

---

## **Strengthening health and well-being through sport events<sup>1</sup>**

The Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly,

Having considered the consolidated report by the Director-General;<sup>2</sup>

Reaffirming the commitment to the principles of the Declaration of Alma-Ata on primary health care (1978), the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986), the Jakarta Declaration on Leading Health Promotion into the 21st Century (1997), the Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a Globalized World (2005) and other relevant international agreements on health promotion and disease prevention;

Recalling the global burden of noncommunicable diseases that accounts for 74% of all global deaths and 1.62 billion disability-adjusted life years, and noting with concern the rising prevalence of noncommunicable diseases, injuries and other health challenges;

Reaffirming the importance of advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals set in 2015 (United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1), including Goal 3, while acknowledging the lack of progress in meeting Sustainable Development Goal target 3.4 to reduce premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being by one third by 2030, as well as of United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/18 on sport as an enabler of sustainable development and of the UNESCO Fit for Life flagship sports initiative;

Recognizing the significance of the action plan (2022–2030) to effectively implement the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol as a public health priority (decision WHA75(11) (2022)), as well as the global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020 (resolution WHA66.10 (2013)), as extended to 2030, and its call for multisectoral actions to address the determinants of noncommunicable diseases, including those related to physical inactivity, unhealthy nutrition and social inequalities;

Recognizing the critical impact of regular physical activity on both physical and mental health, and the concerning shortfall in meeting WHO's recommended levels of physical activity included in the global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030 (resolution WHA71.6 (2018)) and the challenges presented by the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19);

---

<sup>1</sup> Definition of sport events: Sport events are events of limited duration that have a global, regional, national or community reach (in terms of participation, audience and/or media coverage), may require investment and may have an impact on the population and built environment.

Definition of legacy of sport events: "Legacy" means the planned and unplanned outcomes from the hosting of a sport event.

Reference: OECD definition of Global Events and definition of Legacy of Global Events (2018) modified.

<sup>2</sup> Document A77/4.

Building on resolution WHA75.19 (2022) on well-being and health promotion and decision WHA76(22) (2023) on achieving well-being: a global framework for integrating well-being into public health utilizing a health promotion approach, as well as resolutions WHA76.7 (2023) on behavioural sciences for better health and WHA76.2 (2023) on integrated emergency, critical and operative care for universal health coverage and protection from health emergencies;

Recognizing the significant challenges related to the health security of sport events and reaffirming resolution WHA74.7 (2021) on strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies, which underlines that preparing for and responding to health emergencies is primarily the responsibility and crucial role of governments, as well as resolution WHA75.7 (2022) on strengthening health emergency preparedness and response in cities and urban settings, which recognizes the important role that cities and local authorities have in preventing, preparing for and responding to health emergencies;

Reaffirming the resolutions adopted at previous sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and World Health Assembly that emphasize the significance of collaboration between public and private sectors aimed at promoting health integration within sport events, in full accordance with the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (resolution WHA69.10 (2016));

Recognizing the significant role of sport in promoting health and well-being, the importance of sport events as a channel for reaching a large number of people and the influence of sport events in the society at all levels, as well as their potential to impact human behaviour, well-being and physical and mental health;

Recognizing that sport plays an important role in promoting respect for human rights and is a bridge between cultures to promote dialogue, mutual understanding, fairness, non-discrimination, respect and equal opportunities for all, as underscored by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, and acknowledging the wide reach of sport that is capable of acting as a conduit for societal change through empowerment and inclusion;

Recognizing the importance of access to sport and sustainable physical activity for all, including people with disabilities pursuant to resolutions WHA74.8 (2021) on the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities and WHA76.6 (2023) on strengthening rehabilitation in health systems who have higher barriers to access sports and sport events, including infrastructure that does not allow for participation;

Stressing the potential of digital technologies to advance health outcomes, as described in resolution WHA71.7 (2018) on digital health, and in that connection, to promote innovation in the planning, organization and evaluation of sport events and beyond, as well as to enhance physical activity measurements, epidemiological surveillance, behavioural change and innovation,

1. URGES Member States, in accordance with the national context and priorities:

(1) to leverage the power of sport events and sport settings, according to the best available evidence, to address broader public health challenges, such as health emergencies preparedness and response, noncommunicable diseases, violence and injuries, mental health conditions and social inclusion, and to improve societal well-being through collaboration and partnership with all relevant stakeholders, while addressing the risk of undue influences, through transparency and accountability measures, and the potential negative impacts on human health;

