

Prevention or treatment? How much health would a million dollars buy?

This document is intended to support immunization programme managers and staff in their efforts to secure sustainable funding for immunization.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Decision-makers and partners may be more concerned with curative services than with preventive care. However, prevention is an excellent investment with great returns.

This document illustrates how investments in different health areas have very different returns. Not surprisingly, investment in vaccines is the "best buy" that comes out on top.

You can use this document to demonstrate why prevention is important. Use it to prepare for a meeting or print it and use it as a hand-out.



Prevention or treatment? How much health would a million dollars buy?

US\$ 8 MILLION WOULD BUY 574 170 HEALTHY LIFE YEARS

Investing US\$ 1 million in each of **eight selected health care areas** would **save a total of 574 170 healthy life years** that otherwise would have been lost due to ill-health, disability or early death.**

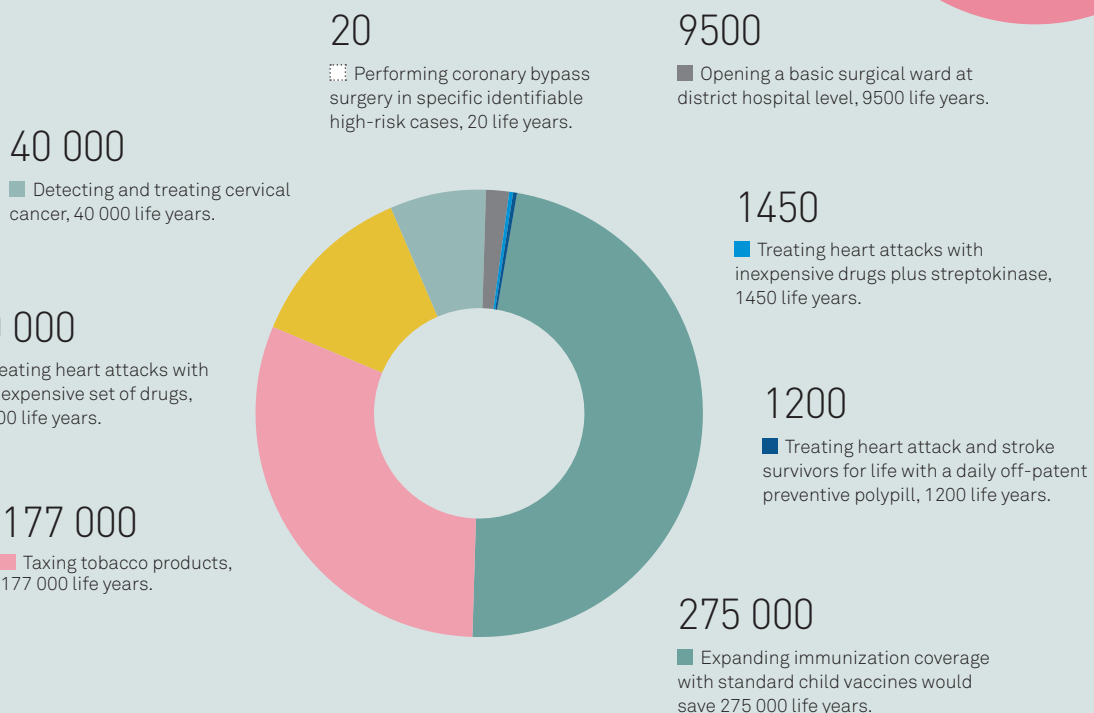
A study in developing countries* shows that return on investment for US\$ 1 million spent on different health care areas would be very different. Some investments would save many more healthy life years than others.

The study estimated that:

- 'Expanding immunization coverage with standard child vaccines' would save **275 000 life years** from ill-health, disability or early death.
- 'Performing coronary bypass surgery in specific identifiable high-risk cases' would save **20 life years** from ill-health, disability or early death.

This study by no means suggests that resources should not be spent on treatment. It only serves to demonstrate the power of investment in immunization.

Life-years saved from ill-health, disability or early death with a 1 million dollar investment



* DT Jamison. Investing in Health. In: DT Jamison, JG Breman, AR Measham, G Alleyne, M Claeson, DB Evans, P Jha, A Mills, P Musgrove (Eds), Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries - 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press and The World Bank; 2006 [p. 25].

** It would avert 574,170 disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).