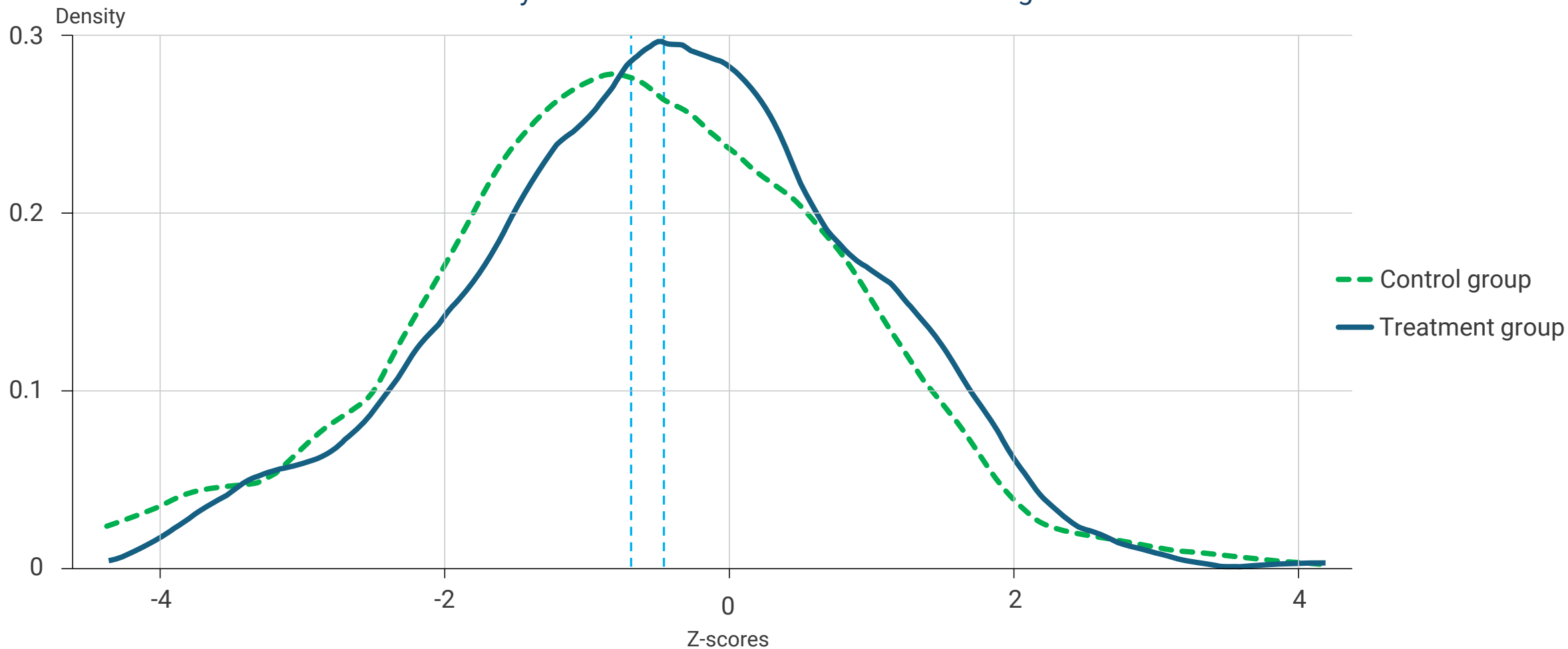




Monitor Quality

Community-based monitoring can improve health outcomes

Study of children's nutritional outcomes in Uganda

