

# THE BANGKOK DECLARATION ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR GLOBAL HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

THE 6<sup>th</sup> ISPAH INTERNATIONAL  
CONGRESS ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
AND PUBLIC HEALTH  
**Bangkok, Thailand**  
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Hosted By



Co-Hosted By



**We the delegates and hosts of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health, the biennial meeting of the International Society for Physical Activity and Health (ISPAH), with representatives from 72 countries and held in Bangkok, Thailand and ISPAH Members:**

- a) **Recognise** physical activity includes all forms of human movement and active living including walking, exercise as well as sport and is a natural behaviour that confers many benefits;
- b) **Endorse** the urgency of addressing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, numerous cancers, respiratory disease, dementia, and poor mental health, which contribute to a significant burden of premature death, disease and disability and associated social and economic burdens to all countries;
- c) **Reaffirm** that physical inactivity is one of the key modifiable risk factors for NCDs and is a cornerstone strategy for reducing the burden of NCDs, as articulated in the World Health Organization Global action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs 2013-2020;
- d) **Draw attention** to the high levels of inactivity globally and the inequalities across the life-course in those meeting the WHO Global Recommendations on Physical Activity, especially relating to gender, disability, and regional and socio-economic disparities;
- e) **Note** the key role that reducing inactivity has to play in contributing to global strategies such as the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity (2016), Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), New Urban Health Agenda (Habitat III), Mobilizing Sustainable Transport for Development (2016); Every Woman Every Child (2010); and the forthcoming WHO Global Action Plan on Dementia (draft 2015);
- f) **Emphasise** that actions to provide supportive environments that reduce physical inactivity provide co-benefits, can significantly reduce health care costs, increase economic productivity and provide effective return on investments in sectors such as transport and tourism;
- g) **Highlight** that the drivers of physical inactivity are linked to societal and environmental changes including technology, globalisation and urbanisation, which are transforming how people live, work, travel and play and increasing levels of sedentary behaviours;
- h) **Acknowledge** that global efforts to decrease physical inactivity have been insufficient, despite its significant role in preventing NCDs, and there is now an urgent need to strengthen and scale the development, prioritisation, financing and implementation of evidence-informed national plans to enable all countries to achieve the WHO global target for reducing physical inactivity for children and adults by 10% by 2025.

**We have identified opportunities for urgent prioritisation and implementation that will support and promote reduction in physical inactivity and contribute to achieving specific 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely:**

- ◆ **SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing:** Policy actions across multiple settings which lead to an increase in population levels of physical activity will contribute to reducing NCDs (**Target 3.4**); providing infrastructure that supports physical activity through equitable access to safe walking, cycling and use of public transport, by all ages, **can contribute to reducing road traffic accidents** particularly those involving pedestrians and cyclists (**Target 3.6**); and reduced automobile use can **contribute to improved air quality (Target 3.9)**;
- ◆ **SDG4 Quality education:** Policy actions that ensure, and monitor, equitable provision of pre-school and school-based physical education curricula, physical activity programs and environments that are inclusive and enable all girls and boys to develop the physical literacy, fundamental movement skills, knowledge, attitudes, habits and the enjoyment of physical activity, **can contribute to enhancing readiness for primary primary education (Target 4.2)**, and **improved educational outcomes (Target 4.1)**;



