

Joint Submission on the Draft global action plan on physical activity 2018-2030

This joint submission collates inputs on the GAPP from the following international organisations (further details on each can be found in the annex):

- The UNESCO Chair “Transforming the lives of people with disabilities their families and communities through physical education, sport, recreation and fitness” at the Institute of Technology Tralee, Ireland,
- The Global Partnership for Children with Disabilities - Physical Activity and Sport Taskforce,
- The International Federation for Adapted Physical Activity (IFAPA),
- Disability Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development (DIAUD) Network,
- Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES).

Summary (*references in core text*)

1. Physical Activity is a critical tool in the development and maintenance of health and wellbeing and in the prevention and treatment of disease at individual and societal levels. Its relevance and impact for people with disabilities is even more critical considering the individual and societal fiscal and human benefits of activity and cost of inactivity.
2. The definitions of ‘health’ and ‘physical activity’ and their interrelationship could be more definitively stated, most especially as ‘health’ has become synonymous with ‘illness’ in much discourse and physical activity has too frequently been trivialised as a ‘nice to do’ not ‘need to do’ health intervention.
3. People with disabilities are three times less active than the general population, despite having more to gain in terms of prevention and treatment of secondary conditions, biopsychosocial health and social inclusion. It is imperative that an ‘inclusion in all policies approach’ be adopted to ensure crosscutting actions address disparities for marginalised groups in terms of awareness, access and opportunity.
4. Preservice vocational programmes preparing people to work in the area of physical activity (health, physical education, sport, urban planning, community development) need to embed inclusion (of people with disabilities and other marginalised groups) as a core curricular area for all professionals. This needs to be supplemented with in-service programmes to address current knowledge and skills deficits reported across the sector. More people with disabilities need to be enabled to take up employment and leadership roles in the sector.
5. The data gap in relation to comparative physical activity levels research across the globe is magnified in the area of disability inclusion. The Washington questions and related constructs developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics established under the UN Statistical Commission should be put forward as part of GAPP to ensure that the existing data gap is addressed within the timeframe of GAPP at a country level.
6. Communication campaigns, mass participation campaigns, champions, coalitions, case studies developed and promoted as part of GAPP need to mainstream diversity and embrace inclusion from the outset.
7. Settings for physical activity need to be lifelong and lifewide addressing all individuals, leaving no one behind and starting with the most vulnerable.
8. Universality/ universability should be embraced in planning, design, implementation and evaluation. A ‘pathway to inclusion’ from recognising the rights of all, to inclusivizing practice and mainstreaming diversity could be implemented on a global level across the timeframe of GAPP.
9. Assistive technologies and devices can support active lifestyles and active transportation for many people with disabilities, yet only 10% of people who would benefit from them can avail of them. The New Urban Agenda and Habitat III aligned with GAPP creates an opportunity to bridge this gap.
10. Many UN and international bodies, NGOs, DPO’s, CSO’s, and Federations representing the public and private sector can support the implementation of GAPP. Many normative instruments, policy agendas and resources address some of the aspirations of GAPP. Crosscutting actions, collaborations and resources could be identified for efficiency and effectiveness.