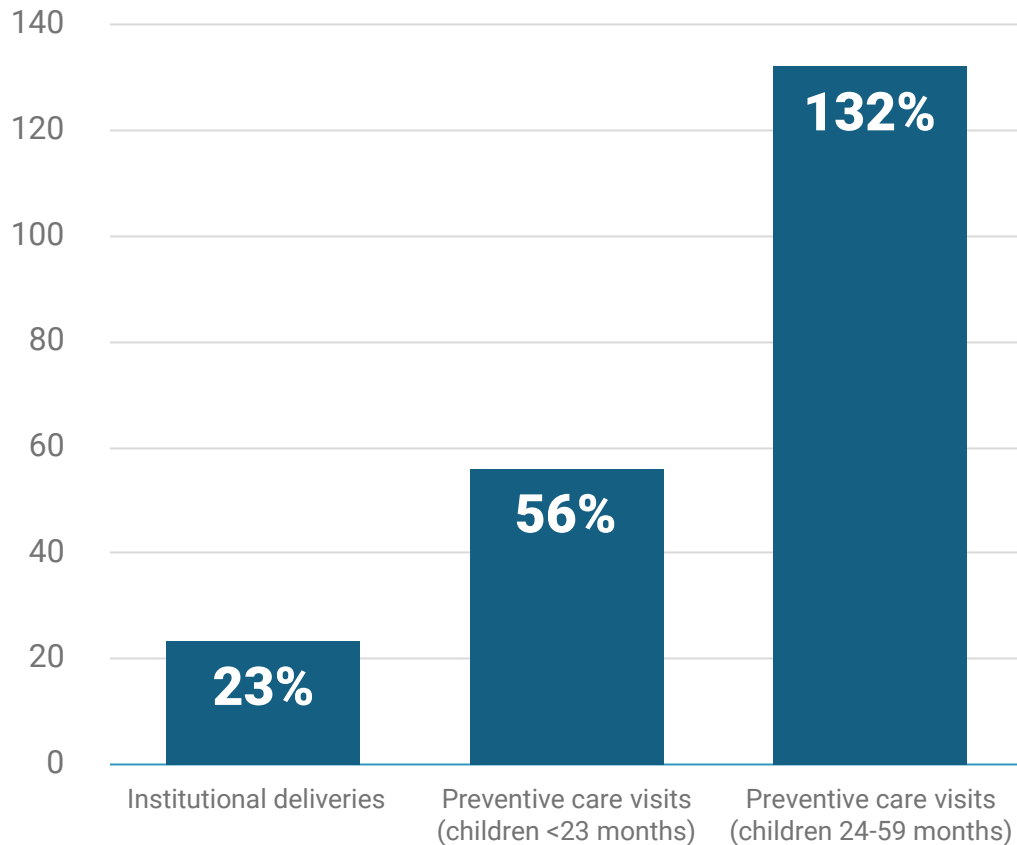


Incentivize performance

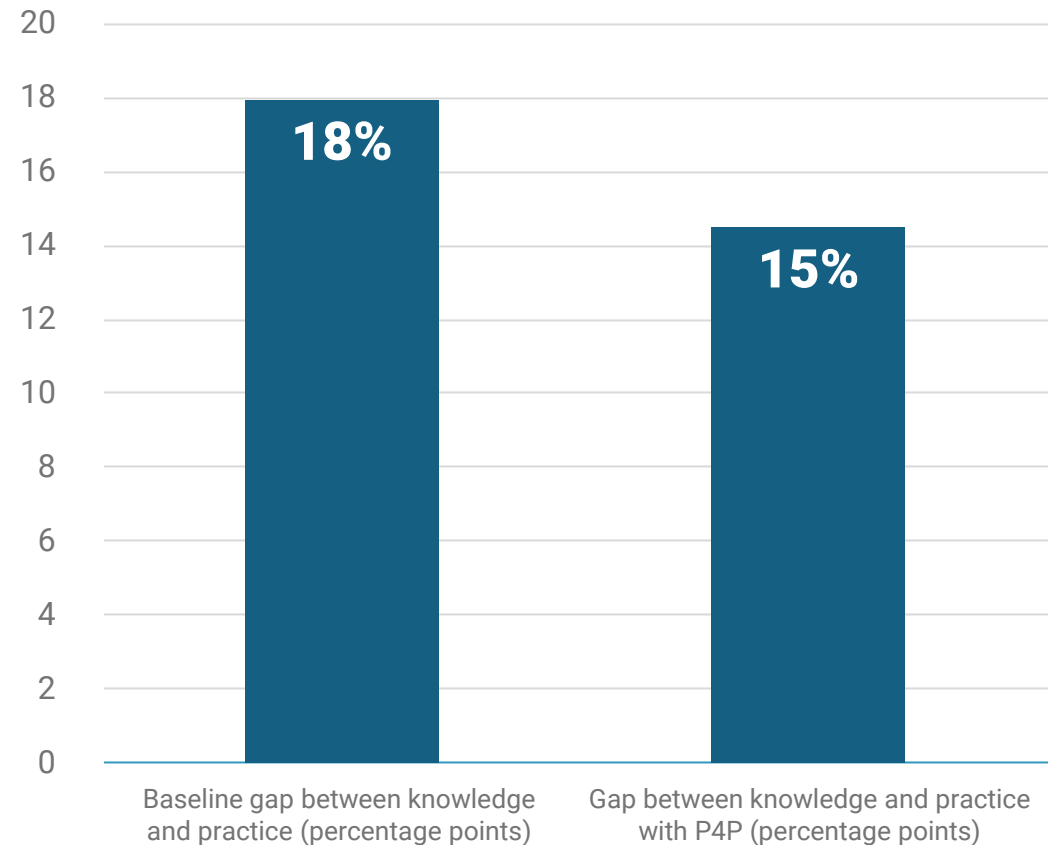


Performance-based financing improves