- ◆ **SDG 5 Gender equity:** Policy actions which promote physical activity through improved access to safe and affordable opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity by girls and women across the life course, particularly those in marginalised and disadvantaged communities, can contribute to ending discrimination (Target 5. 1) in sports and physical activity;
- ◆ **SDG 10 Reduce inequalities:** Policy actions that maximise the potential of sports and physical activity programmes, including major sporting events, to promote inclusion and empowerment regardless of individual traits can contribute to empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all (Target 10.2) and promoting equal opportunity (Target 10.3);
- ◆ **SDG 11 Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities:** Development, implementation and monitoring of urban and transport planning policies that require city and regional designs to provide equitable access to safe, affordable infrastructure for walking and bicycling, as well as public open spaces and recreational facilities can contribute to achieving sustainable transport systems for all (Target 11.2); enhancing inclusive and sustainable urbanization (Target 11.3); reducing the environmental impact of cities (Target 11.6) and achieving universal access to green and public spaces (Target 11.7);
- ◆ **SDG 13 Climate change:** Land use and transport policy, combined with fiscal, environmental and educational interventions that support walking, cycling and use of public transport by all can contribute to a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and climate change mitigation (Target 13. 1) and improved education, awareness, and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation and adaptation (Target 13.2);
- ◆ **SDG 15 Life on land:** Policy actions that ensure adequate access to, and use of, natural environments for physical activity, recreation and play by children and adults can contribute to the sustainable use, appreciation, conservation and restoration of land, biodiversity (Target 15. 1) and terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems (Targets 15.5);
- ◆ **SDG 16 Just and peaceful and inclusive societies:** Policy actions that leverage the capability of sports to nurture positive social values such as respect and fairness and to unite people of different age, gender, socioeconomic status, nationality and political beliefs can contribute to reducing violence and conflicts (Target 16. 1) as well as corruption and bribery (Target 16.5) and promoting non-discriminatory laws and policies (Target 16.b).

**Actions in line with this Bangkok Declaration will contribute at scale to these SDGs in an evidence-based, cost efficient and sustained way that will move nations, communities and individuals into everyday physical activity.**

**The Bangkok Declaration on Physical Activity for Global Health and Sustainable Development, endorsed by delegates at the 6<sup>th</sup> ISPAH Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health calls upon governments, policy makers, donors and stakeholders including the World Health Organization, the United Nations and all relevant non-governmental organisations to:**

1. **Renew commitments to invest in and implement at scale and pace policy actions to decrease physical inactivity across the life course as a contribution to reducing the global burden of NCDs and achieving 2030 Agenda goals (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 15, and 16):** The actions needed to reduce physical inactivity require increased prioritisation multi-sector leadership, partnerships and sustained commitment as well as targeted allocation of resources. Investment from health ministries, and from other government departments, should be maximised to enable a whole system, evidence based approach, implemented at national and local level. Approaches should be cross sectoral and recognise the breadth of political and economic drivers in sectors such as employment, tourism, urban and transport planning, education, health, sport and culture;
2. **Establish national multi-sector engagement and coordination platforms:** All countries should develop, resource and implement integrated national action plans on physical activity. To be effective, plans should include mechanisms and resources to engage multi-sector stakeholders from inside and outside of health sector and engage the potential synergies with sustainable development as well as contribute to reducing health inequalities related to sex, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and people living with disability;
3. **Develop workforce capabilities:** Workforce training and development is fundamental to delivering an effective reduction in inactivity. Building capacity should be multi-professional, including health and social care, urban planners, architects, teachers, sport and recreation providers, educators, policy makers and the non-governmental workforces. Approaches should be integrated into under-graduate, post-graduate and continuing professional educational pathways and also consider the needs of volunteers and community leaders;
4. **Increase technical assistance and share experience:** Many countries require technical assistance and guidance to support the development, implementation and evaluation of national action plans on physical activity as well as guidance on building sustainable partnerships. There is potential to achieve more through collaboration and sharing at a global level and there must be investment to support knowledge transfer and professional networks at global, regional and national level to help all countries progress towards the 2025 global NCD prevention and control targets and the 2030 agenda;
5. **Strengthen monitoring and surveillance:** Regular monitoring and reporting on progress of physical activity, its determinants, and policy implementation are essential in all countries to hold agencies accountable to their commitments and guide effective resource allocations. Yet significant gaps exist in the surveillance of physical activity in children, young people, older adults and within minority populations;
6. **Support and promote collaboration, research, and policy evaluation:** Collaborations across researchers and policy makers, including medical and social research funding agencies to further develop the evidence base with a particular focus on addressing gaps in knowledge in areas such as multi-sectoral economic analyses, implementation research at the population level, and policy and process evaluation. There is a particular need to collaborate on what works to reduce inactivity, especially in low and middle income countries.

**We urge WHO, United Nations agencies, all global health agencies and initiatives, Member States, State and Local governments, and City Officials to work together with civil society including academia, professional bodies, and non-governmental organisations, as well as private sector and the media, to provide leadership and maximise the potential of our combined resources to meet shared goals for health and sustainable development and effectively implement all aspects of this Bangkok Declaration on Physical Activity for Global Health and Sustainable Development.**