

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION ON THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

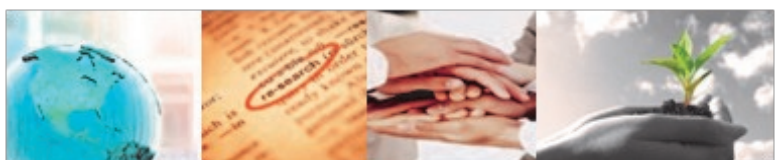
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Advancing health promotion & achieving equity in health globally



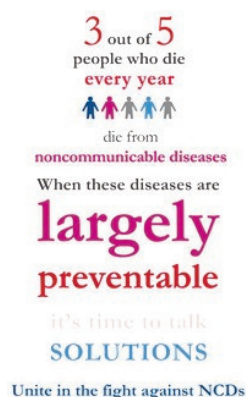
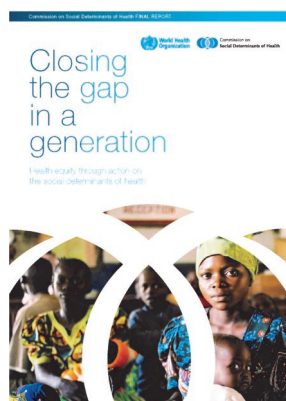
IUHPE – UIPES

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION
UNION INTERNATIONALE DE PROMOTION DE LA SANTÉ ET D'ÉDUCATION POUR LA SANTÉ
UNIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE PROMOCIÓN DE LA SALUD Y EDUCACIÓN PARA LA SALUD



“The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries”. (World Health Organization - http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/)

Social justice underpins health promotion strategies and activities. The inequitable distribution of the social determinants of health (SDH) is unjust because the resulting health inequalities are avoidable. For this reason the IUHPE strongly supports the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) (2008). In 2011 the IUHPE called for full implementation of a health promotion approach to the UN Declaration on Noncommunicable Disease (UN, 2011) as well as the WHO Declaration on Social Determinants of Health (WHO, 2011).



World Conference on
Social Determinants of Health
RIO DE JANEIRO | BRAZIL | 19–21 OCTOBER 2011



Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 21 October 2011

The IUHPE is committed to advancing health equity and reducing the growing health inequalities experienced both between and within countries. The IUHPE recognises the need for a variety of actors across sectors to effectively address social determinants. The IUHPE proposes that health promotion is a vital part of the global social progress agenda, and health promotion is a field of action that has a vital role in the continued effort to improve policies and programs that aim to tackle the SDH.

The IUHPE's advocacy to policy-makers about the social determinants of health is based on mobilizing evidence and communicating examples of effective and scalable programmes and healthy public policy from around the world, and facilitating exchange between policy makers, researchers, practitioners and communities.

THE IUHPE CALL TO ACTION

To meet the challenge of increasing social justice through a social determinants approach to health, the IUHPE calls for increased support for:

1. Research and monitoring systems to develop evidence of effective action on the social determinants of health inequities;
2. Dedicated resources to 'scale-up' best practice interventions;
3. Tools and case studies that support action on health equity;
4. Building workforce capacity;
5. Implementation of models for effective cross-sector governance;

The IUHPE calls for health promotion to be a core strategy for development through:

6. Greater investment in health promotion capacity
7. Increased support for health promotion to be addressed and embedded as a core, cross-cutting development strategy



1 Research and monitoring systems to develop evidence of effective action on the social determinants of health inequities.

While there is available evidence to describe the problem, nature and impact of SDH and their relation to the creation of social inequalities in health, there is a need for further evidence of interventions that are effective and scalable at national level. This research needs to be multi-disciplinary, bringing together epidemiology, social and cultural sciences, economics, planning, engineering and behavioural sciences. This will enable understanding of how socio-cultural, behavioural and economic factors interact and are interlinked, as well as how cities and communities can be configured to safely and effectively meet the needs of all populations. In this regard it is important to support implementation research addressing the strategic drivers in health inequalities and differential health effects of interventions on health equity. Little funding priority has been afforded by research funding agencies to the approaches outlined above.

Further, there is a need to systematically monitor progress on action aimed at reducing health inequalities and tracking progress in policy development and implementation; this includes tracking of social determinants of health in health surveillance systems as well as through linked data across sectors. Research to inform development and design of such monitoring systems should be explicitly funded.

