



WHO Executive Board 2023
Statement by the State of Israel

--

Item #14- Well-being and health promotion

--

Israel faces the worldwide challenge of combatting the undesirable effects of modern lifestyles. These include high rates of obesity and smoking, increased sedentary behavior, extensive use of digital devices and more. Developing a framework that helps people to take control over their own health determinants is therefore crucial.

In Israel, the "Efsharibari" government program was launched in 2011 to improve quality of life for Israel's diverse population and has played a central role in health promotion. The program divides its focus between different areas: municipalities; food environments; education; and the workplace. It also focuses on achieving its goals through different areas of focus: standards and regulations; enabling environment; community programs; and social marketing.

EfshariBari's chief outcomes include: expanding municipalities participating in EfshariBari, now covering 50% of the population; updating nutritional guidelines resulting in extensive food reformulation; increasing health promoting schools and regulating canteens; tax breaks on fruit and vegetables, and paid time for physical activity at the workplace; creating a physical activity report card for children and adolescents as part of the "Active Health Kids" global alliance; promoting change via social networks and campaigns.

Consistent efforts to enable healthy choices and promote systematic change have impacted Israeli society over time. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, Efsharibari was provided rapid and tailored response to support a healthy lifestyle during lockdowns and restrictions.

Amidst ongoing international dialogue to improve and expand implementation, Israel's practical experience, including both successes and challenges, can help inform the international community.