



Statement to the 73rd World Health Assembly

WHA 73 resolution: COVID-19 response [A73/CONF./1 Rev.1](#)

Reducing risk of COVID-19, Cancer & other NCDs

WCRF International, supported by NCD Alliance commend WHO & Member States for their leadership on COVID-19. We especially welcome the *COVID-19 Response* resolution's recognition of the need to leave no-one behind.

We are concerned that obesity & non-communicable diseases including cancer - leading risk factors for COVID-19 & complications - are worsened by pandemic & the response to it. Changing diet & physical activity patterns risk exacerbating these conditions & having a long-term health impact on populations, especially in vulnerable & low-income households.

COVID-19 has heightened the importance of access to healthy food & regular physical activity to people and the risk of becoming ill, access to treatment, & care have become priorities. Acting now with 'Best Buys' policies that support healthy diets & physical activity, as well as reduce alcohol use, tobacco & air pollution exposure, will build resilience to both communicable diseases & NCDs, alleviate strain on health systems & protect, improve & save lives from preventable cancers & NCDs.

As Member States develop COVID-19 responses, we urge governments to:

- **Ensure healthy & affordable food is available for all.**
- **Invest in nutrition, physical activity & other NCD prevention measures.** Policies that help reduce NCDs should be advanced alongside those combating infectious disease. Member States should scale up action to improve the health & resilience of populations & protect against secondary impacts & collateral damage.
- **Address actions that undermine health.** Food & beverage industries, as well as alcohol & tobacco industries have responded to minimise disruption to food supplies & businesses, but their actions risk compromising health. Conflict of interest should be recognised & policies protecting health, especially of children, should be implemented & enforced.

WCRF International also supports the UICC statement on the same agenda item.

This statement is supported by the World Obesity Federation and the Union for International Cancer Control.