PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2024

PL2

GEOPOLITICAL PUPPETEERS: IDENTIFYING THE ROLES OF HIDDEN ACTORS SHAPING THE COMMERCIAL DETERMINANTS OF GLOBAL HEALTH

| BACKGROUND

Commercial determinants of health (CDoH) refers to “strategies and approaches used by the private sector to promote products and choices that are detrimental to health” (Kickbusch, 2016). It is also “the systems, practices, and pathways through which commercial actors drive health and equity” (Gilmore et al., 2023; Mialon, 2020). The health impacts of CDoH are shaped by the ways in which the global economic and trade systems, global institutions and powerful countries enable adverse commercial activity, undermining “public health policies, including WHO guidance, through lobbying, legal threats, ineffective self-regulation, distorting evidence, concealing their practices, and other actions” (Ghebreyesus, 2023). While there are commercial organizations that have a positive impact on health and society, specific commercial goods and behaviors are directly linked to preventable health issues, environmental degradation, and disparities in health and social aspects. The main culprits behind these issues are typically large, multinational corporations. Development and implementation of policies to counter CDoH to reduce their harmful human health and environmental impacts is therefore an important task for nations and global health actors and institutions (Ghebreyesus, 2023; Friel et al., 2023). Addressing commercial determinants of health is vital in light of climate change, promising dual benefits for the environment and health. According to the EAT- Lancet Commission report, shifts towards consuming less sugar, salt, and saturated fat, and more plant-based foods can combat climate change and enhance health (Willett et al., 2019). Advocating for sustainable, healthy food systems can mitigate climate impacts and contribute to a more sustainable future. The increasing climate damage as presented in the recent synthesis IPCC report (IPCC AR6 SYR from March 2023) accentuates the urgency of this action.

There is an urgent need for action on countering the CDoH at the global level and within countries to ensure health and health equity. These actions should include rebalancing power asymmetries, strengthening multi-level governance that puts people before profits, transformative change in economic and political systems, international and domestic policy and frameworks and strong civil society mobilisation (Friel et al., 2023).

| OBJECTIVES

Sub-theme 2 aims to discuss a way forward by exploring strategies and approaches that mitigate the harmful effects of CDoH on health and instead channel their influence towards promoting fairness, equality, and the overall well-being of individuals and the planet. This requires considering geopolitical considerations and developing policies and interventions that reshape the commercial sector's practices to prioritize health and social equity. The future directions should emphasize the need for a multi-faceted approach that addresses the complex and interconnected factors that contribute to commercial determinants of health. The governments should regulate and limit commercial practices that harm public health, support practices that promote health, and promote health literacy and consumer awareness. Additionally, the need to address commercial determinants of health in conjunction with social determinants of health and promote health equity is crucial (Maani, 2018).

Plenary 2 will identify hidden entities influencing global health, such as multinational corporation and lobbyists. The parallel sessions will subsequently explore these for four specific themes/industries – 1) food, beverage and agricultural industry; 2) energy producing industries; 3) “new” technologies; and 4) the pharmaceutical and medical devices industry.This discussion also highlights the ethical implications of these actors' influence, including health disparities and environmental harm. It will pinpoint gaps in current legislation, suggesting improvements for regulatory frameworks. By fostering public discourse, this dialogue enhances accountability, motivates responsible practices among these hidden actors, and raises public awareness about CDoH. Key actions are as follows:

- **To investigate the covert actors and forces** shaping the impact of commercial determinants on global health
- **To explore the interconnectedness** between geopolitical dynamics and the influences of hidden actors on global health through commercial determinants
- **To discuss the ethical implications of hidden actors’ involvement** in shaping commercial determinants and their impact on vulnerable populations.
- **To assess the role of regulatory frameworks in monitoring and addressing the influence of hidden actors**

on global health through commercial determinants.
- **To propose policy recommendations and interventions to increase transparency and accountability in relation to hidden actors' influence** on global health via commercial determinants.

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Panelist / Panelist

Pipit Aneaknithi

President

Kasikornbank
Thailand

Pipit Aneaknithi, a seasoned banker with a background in pharmacy, has been steering KASIKORNBANK since January 2017. His illustrious career saw him at the forefront of the World Business Division, orchestrating the bank's regional expansion into China, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Indonesia. A key accomplishment during this tenure was laying the foundation for KASIKORNBANK to emerge as a regional powerhouse in AEC+3 countries. This strategic move not only supported Southeast Asia's burgeoning trade and investment activities but also positioned the bank as a significant player on both physical and virtual fronts.

Boasting over two decades of professional experience, Pipit brings a wealth of expertise in capital markets, project financing, credit and risk management, as well as corporate, SME, and retail banking. Joining KASIKORNBANK amid the Asian Financial Crisis in the 1990s, Pipit played a pivotal role in steering the bank through post-crisis organizational transformations. His proactive approach extended to pioneering innovative business models for corporate and retail customers, introducing strategic measures that reshaped the bank's blueprint and ensured business sustainability.

Notably, Pipit is actively leading KASIKORNBANK's sustainability efforts, steering the organization toward a net-zero future. Recognizing the importance of environmental responsibility, he has championed initiatives to integrate sustainable practices across the bank's operations. This includes a commitment to reducing the carbon footprint, implementing eco-friendly policies, and aligning the institution with global efforts to combat climate change. His vision goes beyond traditional banking, focusing on the bank's role in fostering a low-carbon economy.

Currently, Pipit is also spearheading the bank's comprehensive digitalization efforts and leading the charge in redefining banking experiences for the future. He is actively engaged in organizational and talent readiness, ensuring the bank is at the forefront of technological advancements. Committed to positioning the bank for long-term growth in the digital and low-carbon economy, Pipit is driving initiatives to stay ahead of the curve.

Pipit earned his MBA from FH Pforzheim in Germany and the University of Brighton in the United Kingdom. In addition to his role at KASIKORNBANK, he serves as Chairman of the Board of KBank (China) and the KASIKORN Research Center.