

Intervention on provisional agenda item 4.9 EB126/12 Prevention and control of non-communicable diseases: implementation of the global strategy

Honourable Members of the Executive Board, Chairperson, Director General,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices, the International Union of Health Promotion and Education, the International Network of Health Promotion Foundations, the International Health Co-operative Organisation, the NGO Alliance for Health Promotion, Life University USA, the Stop-Drink-Network Thailand, the Afro-European Medical Research Network, the International Baby Food Action Network, the Education Development Center, the International Council on Social Welfare, International Federation of Medical Students' Associations, the International Pharmaceutical Federation, the Associated Country Women of the World, the Global Alliance for Women's Health and the World Federation for Mental Health.

We welcome the report by the Secretariat on the overview of progress made in implementing the action plan for the global strategy for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, including a short summary of the outcomes of the 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion held in Nairobi, Kenya, 26-30 October 2009.

In particular, the NGO and Civil Society community would like to draw the attention of the Executive Board Members to the "Nairobi Call to Action", which aligns with the aspirations of Member States, reflects the vision of the Alma Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care and supports the recommendations of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

On behalf of over 600 experts from more than 100 countries represented at the conference, we would like to reiterate our request to Member States to mandate WHO to:

1. Develop a Global Health Promotion Strategy and action plans with regional follow up that respond to the major health needs.
2. Strengthen its internal capacity for health promotion so as to be able to assist Member States in developing sustainably funded structures and in setting up accountable reporting mechanisms.
3. Gather and disseminate compelling evidence on the social, economic, health and other benefits of health promotion to other key governmental sectors.

A lot has been said and much is known about health promotion, however there is an urgent need for more to be done to close the implementation gap.

Therefore, in order to reduce the growing health equity gap, we believe that it is imperative to empower the people of low-income communities to conduct health promotion using community assets, focusing on the people themselves and their knowledge, abilities, and skills. For countries to achieve sustainable health improvements, local people themselves must be the active agents of empowerment, taking charge of their own health with the support and encouragement of national, regional and global social policies, infrastructures, systems and organisations. Medical and public health education should also adopt a more holistic health promotion approach that goes beyond disease control.

In conclusion, we as NGOs and civil society are called to be responsible partners to provide a vital link in spanning the health equity gap. NGOs and civil society by working directly with local people at the grass roots level and partnering with their governments will fulfil our responsibility not only for promoting the health and well-being of all citizens, but also for building the community capacity in finding sustainable solutions to tackle the social determinants of poor health.

Thank you.

Organisations who expressed specifically their support

- International Baby-Food Action Network - IBFAN, Geneva
- Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia
- Afro-European Medical Research Network, AEMRN, Bern, Switzerland

- International Pharmaceutical Federation, FIP, The Netherlands
Through its 122 Member Organisations and 4000 Individual Members, FIP represents and serves almost two million pharmacists practitioners and scientists around the world.

- International Union of Health Promotion and Education, IUHPE, France, representing 1780 individual professional or student members and 160 national, regional and local institutional members and their respective professional network.

- Life University, USA, representing 13,000 health care practitioners in more than 40 countries

- International Health Co-operative Organisation, Barcelona, Spain,
Health co-operatives currently serve at least 100 million households around the world.

- NGO Alliance for Health Promotion, Geneva, regrouping 120 NGOs worldwide involved in health promotion

- StopDrinkNetwork Thailand

- International Network of Health Promotion Foundations, INHPF, Australia representing
 - Austrian Health Promotion Foundation
 - Health Promotion Switzerland
 - Malaysian Health Promotion Board
 - Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), Thailand
 - Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), Australia
 - Western Australia Health Promotion Foundation (Healthway), Australia
 - BC Coalition for Health Promotion, British Columbia, Canada
 - Health 21 Hungarian Foundation
 - Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, India
 - Management Centre for Health Promotion, Korea
 - Department of Health - Government Implementing Agency, Health Promotion Division, Mongolia
 - Oman Health Promotion Initiative
 - Polish Health Promotion Foundation
 - Tonga Health Promotion Foundation (TongaHealth)
 - Vietnam Steering Committee on Smoking and Health, Ministry of Health (VINACOSH)

- Education Development Center, EDC, Newton, USA

- International Council on Social Welfare, ICSW, The Hague, The Netherlands - a global organisation with member organisations in over 70 countries that represent hundreds of thousands of NGOs and individuals working directly to alleviate poverty

- International Federation of Medical Students' Associations and the 1.2 millions medical students
- Associated Country Women of the World, United Kingdom
- Global Alliance for Women's Health, USA
- World Federation for Mental Health, USA