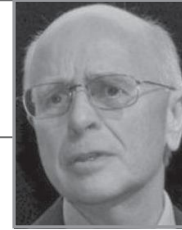


FIFA 11 FOR HEALTH UPDATE

Fuller C

FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre, Nottingham,
United Kingdom



Introduction

The social and economic burden associated with communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), malaria and gastrointestinal diseases is a major concern in many developing countries. While communicable diseases will continue to be a major problem, non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity are a growing issue and World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that without the introduction of appropriate preventive action, non-communicable diseases will become the greater problem by 2030.

There is evidence that programmes providing regular physical exercise and advocating a controlled diet can reduce obesity levels and the prevalence of associated non-communicable diseases; however, health education leading to changes in people's attitudes and behaviours remains the best approach for reducing the problems associated with communicable diseases. Therefore, a programme delivering health education and physical activity offers great potential for addressing the health issues associated with both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

In 2006, an initiative was started to develop a health education programme that used the popularity of football to encourage greater physical activity and to deliver health education to children in developing countries. This programme, which is known as the "FIFA 11 for Health" and consists of 11 simple messages linked with 11 football skills, is designed to address the most common risk factors for communicable and non-communicable diseases. The programme was developed initially as a medical legacy for the FIFA World Cup 2010 South Africa, where it has already been implemented in 12 countries. The programme has also been implemented in Latin America in association with other FIFA tournaments: FIFA U-17 World Cup 2011 in Mexico, FIFA U-20 World Cup 2011 in Colombia and FIFA World Cup 2014 in Brazil.

Current and future developments

FIFA implementation strategy was adopted for implementations of the "FIFA 11 for Health" programme in all countries on five continents over the period 2010 to 2015.

Current developments are aimed at enhancing the delivery of the existing programme within a rapidly growing number of countries where health concerns are mainly focused on non-communicable diseases.