- (2) to implement effective, evidence-based health promotion measures in sport events at the international, regional and national levels and in subnational community-based, organized sport settings, including by utilizing innovative digital technologies as well as behavioural science, to improve the impact on population health through reducing risk factors of noncommunicable diseases and enhancing mental and social health, and well-being;
- (3) to facilitate and strengthen capacity in health emergency preparedness, readiness and response and to ensure that activities are planned by applying a risk-based approach and implemented in line with WHO guidance on mass gatherings to avoid adverse health consequences and to maintain and strengthen the full operation of existing health systems without disruption and overload during sport events;
- (4) to cooperate with WHO and other relevant organizations, as necessary, in the preparation of mega sport events, including through emergency medical care planning and response and by applying the Emergency Medical Teams initiative principles, core and technical standards as appropriate;
- (5) to ensure that actions are undertaken at sport events and settings to support global health priorities including physical activity, clean air, clean water and healthier diets, to limit the marketing of unhealthy products as well as to prohibit or restrict the advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco, in accordance with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, to promote policies on alcohol in line with the WHO action plan (2022–2030) to effectively implement the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol as a public health priority, and to minimize the negative consequences of gambling to health and well-being;
- (6) to integrate, as part of the objectives of sport events, the promotion of regular, adapted and sustainable physical activity for people of all ages and abilities, as well as sustainable, safe and green mobility, thus contributing to air quality control and improvement;
- (7) to encourage the event organizers to conduct health impact assessments of sport events, events legacy and associated programmes to guide evidence-based decision-making, planning and evaluation, as appropriate, and to ensure adequate planning and resources to conduct post-event short-, medium- and long-term evaluations to assess the public health impact, including the societal cost–benefit resulting from these actions;
- (8) to share and recognize best practices, lessons learned and innovative approaches to integrating health promotion into sport and sport events and to foster global collaboration, research and knowledge exchange in order to inform public health policies across sectors, including through WHO’s dedicated activities and Healthy Cities Networks, with the aim of improving health and creating urban environments that support well-being, reduce health inequalities and build resilient communities;
- (9) to increase accessibility to sport events and to inclusive sport and physical activity interventions as part of sport event legacy in community settings, including sport clubs, educational institutions, medical and social centres and workplaces, using evidence-based approaches to increase participation in sport and physical activity, while paying special attention to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged populations and reducing health inequities;

(10) to foster opportunities and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, while addressing the risk of undue influence, to implement and evaluate the use of awareness-raising and behavioural change interventions and campaigns aiming at promoting health and well-being through sport events, including through traditional and social media platforms, according to context and target audience, and to build the evidence on cost-effective approaches;

(11) to consider establishing a national annual “Sport and Physical Activity Day” to strengthen advocacy and promotion of the benefits of sport and physical activity for health and well-being;

(12) to enhance collaboration and partnerships with other relevant stakeholders, while addressing the risk of undue influence, to develop and test new ways of resourcing health promotion in and through sport events and their legacy;

2. INVITES other relevant international organizations and relevant non-State actors to cooperate with Member States:

(1) to jointly implement effective, evidence-based health promotion measures and to contribute and support health emergency preparedness and response when organizing sport events, in order to promote and protect population health, improve community well-being, and mitigate any negative impacts on health;

(2) to strengthen partnerships with other relevant stakeholders and to mobilize expertise and resources, in order to support the delivery of health promotion through sport events on the basis of transparency, openness, inclusiveness, accountability, integrity and mutual respect;

(3) to support the evaluation of health promotion and health emergency preparedness and response in sport events and make available such data and information, in order to strengthen the evidence base associated with the planning, implementation and evaluation of sport events and their legacy in the short-, medium- and long-term;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to develop and strengthen the evidence base on the short-, medium- and long-term impact of sport events and their legacy programmes on health;

(2) to develop technical guidance for Member States on how to implement and leverage the opportunities and reach of sport events and their legacy programmes, in order to improve health and well-being and minimize any detrimental effects on health, as well as to provide technical assistance upon the request of Member States in the application of the guidance within country context;

(3) to provide Member States with appropriate technical tools, support and training to conduct health impact assessments of sport events and their legacies;

(4) to provide technical assistance and training to Member States upon request on the application of existing WHO mass gathering guidance and tools, including for the development of emergency medical teams, as appropriate, and to develop additional instruments as required for the planning, implementation and evaluation of sport events;

(5) to set up a platform to coordinate the efforts and activities of Member States to facilitate exchange of experiences and best practices, in order to ensure synergies and increase the positive impact of sport events and their legacy programmes for health and well-being;

(6) to support Member States to effectively use appropriate national and international days on sport or relevant health issues to stress the importance of physical activity and sport to promote health and well-being;

(7) to establish and strengthen partnerships with other international organizations and non-State actors, in full accordance with the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors, to mobilize expertise and resources, and to review and analyse possible models, including funding, to strengthen health promotion through sport events, while safeguarding public health interests from undue influence by any form of real, perceived or potential conflict of interest;

(8) to provide progress reports to the Health Assembly in 2027 and 2030, outlining the achievements and challenges related to the integration of health and well-being into sport events.

Eighth plenary meeting, 1 June 2024  
A77/VR/8

= = =