care utilization and quality

Increase in utilization



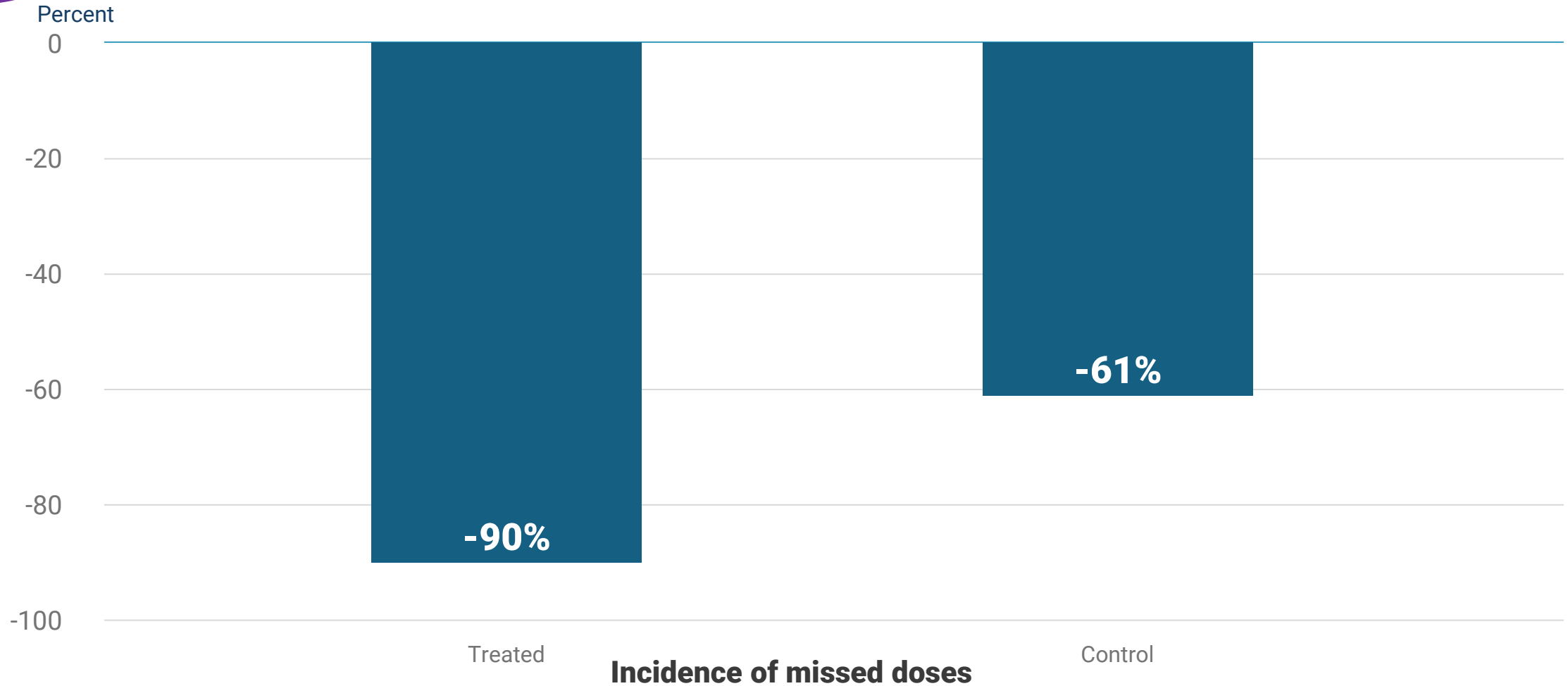
Change in know-do gap





Stimulate demand: Inform...

