

## **GIRONA DECLARATION**

*I Symposium on Health Promotion in the Mediterranean Arc*

*May 30, 2012*

Twenty six years after the Ottawa Charter the importance of promoting health for human development is underrated. In front of the demand of more individualistic and consumer health, we are looking at considering health as a resource for life. Placing the human being in the centre of policies, not as a user, but as a conscious citizen. Conceiving health promotion as a way to see and do, as a way to improve the populations health with the citizens, as a political and social global process to generate a better and more empowering role for people.

It is necessary to understand what happens in the environment in order to intervene from an ecological and systemic approach in an information, changing and globalized, society. It is essential to know how the various determinants of health shape and influence health and quality of life of the different social groups of people, while causing inequalities in their life contexts.

It is necessary to consider an integrated approach to health policies at different levels, cultures and areas of good governance, harmonizing macro and micro action plans, global and local, triggering participation and empowerment of citizens by sustainable and equitable actions, health respectful in all policies.

The flow and the background of experiences and the good practices serve as a benchmark and enhancer in the innovation and development of health promotion. It is necessary to evaluate to understand, document and transfer these experiences establishing a framework of common knowledge in the culture of evidence-based assets. An asset to health can be defined as any factor or resource that enhances the ability of individuals, communities and populations to maintain and promote health and wellness.

To ensure the training of all professionals involved in the various areas (health, social, education, work, community, etc.), the university plays an important role in the development of skills for the undergraduate and postgraduate level. Always starting from the main needs and potential of the population in terms of health, each territory should articulate a plan for continuous education, also adjusted to the characteristics of professionals and organizations, but based on WHO standards, EU, etc. A concrete and specific training is needed, linked to the fact proposed to change, in order to make it easier for the practice of health promotion.

A current challenge of health promotion is to get the evidence to understand our context and to encourage the most appropriate actions. For this purpose there are resources for identifying evidence, improving quality and enhancing effectiveness. The complement of approaches and

methodologies is necessary to strengthen knowledge management in health promotion, considering ethical criteria in decision-making.

To reformulate the way of understanding and promoting health, we must direct our gaze to a salutogenic focus and health assets. We must maximize the capacity that revitalizes the positive elements that people and communities possess. A global strategy, intersectoral and of local action, and an invitation to the different citizen actors that can be mobilized from healthy scenarios, including the digital environment, always developing healthy policies in order to invite choosing the healthiest option as the easiest to take.

The Mediterranean Arc offers advantages and opportunities for networking between countries and regions.