2 Dedicated resources to 'scale-up' best practice interventions

Once evidence of effectiveness is generated it is critical to support platforms that disseminate this knowledge. The knowledge gained needs to be critically consolidated through systematic reviews of evaluated interventions. This is with a view to enabling:

- wide dissemination of evidence
- translation and exchange of knowledge
- extension of effective initiatives at local level
- scaling up initiatives at national and global scale

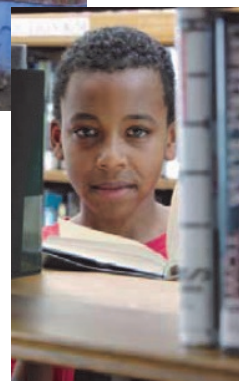
3 Tools and case studies that support action on health equity

To support implementation of best practice knowledge, tools and case studies need to be mobilized to assist the workforce of policy makers and practitioners to implement good practice.

4 Building workforce capacity

Support needs to be provided for education, exchange and capacity building on policy development and practice to enable a skilled workforce to implement social determinants based health promotion activities. This includes engagement with both the health and non-health workforce to enable cross sector action. An enabled workforce can better support wide implementation of best practices in advancing the SDH and health promotion. This can be facilitated through policy dialogues, short courses, and existing tools such as publications, conferences and websites. Training has an important role in enabling exchange and promoting translation of experiences from different countries and regions. Training should be supported to ensure the relevant workforce is equipped with the core health promotion skills and competencies to implement policies and practice that improve social and structural determinants of health. This includes a mix of technical skills, community development and policy expertise.

The IUHPE has an active global program that is building global consensus around domains of core competency for health promotion. This should inform training and the supply of an expanded and skilled workforce of health promotion specialists.



5 Implementation of models for effective cross-sector governance

In developing a health promotion approach to SDH, it is important to consider the role, commitment and perspectives from all stakeholders including governments, NGOs and community based organizations as well as citizens and the private sector. This requires building strong alliances and partnerships among all sectors based on agreed ethical principles, shared objectives, mutual understanding and respect. Policy dialogues and deliberative forums are a particularly useful strategy to bring stakeholders together.

The IUHPE acknowledges that many of the solutions to the most pressing health issues reside outside the health sector. It is therefore imperative to facilitate governance practices that enable improved work across sectors in government, the non-government sector, academic institutions and industry.

This agenda at the global level also can enable work across the span of UN agencies to maximise their contribution to shaping the global conditions that support health and equity within and between countries, as well as support investment in programs and policies for upstream, preventive and health promotion actions.

The IUHPE calls for health promotion to be a core strategy for development through:

6 Greater investment in health promotion capacity

Health promotion should be considered as an essential function of departments/ministries of health. Governments and health systems should give greater priority to improving output and professionalism in health promotion. This can be facilitated by the full implementation of the above activities. In addition the IUHPE supports new and innovative ways to fund health promotion infrastructure. Proven options for raising sustainable revenue for health promotion include the mechanism of surcharges or levies on unhealthy products such as tobacco. This is a favourable and sustainable additional funding source for health promotion.

7 Increased support for health promotion to be addressed and embedded as a core, cross-cutting development strategy

Given the particular challenges that confront countries in the Global South, health promotion approaches should be supported as a core cross-cutting development strategy. This can help ensure that critical values such as equity, social justice and sustainability are addressed and embedded in the development of healthy public policies. Donors need to incorporate health promotion action on SDH in development assistance projects, thereby enabling increased resources for health promotion in LMICs.

THE IUHPE COMMITMENT

The IUHPE has identified Social Determinants of Health (SDH) as a strategic priority in its Integrated Work Plan. This is being advanced by the IUHPE Board and an IUHPE Global Working Group. In light of this, and the IUHPE's call for action by others, **the IUHPE commits to:**

- ◆ **Furthering dialogue and debate on challenges for action on the SDH**
- ◆ **Advancing knowledge dissemination through its family of journals and its global and regional conferences**
- ◆ **Improving scientific knowledge and evidence on what works in policy and practice**
- ◆ **Participating in international forums that advance communication, build capacity and engage decision-makers to address SDH**
- ◆ **Sharing experience of practices to improve effectiveness globally**
- ◆ **Continuing to advocate the IUHPE's position on SDH and its integral link with health promotion.**