Norwegian comments to the draft of WHO global action plan on physical activity 2018 - 2030

Introductory remarks:
We appreciate the possibility to share our comments on the draft action plan on physical activity 2018-2030. Overall we think that the draft is well conceived and developed. We are certain that the draft action plan, when implemented, will be important for all Member States in the World Health Organization. We have comments that we hope will be helpful in the development of the action plan.

The global action plan is to run to year 2030 and as such it is relevant to the work and attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). We are pleased to see the SDGs importance highlighted in the draft action plan. The SDGs underscore the need for working through partnerships and we see that as valuable to ensure involvement and ownership by relevant actors in implementing the draft action plan on physical activity.

A great number of perspectives and priority areas related to physical activity are mentioned in the draft and it is up to the Member States to follow up on implementation the action plan. However, we are interested in more clearly defined information on how WHO plan to support Member States on implementation and follow up, i.e. on reporting and indicators and the actions plans relation to other concurrently running action plans that are relevant to the attainment of good health and well-being. The indicators have to be valid, reliable and realistic to measure for the Member States. The WHO EURO Regional Committee adopted the development of a Joint Monitoring Framework (JMF) in September 2017. We believe that it would be important to look into how the development of the JMF can assist in the follow up on indicators and reporting routines for the action plan on physical activity.

General comments:
The document is well structured and shared responsibilities between member states, secretariat, national and international partners, is clearly defined. However, we suggest
structural changes in the document that highlights the role and importance of actions on regional and local level in the Member States, i.e. developing activity friendly environments, building bicycle roads, actions in schools. One way to highlight this is to define the national partners in the glossary.

The emphasis in the draft action plan on environment, climate, urban development and social inequalities is important.

The private sectors contributions to increase the physical activity level are precisely described in the WHO EURO’s document "Physical activity strategy for the WHO European Region 2016–2025". We believe that the abovementioned strategy should be considered as an issue that is also relevant in a global context on physical activity. An example that we see as relevant in this context is from the field of nutrition where there is a tradition for working with industry i.e. on reduction on salt in foods.

The gains in quality of life and productivity based on the suggestions in the draft action plan are mentioned a few times. We suggest developing and relating this work and gains clearer to the different sectors. This could be extended with a description of gains in both short/acute phase and in a longer perspective in different sectors. Even if the existing recommendations for physical activity are under review, the existing global recommendations could be defined in the beginning of the document.

The document underscores schools as a central arena in terms of physical activity. This is important and in sections 3.1, no. 147 and no. 148 the youngest children are mentioned especially. It is also important to involve the activity arenas for the pre-school children, (e.g. kindergarten and playgrounds etc.).

In many parts of the world the proportion of older people will increase in the coming years and this should be taken into account in the development of the draft action plan as concrete actions for the elderly are important to ensure healthy life years.
Specific comments:
The comments are made in connection to specific bullet points and pages.

I. No. 39, page 11-12. The Action plan could be more concrete on the use of new technologies role in measuring different aspects of physical activity in daily life, during travel and other activities and how this knowledge can be used in the work with urban development, city planning, active travel to school and work and outdoor recreation. The traditional public health researchers and public health workers should be stimulated to collaborate with research in this area. The WHO Euro physical activity strategy (2015) is more distinct in this area: “Collaboration with national experts, academic institutions and civil society, as well as with sectors beyond health, and at different levels, such as cities, should be promoted in this area in order to ensure timely and innovative sources of data.” (No 54 p.19) Some work that could be interesting here could be the following: The 7th International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitors in Recreational and Protected Areas (MMV), Total Body Movement Monitoring Using a Regular Smartphone to Detect Bicycle Accidents, and Strava walking and biking data.

II. No. 40, page 12. In a global viewpoint, this section contains many crucial and important perspectives e.g. limited connection between sectors, strategic links national and subnational, advocacy, leaderships, mobilising systems etc. and overreaching challenges. We would like to see this area highlighted earlier in the documented.

III. No. 46, page 13. The Goal, two comments
   - Consider the possibility of providing a clearer definition on the goal "more active". It is unclear if the goal contains health enhancing physical activity with moderate intensity and a specific duration or if it is increased physical activity in general on all intensities and duration. Clarify if the goal is related to adults and children or both. A possible goal could be, “One hundred million adults and children are physical active* by 2030”.


*Physically active in this context means achieving WHO's global recommendations for minimum physical activity for children or adults.

- In a public health perspective, it is important to correctly categorize the population after their physical activity level. The goal is “One hundred million people more active by 2030”. We are uncertain how monitoring if the existing methods can monitor the changes in the physical activity level of moderate intensity in the real life. We suggest using objective methods and the use of big data. Maybe two hundred million on global level will increase or decrease their activity level with moderate intensity with plus or minus nine minutes per day during the next five years. Probably a big effect on the public health. Based on the experiences from use of objective measurements in Norway and other countries, i.e., Portugal and U.S, we do not think it will be possible to monitor changes in activity level on some minutes per day with the existing self-reporting instruments. There are potential big investments for the countries when they will follow up the action plan, for example building bicycle roads, environmental changes, city planning, sport and school activities etc. Compared with these investments the investments for use of the recommended reliable and valid instruments are low. Objectively measures combined with self-reporting should be favored.

IV. No. 47, page 14. The best buys mentioned on page 12 could be better defined and specified. Knowledge about known and agreed upon cost-effective interventions (Appendix 3) is important on national, regional and local level in the Member States.

V. No. 49, page 14-15. Increased activity requires concerted and integrated action from all sectors. The role of media is not mentioned in the listed bullet points. Media is central; consider including this sector also. The role of media, maybe also exemplified with social media, could also be described better in the plan, not only under No. 44 (page 13). Also in the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health from 2004 medias role was highlighted and in the WCRF (2009) document “Policy and Action for

VI. No. 53, page 16. II. "X % of countries with inclusion of physical activity in professional training of sectors in health and X% including in training beyond health" The indicator is vague. We are uncertain as to the possibility of Member States ability to supply valid answerers for this indicator. It is important to consider the validity and reliability in the development of all indicators for the action plan.

VII. No. 56, page 16. There is focus on campaigns on sport events and that is probably important for many Member States. However, we would like to see the action plan set goals for reaching the big portion of the inactive groups in our populations and increase the "Health-enhancing physical activity/activity in daily life" Collaboration with the transport sector and involvement of other NGOs could be important to have this happen. If we focus too much on campaigns directed to sporting events as a means to increase the number of physically active we run the risk of only reaching those that are already involved in organized sports activities, and not those that are currently physically inactive, or use other means to stay physically active – such as broader physical activity campaigns.

VIII. No. 152, page 28. Researchers are mentioned, consider if the private sector also should be mentioned here. They have a key role when you look to innovation.

We hope that the comments and suggestions to the draft will be perceived as constructive input for the process of developing the draft action plan. We are pleased with the progress so far and wish Secretariat the best of luck with the process. We are willing to contribute in a later part of the development of the draft action plan if needed.
Dear Sir/Madam

One extra comment related to the goal in the draft of the action plan. The global NCD goal for physical activity is a 10% reduction in physical inactivity, the goal in the draft of the action plan was 100 million people are more active. We have to make sure that if the goal in the action plan will be achieved, then will also the global NCD goal related to physical activity be achieved.

Kind regards

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