

The Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion

Overview	The Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a globalized world highlights the new challenges, the commitments to be made and the actions to be undertaken by all stakeholders to address the determinants of health. This Charter aims to engage and provide guidance to all health promotion stakeholders. The goal is to position health improvement and the reduction of health inequalities at the centre of global and national development agendas.
Health is a human right	One of the fundamental rights of every human being is the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. Health is a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".
Values	Health promotion is based on the following values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social justice and gender and health equity within and between countries • Respect for diversity and human dignity • Peace and security
Public health and health promotion	Public health action underpins the achievement of Health For All. Health promotion, a core function of public health, is the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health. It embraces community actions by people and supportive actions by decision-makers to improve the underlying conditions that affect physical, mental, social and cultural aspects of health.
Ottawa Charter and global health promotion conferences	The Bangkok Charter endorses the principles and purposes of health promotion as laid out in the Ottawa Charter and the recommendations of the subsequent global conferences held in Adelaide, Sundsvall, Jakarta and Mexico City. The Bangkok Charter builds on the Ottawa Charter's five Action Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build healthy public policy • Create supportive environments • Strengthen community action • Develop personal skills • Reorient health services
Context, challenges and opportunities	
National challenges	While special responsibility for health promotion lies in the health sector, it alone cannot achieve health for all. Health supportive policies from both the public and private sector are required. Therefore the adoption of the whole of government approach and partnership among all stakeholders for health are essential to address the determinants of health. It is crucial to build the capacity for health promotion in all sectors at the local and national levels.

Global changes Environmental degradation, urbanization and political, epidemiological and demographic transitions, advances in science and information technology, the role of the state and particularly globalization, have markedly changed the context for health since the Ottawa Charter.

Health promotion in a globalizing world

Globalization opens up new opportunities for cooperation and health improvement. It can also:

- Weaken governmental control over a growing number of health determinants
- Subject individuals and communities to rapid and often adverse social change
- Reduce social and economic development prospects particularly for marginalized and indigenous peoples

Policy cohesion is required between all levels of governments, United Nations bodies and other organizations for more equitable globalization. Globalization also demonstrates the central importance of poverty reduction for health improvement and the economic and social development of nations, as emphasized by the importance given to health in the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreements.

Active participation required

Progress towards a healthier world requires strong political action and active participation by many stakeholders including:

- The health sector
 - Governments
 - International organizations
 - The private sector
 - Nongovernmental organizations and civil society
 - The wider community
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New commitments

Four commitments

To meet the wide range of existing, emerging and potential future opportunities and challenges, commitment is required by all stakeholders to ensure that:

- Globalization becomes a positive force for improving the health of populations
 - The promotion of health is a core responsibility of all governments
 - The promotion of health is a key criterion for good corporate practices
 - Environments empower individuals and communities to improve their health
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Make the promotion of health central to the global development agenda

The task of ensuring that the promotion of health becomes central to the global development agendas requires actions by all concerned stakeholders to:

- Promote dialogue and cooperation among civil society, the private sector, government and intergovernmental bodies to coordinate public health actions
- Balance the benefits of globalization with the benefits of local action so that the assets of culture are preserved and cultural diversity is enhanced
- Make public health considerations an integral part of foreign and domestic policy and international relations including during times of conflict
- Support national government actions and intergovernmental alliances that increase positive health benefits and protect people from the potentially harmful effects of products, services and marketing strategies
- Address the brain drain of health expertise from developing countries

Make the promotion of health a core responsibility of governments

To ensure that health promotion is an integral part of socioeconomic and political development, governments should use the whole of government approach to:

- Tackle the underlying causes of poverty, poor health and inequalities
 - Ensure that the health implications of all government policies and legislation are taken into consideration
 - Ensure that investments outside the health sector contribute to the achievement of positive health outcomes
 - Develop appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks to promote public–private and intersectoral collaboration
 - Invest in health promotion capacity, research and its application to practice
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Make the promotion of health a criterion for good corporate practices

The private sector is an important stakeholder in the achievement of population health. This sector needs to:

- Invest in health and safety and promote well-being of employees, their families and communities
 - Ensure that production processes, products and marketing strategies do not undermine health
 - Foster public–private collaboration and multinational alliances to enhance health through greater corporate social responsibilities
 - Undertake collaborate efforts with public sector health care providers to enhance access to basic, good quality and affordable health services
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Promote environments that empower individuals and communities

This commitment will include actions that:

- Provide policy environments which enable communities to engage in self-determined health promotion action
 - Establish networks and partnerships, particularly with nongovernmental organizations, that strengthen community actions for tackling local, national and global health issues
 - Support evidence-based traditional and complementary approaches to health
 - Make health-promoting information available to every individual and engage in efforts to ensure high levels of health literacy
 - Assist communities to engage in activities that promote mental health especially when they are undergoing rapid transition
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Making it happen

Implementation Support for the Bangkok Charter is an important step in strengthening action-oriented health promotion. This will require:

- Adopting integrated strategies in multiple settings across all age groups.
 - Acknowledging the importance of partnerships for health
 - Recognizing the urgent need to strengthen health promotion capacity
 - Affirming the adoption of the evidence-based approaches to policy development and practice
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Implementation guide

To ensure continuing progress on health promotion, the following implementation guide is proposed:

#	Actions	Requirements
1	Invest	Achieve adequate and sustainable financing for investment in actions that tackle the determinants of health and in health systems that are appropriate, affordable and accessible
2	Advocate	Advocate for evidence-based policy development and practices that support and protect health by engaging the political system at all levels, and by working with nongovernmental and community organizations
3	Build capacity	Build capacity to promote health, particularly in the areas of policy development and practice, health literacy, community actions, leadership, workforce and research
4	Enable and mobilize	Enable and mobilize individuals and communities to overcome structural barriers to health, to enhance social support, and to reinforce social norms conducive to health, in particular through information and communication technology
5	Collaborate	Collaborate and build alliances with public, private and nongovernmental organizations to create sustainable actions across sectors to address the determinants of health

Health promotion is result oriented

The health of the population is a key criterion of the success in managing the natural and social environments. To measure progress on implementation of the Bangkok Charter, the World Health Organization, in collaboration with other partners, will encourage, and work with, Member States to develop appropriate indicators, processes and mechanisms.

Benchmarks for measuring progress

The following benchmarks, against which progress can be measured, will enable countries and communities to report on progress in 2009 and at regular intervals:

- Capacity for health promotion
- Investment in health promotion
- Health concerns in international trade agreements
- Policies focusing on health determinants in all sectors
- Stakeholder participation in health promotion policy formulation, planning and implementation
- Trends in health of the population and in health inequalities

A global pledge

This Bangkok Charter urges all stakeholders to work together in a worldwide health promotion partnership, with global and local engagement and action, to undertake the commitments and strategies outlined above for the health and well-being of all.

We, the participants of the 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion in Bangkok, Thailand, strongly support the values, commitments and actions outlined in this Charter.