



Proposal for a supplementary agenda item

1. In accordance with Rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, the Director-General has the honour to refer to the following proposal for a supplementary agenda item to be added to the provisional agenda of the Board at its 134th session.
2. A proposal was received on 27 November 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, for an additional item for the provisional agenda of the Board to be entitled: “Contributing to social and economic development: sustainable action across sectors to improve health and health equity”.
3. This proposal is submitted to the Board for its consideration (see Annex).

ANNEX

Contributing to social and economic development: Sustainable action across sectors to improve health and health equity (follow-up of the 8th Global Conference on Health Promotion)

Background

The impact of good population health on societies is increasingly recognized. Various milestone WHO documents over decades have recognized the impact of other societal sectors and their policies on health. This connection is also highlighted in the UN Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases. WHO's relatively recent work on social determinants of health and NCD prevention has been groundbreaking in analyzing root causes of ill-health and health inequities, which are barriers of social and economic development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Rio+20 outcome document "*The future we want*" identifies health as a precondition for, an outcome of, and an indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Proposal

Health outcomes will not be achieved by the health sector alone and eradicating poverty and reducing health inequalities will not be successful without addressing population health across sectors. To emphasize this, a WHA resolution in 2014 is essential, on one hand, for the final push to achieve the MDGs, and on the other, to contribute to the debate on future global development policies, starting in 2014. In order to best advance these twin initiatives at this critical time, it is vital that the WHO, in addition to strengthening its own work in this domain, expresses now the importance of addressing health and health inequities across sectors.

To ensure that WHO is well equipped to address the increasingly complex challenges of population health in the 21st century, the translation of the increased understanding of the broad determination of health into guidance for concrete action should not be further delayed. To be able to effectively start working on health determinants and risk factors of ill-health across sectors, Member States need now guidance on:

- which structures, strategies and processes are necessary for the evaluation of the impact of societal policies on health and health equity outcomes,
- how to prioritize and seek multisectoral solutions at the different levels of governance, and
- how the health sector can engage with other sectors as a broker and as an advisor.

Solid and timely guidance on intersectoral action is of key importance for effective prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases.

Against this background, Finland has requested the inclusion of a new agenda item for the 134th session of the Executive Board. It will provide an opportunity for the Board to have a debate, adopt a recommendation for an Assembly resolution calling for concrete steps forward, carried out within existing resources, and expressing the importance of actions across sectors for health and health equity in the final efforts to achieve the MDGs and in the debate on the post-2015 development agenda.

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