

## WHF urges countries to develop cardiovascular action plans, launches global petition

**Geneva, 27 September 2024:** The World Heart Federation (WHF) is today launching a [global petition](#), urging all countries to have a ‘National Cardiovascular Action Plan’ to tackle heart disease, the world’s number one killer. Improving cardiovascular health requires strategies that are tailored to the national, regional, and local context, and must take the socioeconomic environment and healthcare system into account, they argue.

Marking this year’s World Heart Day with the petition launch, the WHF hopes the call to action will inspire a more robust and coordinated response to cardiovascular disease (CVD), which is responsible for more than 20.5 million deaths every year.

As many as 80% of these deaths from heart attacks and strokes are preventable, but early findings by WHF show that as few as 7% of countries have standalone plans or strategies to tackle CVD. In contrast, 87% of countries have already developed National Cancer Action Plans, demonstrating the progress that must be made to improve cardiovascular health.

So far, most of the countries with a standalone National CVD Action Plan or Strategy in place are based in Europe and the Western Pacific Region.

The staggering number of deaths from heart disease combined with scarce plans to tackle the disease, highlights the urgent need for the remaining countries to develop tailored strategies to address cardiovascular disease.

For over two decades, WHF has been leading the World Heart Day movement, which is celebrated every year on 29 September – raising awareness about CVD, calling for better healthcare policies and more funding for heart health research.

This World Heart Day, WHF aims to secure over a million signatures to send a strong message and urge elected leaders to make a bold political declaration at the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases in 2025.

**Jean-Luc Eiselé, Chief Executive of World Heart Federation said:** “Cardiovascular disease claims more lives than all forms of cancer and chronic lower respiratory disease combined yet efforts to combat CVD at a national level fall short almost everywhere in the world. We have the knowledge and tools to improve cardiovascular health outcomes and give everyone access to appropriate care.

“A National Cardiovascular Action Plan acts as a strategic tool to reduce premature deaths from heart disease and stroke, while also cutting healthcare costs and losses due to low productivity—in turn, saving hundreds of billions of dollars annually worldwide.

“This World Heart Day, we encourage people all over the world to sign our petition and send a powerful message to all political leaders that an action plan is necessary to improve heart health and prevent premature deaths caused by CVD. Nations need to develop tailored plans to protect communities from the world’s biggest killer.”

Sign the first-ever global petition for health heart here: <https://world-heart-federation.org/world-heart-day/petition/>

**ENDS**

**ABOUT WORLD HEART FEDERATION**

The [World Heart Federation \(WHF\)](#) is an umbrella organisation representing the global cardiovascular community, uniting more than 200 patient, scientific and civil society groups. Together with its Members, WHF influences policies, shares knowledge, and inspires behaviour change to achieve heart health for everyone.

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