SMS reminders improve treatment adherence

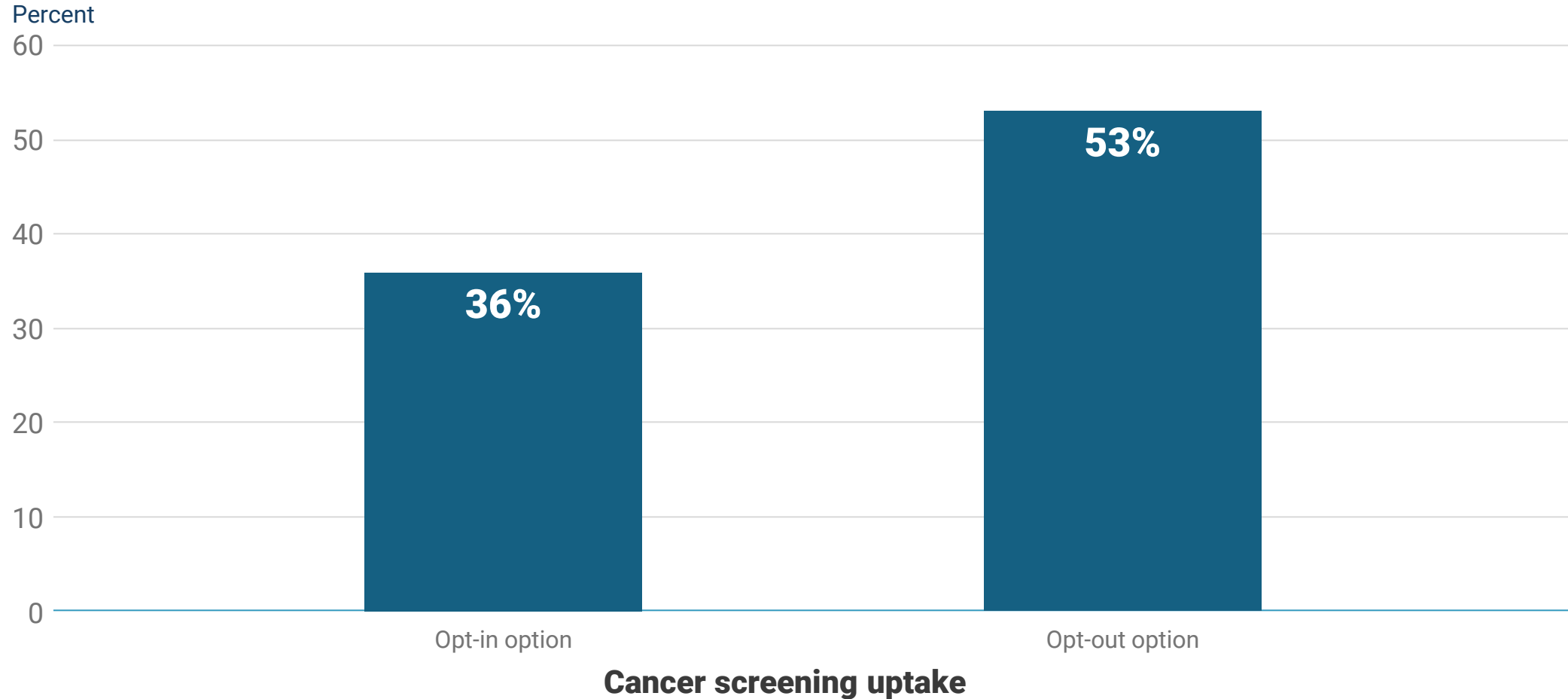


Source: original figure for this publication based on [Liang et al. 2013](#)
Taiwan, China.



... nudge...

