

Regional Committee for Europe

68th session

Rome, Italy, 17–20 September 2018

EUR/RC68/R6

19 September 2018

180670

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Resolution

Advancing public health for sustainable development in the WHO European Region

The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolution EUR/RC62/R4, adopting Health 2020, the European policy framework for health and well-being, which supports action across government and society and provides a shared vision, set of principles and approach to health as a human right;

Recalling resolution EUR/RC62/R5, endorsing the European Action Plan for Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services¹ as a necessary component of health improvement in the WHO European Region;

Recalling the adoption of Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,² which established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the targets under SDG 3 and other targets tackling the broader determinants of health, and resolution EUR/RC67/R3, adopting the roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, the European policy framework for health and well-being;

Recalling World Health Assembly resolution WHA69.1 on Strengthening essential public health functions in support of the achievement of universal health coverage;

¹ Document EUR/RC62/12 Rev.1.

² United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1.

Committed to the implementation of WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023,³ achievement of which will greatly depend on a stronger public health capacity to effectively address the determinants of health across sectoral boundaries;

Commending the leading role and commitment of the WHO European Region's Member States in advancing the public health agenda for sustainable development;

Acknowledging that public health interventions can be cost-saving and that high returns for health and sustainable development can be achieved through investing in public health policies and actions across the Region that take into account specific national contexts, provide greater coherence across national policies with impact on public health, and mainstream public health across all policies and levels of government;

Having considered document EUR/RC68/17 on Advancing public health for sustainable development in the WHO European Region, and its values, principles and call for action;

1. ENDORSES document EUR/RC68/17 on Advancing public health for sustainable development in the WHO European Region, with its vision, ethical values, principles and framework for action;
2. URGES Member States,⁴ as a contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:
 - (a) to reaffirm their political commitment to providing leadership and efficient governance for the development of strong, well-resourced and fit-for-purpose public health systems, including the institutional bases and adequate human resources and capacities;
 - (b) to develop or strengthen coherent national public health strategies and policies, aligned with national policies for implementation of the SDGs, addressing the determinants of health across all policy sectors and inequalities in health, particularly in vulnerable groups, following gender-sensitive and participatory approaches;

³ Document A71/4.

⁴ And regional economic integration organizations, where applicable.

- (c) to review the institutional frameworks for public health action, and provide the necessary resources to strengthen the capacity building for public health professionals and other actors, within health systems and across other relevant sectors;
- (d) to establish or strengthen effective intersectoral mechanisms for addressing all health determinants, particularly the environmental, social, economic, cultural, commercial and behavioural determinants, across policy sectors and levels of government, including by exploring common interests across public policies, as well as common threats to a sustainable future;
- (e) to establish or strengthen broad partnerships to effectively engage with all relevant sectors, civil society, local actors and stakeholders, including the general public where appropriate and the private sector, recognizing and addressing possible conflicts of interest, and empowering communities to take effective actions to protect and promote health;
- (f) to ensure adequate investments in public health policies and interventions, with particular emphasis on evidence-informed and cost-effective public policy approaches;
- (g) to support and strengthen institutional capacities for the generation of evidence, health data, information, tools and methods to support evidence-informed policy-making and decision-making, implementation and monitoring of results with a focus on translation from evidence to policy practice;
- (h) to invest in training and continuous development of human resources for public health to create a fit-for-purpose health workforce with the necessary core public health capacities and further attributes (in areas such as policy, political and strategic analysis, capacity to undertake health and health equity impact assessment, political astuteness, and influencing and negotiating skills), both within health systems and across other relevant policy sectors;
- (i) to empower people to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families, by ensuring access to knowledge, promoting health literacy, social values and resources, and providing health-conducive environments that facilitate healthy choices;

- (j) to work in collaboration with international, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, including United Nations agencies, user associations, family associations and professional associations, to support the implementation of this resolution;
3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
- (a) to continue providing leadership and advocacy for effective public health policies and strategies for health and well-being in the context of sustainable development;
 - (b) to continue advocating and supporting strong governance for public health within health systems and across sectoral policies to attain a high level of health protection in all policies, universal health coverage and sustainable development;
 - (c) to support national action, on request, through the provision of technical assistance and advice, the production of evidence, tools and guidelines, and the collection and dissemination of good practices;
 - (d) to continue engaging in cooperation with United Nations agencies and other organizations and relevant stakeholders, promoting intersectoral and interagency action for health and well-being through relevant intersectoral mechanisms and platforms;
 - (e) to support national and local action by leveraging existing regional platforms and networks in order to share information and best practices and address issues of common interest through collaborations and partnerships;
 - (f) to report on the implementation of this resolution to the Regional Committee in 2023, using existing regional monitoring mechanisms.

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