



Statement by European and international civil society organisations concerned with nutrition to the 64th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, Copenhagen, 15-18 September 2014, on the *European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020*

September 2014

We are pleased to read a statement from the European Association for the Study of Obesity, the European Heart Network, the European Public Health Alliance, Consumers International, the NCD Alliance, World Obesity Federation and, our own organization, World Cancer Research Fund International.

All of these organizations universally support the adoption of the proposed *European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020* as a comprehensive approach to tackling the heavy burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases in Europe. We thus call on Member States of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe to endorse the proposed Action Plan and to give priority to its implementation.

In particular, we call on Member States to take concrete and comprehensive action to create healthy food environments. We know there are good practice examples from which all countries can learn to design effective policy actions. The evidence base for action is also growing. For example, evidence shows that adopting a range of different strategies in schools, such as nutrition education, food standards, providing fruit and vegetables and water, and engaging with teachers, parents and food service staff can encourage the kind of healthy start our children need. We call on all Member States to put effective strategies into place in schools by 2020, and to monitor and evaluate their effects.

Likewise, we call on Member States to establish strong measures to implement the *WHO Set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children*. Evidence shows that actions to reduce children's exposure to marketing are feasible and enforceable – but are prone to being undermined if they are not fully comprehensive. We recognize that the power to implement effective measures, such as restrictions on marketing to children, often lie outside the hands of health ministries, and therefore we call on the Regional Committee to mandate the WHO Regional Office for Europe to provide technical support and assistance for health ministers to engage with other government departments to achieve the goals of the Action Plan.

World Cancer Research Fund International and partners also call on Member States to adopt a clear monitoring framework for the Action Plan, and to develop national evaluation strategies. This will enable all stakeholders to track progress, promote comprehensive action and learn how to design more effective policies.

We in civil society are here to support you in your work. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance. Thank you.