

THE CO-BENEFITS OF IMPROVED AIR QUALITY

Southeast Asia is one of the world's fastest growing regions and home to up to

580M CITY DWELLERS

with that growth largely fueled by the rapid rate of urban expansion. And while that expansion presents a range of sustainability challenges, there also exist opportunities to develop and implement policies that simultaneously improve air quality and help to offset the impacts of climate change.

Recognizing co-benefits can potentially save resources and time for governments and will enable Southeast Asian countries and cities to not only attract new flows of carbon and development financing, but also reduce the region's vulnerability to climate change impacts. For these reasons, they are well positioned to capitalize on the integration of co-benefits into policies.



WHAT ARE CO-BENEFITS?

Co-benefits are the secondary or added benefits of improved air quality that result from the implementation of air pollution mitigation policies, strategies and actions

Co-benefits are win-win situations.

Reductions in harmful emissions from transport, industry and energy have multiple economic, social, health, environmental, mobility, and policy benefits.

Co-benefits include:

- A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- Lower rates of morbidity and premature mortality
- Improved public health
- A lower cost burden from illnesses
- Less lost income
- More jobs
- Greater productivity
- Better connected and better functioning infrastructure
- More efficient public services
- Less traffic congestion

WHY ARE CO-BENEFITS IMPORTANT?

The greatest air quality co-benefits can be found in developing countries with high levels of air pollution. Even small reductions are likely to have large health benefits.



People are more likely to take action to address air pollution, or are more likely to support governments that take action on air pollution, if the wider co-benefits of those actions are known



Policymakers are more likely to undertake mitigation measures and enact appropriate policies if the co-benefits of such measures and policies are recognized



CO-BENEFITS OF LOW-CARBON, NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORT

Asia's motorized transport emissions are responsible for

23% OF GLOBAL ENERGY-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

and are set to rise to 31 percent by 2030.

Traffic congestion alone is costing Asian economies an estimated 2-5 percent of GDP every year due to lost time and higher transport costs.

Improved public transportation and the provision of safe sidewalks and roads for walking and cycling are ways for cities to reduce transport-related emissions and the associated health and environmental costs.

In addition to the environmental co-benefits resulting from a decrease in harmful pollutants, the health co-benefits include reduced cardiovascular and respiratory disease from air pollution, fewer traffic injuries, and the prevention of some cancers, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other obesity-related risks.