Subject: Submission of the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry on the “Development of a draft global action plan to promote physical activity”

Dear WHO Secretariat,
Dear Fiona,
Dear Temo,

We welcome the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) and congratulate WHO on advancing the global policy framework significantly to increase physical activity levels.

Also, we wish to thank you for the opportunity to deliver this submission on behalf of the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI).

We appreciate WHO’s multi-stakeholder approach in developing this plan, including direct work with the private sector. Engaging with private sector entities will create diversity and ultimately broaden the scope of stakeholder mobilization and advocacy, based on a common messaging framework. Such an approach will increase the likelihood that the efforts contained in the global action plan will be adopted and implemented with widespread support and motivation.

The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry and its membership have long recognized the benefits of physical activity and look forward to contributing to many of these efforts, especially Strategic Objective #1: Creating an Active Society. Our industry has a unique role in creating a more active world - from sharing our passion and energy to inspire people around the globe to bringing to life the joy of sport and unlimited potential associated with active lifestyles. The industry currently supports a wide range of local, national and international initiatives to get people active and, collectively, we can provide our expertise in engagement, communications, marketing and other relevant areas to contribute to “positive attitudes, values and actions towards everyone being active.” As an industry, we know it is particularly important to instill a love of activity and sport at an early age. Lifelong habits are formed early, and providing early positive experiences of sport and physical activity to children sets them on a course to be active for life.

We also recommend including “the international level” to Strategic Objective #4: Creating Active Systems, in addition to the referenced regional and national level on page 29 under “Proposed Action 4.5”.

In addition, we would like to propose consideration of two other key areas for inclusion in the global plan’s overall format:
1. Consider placing the very informative introductory “Background” section at the end. Beginning with the “Vision” and “Goal” of the global action plan, we believe, provides significant direction and sets a strong tone.

2. Integrating physical activity into daily lives through different options is key to increase activity levels. We also know that the first 10 years of a child’s life provide a critical window for creating a lifelong commitment to physical activity. It is equally important to provide quality physical activity opportunities for children during these formative years, especially where they spend most of their time – often that place is schools. Integrating activity into schools – before, during and after – can have transformative benefits for both children and schools. Therefore, we recommend incorporating a focus on getting kids active as part of the effort to break the cycle of inactivity and as a way to ensure future generations have more active lifestyles.

WFSGI supports the objectives of the GAPPA (which includes promoting play, along with sport) and we are delighted to support the global plan’s adoption at the World Health Assembly (WHA) 2018. After the implementation of the GAPPs, we would welcome receiving communication and engagement tools that we can share with our WFSGI members and other partners to help support the effort.

We also support continued efforts like the development of the WHO Toolkit for Member States as a way to assist implementation of policy action on the regional and national level. We believe sharing case studies, best practices and learnings can help support Member States in the implementation process. We look forward to future opportunities for sharing additional examples of partnerships, collaborations and other initiatives aligned with GAPPAs.

We thank the WHO Secretariat for pulling this action plan together and applaud the efforts to pass it at the WHA 2018 and the impact it will have to create a world where physical activity, play and sports are highly valued and an expected, enjoyable part of life.

Sincerely,
World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry

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