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More painkillers needed for cancer patients -experts

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China, Aug 21 (Reuters) - Cancer patients, particularly in developing regions, are in dire need of painkillers and affordable drugs, experts said.

"It's shocking and shameful the number of people who suffer needlessly because of the lack of access to analgesics," John Seffrin, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society, told Reuters on the sidelines of the World Cancer Congress in Shenzhen.

According to the World Health Organisation, some five billion people now live in countries with limited or no access to controlled medicines that relieve pain. Many anti-cancer drugs are also very costly and out of reach of many people.

Doug Ulman, president of Livestrong, said cancer experts were working out plans for a pilot scheme in five countries - Rwanda, India, Haiti, Malawi and Jordan - to procure cancer drugs from pharmaceutical companies at lower prices.

"It's all about proving that you can deliver that great care at a lower cost in a developing country ... for a lot of these companies, it's a new market," Ulman said.

Livestrong is a cancer foundation set up by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong.

There were 12.7 million new cases of cancer and 7.6 million cancer deaths in 2008, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

There will be an estimated 15 million new cases in 2020, with the

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developing world carrying 60 percent of that burden.

The American Cancer Society and Livestrong launched a joint report this week which estimated the total economic impact of premature death and disability from cancer worldwide at \$895 billion, excluding direct treatment costs. (Reporting by Tan Ee Lyn; Editing by [Miral Fahmy](#))

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