
G: GLOSSARY¹

Burden of disease

The burden of disease is a measurement of the gap between a population's current health and the optimal state where all people attain full life expectancy without suffering major ill-health.

Capacity building

Capacity building is the development of knowledge, skills, commitment, structures, systems and leadership to enable effective health promotion.

Community

A specific group of people, often living in a defined geographical area, who share a common culture, values and norms, are arranged in a social structure according to relationships which the community has developed over a period of time. Members of a community gain their personal and social identity by sharing common beliefs, values and norms which have been developed by the community in the past and may be modified in the future. They exhibit some awareness of their identity as a group, and share common needs and a commitment to meeting them.

Cross-sectoral action

See intersectoral action.

DALY

Disability-adjusted life year (DALY) is a measure of overall disease burden, expressed as the number of years lost due to ill-health, disability or early death.

Determinants of health

The range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine the health status of individuals or populations. The determinants of health can be grouped into seven broad categories: socioeconomic environment; physical environments; early childhood development; personal health practices; individual capacity and coping skills; biology and genetic endowment; and health services. To this, some also add commercial and political determinants.

Epidemiology

Epidemiology is the study of the distribution and determinants of health-states or events in specified populations, and the application of this study to the control of health problems.

Equity

The absence of avoidable or remediable differences among populations or groups defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically.

Evidence-based health promotion

The use of information derived from formal research and systematic investigation to identify causes and contributing factors to health needs and the most effective health promotion actions to address these in given contexts and populations.

¹ Compilation based on the glossaries contained in Leppo K *et al.* (2013) *Health in All Policies: Seizing Opportunities, Implementing Policies*. Finland, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health; WHO (1998) *Health Promotion Glossary*. Geneva, WHO; and Smith B *et al.* (2006) WHO Health Promotion Glossary: New Terms. *Health Promotion International*, Vol. 21. No. 4. Oxford University Press, pp. 340–345.

Framing

Framing refers to how an issue is defined, which can in turn influence how the issue is viewed (non-issue, problem, crisis etc.), who is considered responsible and the cause and possible solutions.

Global health

Global health refers to the transnational impacts of globalization upon health determinants and health problems which are the beyond the control of individual nations.

Governance

Broadly concerns the agreed actions and means adopted by a society to promote collective action and deliver collective solutions in pursuit of common goals. Governance can be formed at different levels of social organization – local, state/provincial, national, regional and global – which can become closely intertwined.

Health

A state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Reference: WHO Constitution. Geneva, WHO, 1948.

Health expectancy

Health expectancy is a population-based measure of the proportion of expected life span estimated to be healthful and fulfilling or free of illness, disease and disability according to social norms and perceptions and professional standards.

Health for all

The attainment by all the people in the world of a level of health that will permit them to live a socially and economically productive life. Health for all has served as an important focal point for health strategy for WHO and its Member States for almost 20 years.

Health impact assessment (HIA)

A combination of procedures, methods and tools that assess the potential effects of a policy or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIAs also identify appropriate actions to manage those effects.

Health in All Policies (HiAP)

Health in All Policies (HiAP) is an approach to public policies across sectors that systematically takes into account the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies and avoids harmful health impacts in order to improve population health and health equity. It improves accountability of policy-makers for health impacts at all levels of policy-making. It includes an emphasis on the consequences of public policies on health systems, determinants of health and well-being.

Health inequity

Differences in health that are unnecessary and avoidable and, in addition, are considered unfair and unjust. The CSDH states that such differences must be systematic and considered avoidable by reasonable action globally and within societies.

Health outcomes

A change in the health status of an individual, group or population which is attributable to a planned intervention or series of interventions, regardless of whether such an intervention was intended to change health status.

Health policy

A formal statement or procedure within institutions (notably government), which defines priorities and the parameters for action in response to health needs, available resources and other political pressures.

Health promotion

The process of enabling individuals and communities to increase control over the determinants of health and thereby improve their health. An evolving concept that encompasses fostering lifestyles and other social, economic, environmental and personal factors conducive to health. Reference: Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. Geneva, WHO, 1986.

Health sector

Organizations that are held politically and administratively accountable for the health of the population at various levels: international, national, regional and local.

Health service

A formally organized system of established institutions and organizations, the multi-purpose objective of which is to cope with the various health needs and demands of the population.

Health status

A description and/or measurement of the health of an individual or population at a particular point in time against identifiable standards, usually by reference to health indicators.

Health system

All the organizations, institutions and resources that are devoted to producing health actions.

Healthy cities

A healthy city is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.

