

Diet, physical activity and health

The Fifty-fifth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on diet, physical activity and health;¹

Recalling resolution WHA53.17 on prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases that reaffirmed that the global strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and the ensuing implementation plan were directed at reducing premature mortality and improving the quality of life;

Recalling *The world health report 2001*,² which indicates that mortality, morbidity and disability attributed to the major noncommunicable diseases, currently account for approximately 60% of all deaths and 43% of the global burden of disease, and are expected to rise to 73% of all deaths and 60% of the global burden of disease by 2020;

Noting that already 79% of the deaths attributed to noncommunicable diseases occur in the developing countries;

Alarmed by these rising trends that are a consequence of the demographic and epidemiological transition, including those in diet and physical activity, and the globalization of economic processes;

Recognizing, however, the vast body of knowledge and experience that exists in this domain, and the need to reduce the level of exposure to the major risk factors of unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and tobacco use;

Mindful also that these major behavioural and environmental risk factors are more amenable to modification through implementation of concerted essential public health action, as has been demonstrated in several Member States;

Recognizing the importance of the proposed framework for action on diet and physical activity within the integrated prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, including the support of healthy lifestyles, facilitation of healthier environments, provision of public health services, and the major involvement of the health, nutrition and other relevant professions in improving the lifestyles and health of individuals and communities;

¹ Document EB109/14.

² *The world health report 2001. Mental health: new understanding, new hope*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2001.

1. URGES Member States to collaborate with WHO in developing a global strategy on diet, physical activity and health for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, based on evidence and best practices, with special emphasis on an integrated approach to improving diets, and increasing physical activity, in order:
 - (1) to promote health and reduce the common risks of chronic noncommunicable diseases that stem from poor diet and physical inactivity by essential public health action and integration of preventive measures in the functions of health services;
 - (2) to encourage, as part of health sector reform, incorporation in national plans of action for nutrition as they are updated, of strategies for diet, physical activity and health involving all sectors, including civil society and the food industry;
 - (3) to monitor scientific data and to support research in a broad spectrum of related areas, including human genetics, nutrition and diet, matters of particular concern to women, and development of human resources for health;
2. FURTHER URGES Member States to celebrate a “Move for Health Day” each year to promote physical activity as essential for health and well-being;
3. REQUESTS the Director-General:
 - (1) to develop a global strategy on diet, physical activity and health within the framework of the renewed WHO strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and, in consultation with Member States, and with the bodies of the United Nations system and professional organizations concerned, to give priority to providing support to Member States for establishment of corresponding national policies and programmes;
 - (2) to support further research on effective implementation of different means leading to healthier lifestyles;
 - (3) to ensure that a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach is a governing idea of the global strategy;
 - (4) to ensure, while developing the strategy, an effective managerial mechanism for collaboration and technical support involving all programmes concerned at different levels of the Organization and WHO collaborating centres, emphasizing the introduction and strengthening of global and regional demonstration projects;
 - (5) to strengthen collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations system, and other partners, including the World Bank, international nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector for implementation of plans at global and interregional levels and to promote capacity-building at national level;
 - (6) to submit a progress report on integrated prevention of noncommunicable diseases to the Executive Board at its 113th session and the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly.

Ninth plenary meeting, 18 May 2002
A55/VR/9

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