Behavioral nudges encourage health check-ups and screenings

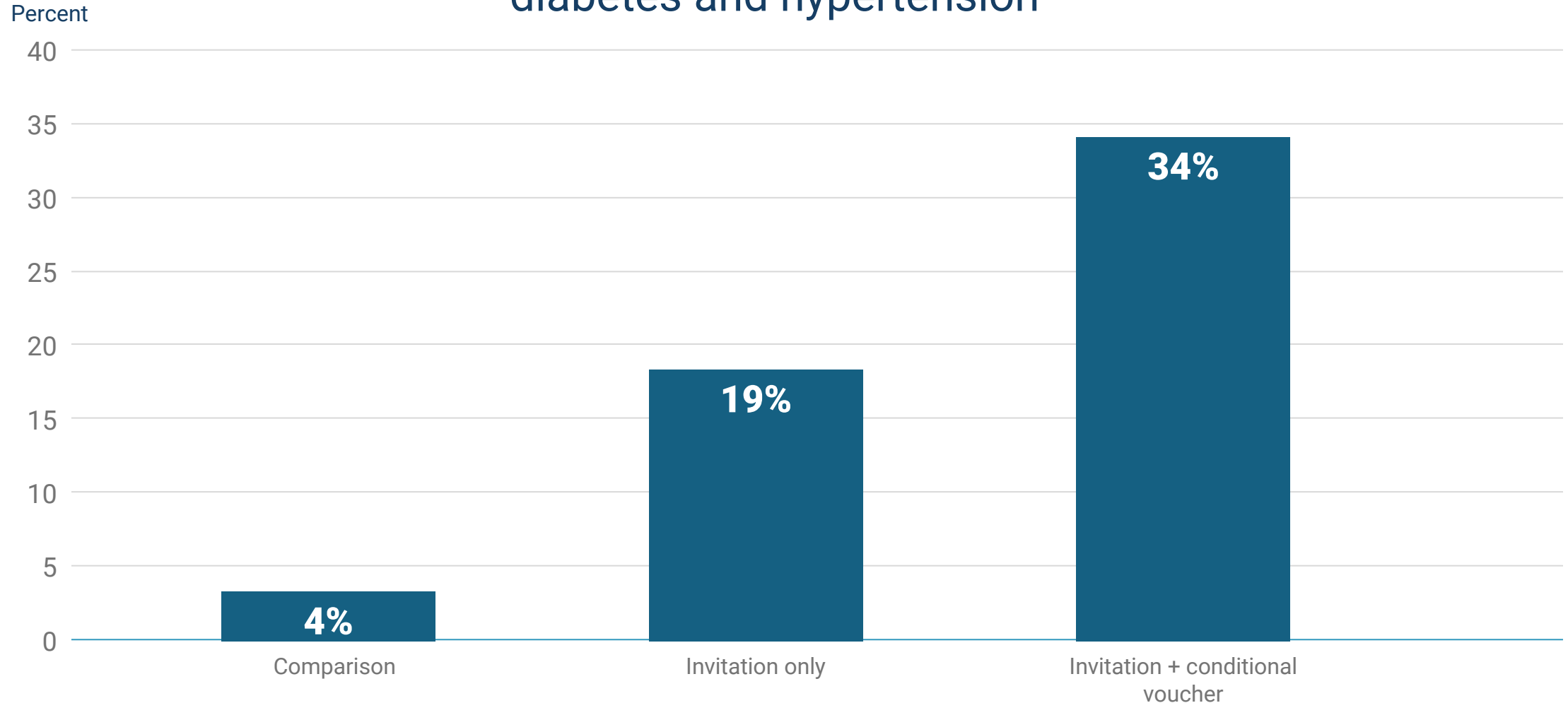


Source: original figure for this publication based on Murayama et al. 2003



...incentivize

Financial incentives increase uptake of screening for diabetes and hypertension



Source: original figure for this publication based on de Walque et al. 2022

Reforms must be tailored to local circumstances

Population
health needs



Technical feasibility
and digital readiness



Economic viability
and fiscal space



Political
economy



A young girl in a nurse's uniform, including a white cap and a stethoscope around her neck, is smiling warmly. She is surrounded by other people in white coats, suggesting a hospital or medical setting. The entire image is overlaid with a dark teal color filter.

Thank You