Healthy public policy

Healthy public policy is characterized by "an explicit concern for health and equity in all areas of policy, and by accountability for health impact. The main aim of healthy public policy is to create a supportive environment to enable people to lead healthy lives. Such a policy makes healthy choices possible or easier for citizens. It makes social and physical environments health enhancing". The term "healthy public policy" is a synonym for HiAP and an early term used in the health promotion movement. See also whole-of-government. Reference: Adelaide Recommendations on Healthy Public Policy. Geneva, WHO, 1988.

Indicator

A health indicator is a characteristic of an individual, population, or environment which is subject to measurement (directly or indirectly) and can be used to describe one or more aspects of the health of an individual or population (quality, quantity and time).

Intersectoral action

Intersectoral action refers to the coordinated efforts of two or more sectors within government to improve health outcomes. This can include working across different levels of government such as district, provincial and national jurisdictions. The term intergovernment is sometimes used to refer to these horizontal and vertical linkages between levels of government within a country. Whole-of-government, joined-up government and healthy public policies are similar terms used in the HiAP literature.

Joined-up government

See whole-of-government.

Lifestyle

Lifestyle is a way of living based on identifiable patterns of behaviour which are determined by the interplay between an individual's personal characteristics, social interactions and socioeconomic and environmental living conditions.

Living conditions

Living conditions are the everyday environment of people, where they live, play and work. These living conditions are a product of social and economic circumstances and the physical environment – all of which can impact upon health – and are largely outside of the immediate control of the individual.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring can be defined as the systematic collection of data about an indicator or variable of interest. Evaluation, in contrast, involves a judgement about the value of or change in that variable.

Policy brief

A policy brief is a document which outlines the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate. It is part of the agenda setting and policy formation stages of the policy cycle.

Policy champion/entrepreneur

Policy champions and policy entrepreneurs are crucial to the HiAP approach. A policy champion is a person or team willing and able to lead and manage the policy process. Entrepreneurial policy-makers are able to break with habits and initiate new policies. Their creative acts have transformative effects on politics, policies or institutions.

Population health

The health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group. Crucial to the concept of population health is the idea that most cases in a population come from individuals with an average level of exposure (rather than high-risk groups). A small (clinically insignificant) change at a population level yields a greater impact on population health and well-being than an intervention on high-risk groups.

Primary health care

Primary health care is essential health care made accessible at a cost a country and community can afford, with methods that are practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable. Reference: Alma-Ata Declaration. Geneva, WHO, 1978.

Public health

Public health refers to all organized efforts of society to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole. Its activities aim to provide conditions in which people can be healthy and focus on entire populations, not on individual patients or diseases.

Risk conditions

The social, economic, geographical and environmental conditions into which people are born. They encompass the social determinants of health; condition and constrain health opportunities; and are causally associated with an increased probability of a disease or injury, lower self-reported health and with risk factors.

Risk factor

An attribute or exposure which is causally associated with an increased probability of a disease or injury.

Social determinants of health

The WHO CSDH defined this as the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness. The CSDH took a holistic view of social determinants of health, arguing that “the poor health of the poor, the social gradient in health within countries and the marked health inequities between countries are caused by the unequal distribution of power, income, goods and services.”

Stakeholder

A stakeholder is a person, or group of persons, who have an interest or concern in a particular process or issue due to direct or indirect involvement. Examples include government ministries, politicians, non-government organizations, religious organizations, research institutes, labour unions, professional associations and businesses.

Strategy

Broad lines of action to be taken to achieve goals and objectives, incorporating the identification of suitable points of intervention; ways of ensuring the involvement of other sectors; the range of political, social, economic, managerial and technical factors; as well as constraints and ways of dealing with them.

Universal health coverage

The goal of universal health coverage is to ensure that all people obtain the health services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them. This requires: a strong, efficient, well-run health system; a system for financing health services; access to essential medicines and technologies; and a sufficient capacity of well-trained, motivated health workers.

Wellness

Wellness is the optimal state of health of individuals and groups. There are two focal concerns: the realization of the fullest potential of an individual physically, psychologically, socially, spiritually and economically, and the fulfilment of one's role expectations in the family, community, place of worship, workplace and other settings.

Whole-of-government

A whole-of-government approach refers to the coordinated efforts of two or more sectors within government to improve health outcomes. This can include working across different levels of government such as district, provincial and national jurisdictions. Joined-up government and healthy public policies are similar terms used in the HiAP literature.

Whole-of-society

A whole-of-society approach refers to coordinated efforts to improve health by multiple stakeholders within and outside government that may also be from several sectors.

Window of opportunity

Windows of opportunity are short periods of time in which, simultaneously, a problem is recognized, a solution is available and the political climate is positive for policy change.



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