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PRESS RELEASE

One Billion People Globally Estimated to be Living with Obesity by 2030

Call for Global Action Plan on Obesity at World Health Assembly in May 2022

- The [World Obesity Atlas 2022](#), published by the [World Obesity Federation](#), predicts that one billion people globally, including 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men, will be living with obesity by 2030.
- The findings highlight that countries will not only miss the 2025 WHO target to halt the rise in obesity at 2010 levels, but that the number of people with obesity is on course to double across the globe.
- The greatest number of people living with obesity are in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with numbers more than doubling across all LMICs, and tripling in low income countries, compared to 2010.
- The report presents a new Obesity-Non Communicable Disease (NCD) Preparedness Index, showing that the 30 most prepared countries are all high income, while the 30 least prepared countries are all lower middle and low income countries, adding to concerns about the impact of inaction on already vulnerable populations.
- There is a global call to end the misunderstanding, fragmentation, underinvestment in and stigmatisation of obesity that is driving this systemic failure; governments around the world must work with WHO to develop a comprehensive Global Action Plan on Obesity.

The World Obesity Federation today published its fourth World Obesity Atlas, which this year provides predictions for the prevalence of obesity in men, women and children in 2030 and presents a new index for ranking countries in terms of their preparedness for obesity, including their health systems.

Published on World Obesity Day, a global awareness day calling for action to address the impact of obesity, the Atlas report estimates that by 2030 a billion people globally will be living with obesity.

Johanna Ralston, CEO World Obesity Federation said:

“Political and public health leaders need to recognise the gravity of the obesity challenge, and take action. The numbers in our report are shocking, but what is even more shocking is how inadequate our response has been. Everyone has a basic right to prevention, treatment and management access which works for them. Now is the time for joined up, decisive and people centred action to turn the tide on obesity.”

“It is clear we will not meet the 2025 UN targets to halt the rise of obesity, however we do have reasons to be optimistic. Every year we are increasing our scientific understanding of obesity, more people than ever are demanding action in their communities, and the recent momentum on securing WHO led coordination through a Global Action Plan on Obesity means we should remain hopeful. But the missed opportunity of the last decade should be a warning that success will only come if we all work together and invest in implementing and supporting comprehensive actions to prevent, manage and treat obesity throughout the life

course.”

The Changing Global Landscape

Obesity rates continue to rise, and by 2030 it is predicted that the number of people with obesity globally will have doubled since 2010. While the lack of progress on reducing obesity is a worldwide issue, each region has its own story. In parts of Europe and North America obesity is starting to plateau, albeit at a high rate, while it is rising fastest in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs) as well as Small Island Developing States (SIDS), adding pressure to many countries also grappling with malnutrition.

The highest rates of obesity are still found in the WHO Americas region for both men and women. However, while the Americas are predicted to have a 1.5 fold increase between 2010 and 2030, the numbers in Africa are expected to triple by 2030; from 8 million (2010) to 27 million men (2030) and 26 million (2010) to 74 million women (2030).

It is also notable that half of all women with obesity live in 11 countries: USA, China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. At the same time, half of all men with obesity live in 9 countries: USA, China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Egypt, Germany and Turkey. Of these countries, the USA has the highest prevalence for men and Egypt the highest for women.

Especially concerning are the countries that feature in both the top 20 rankings for prevalence and number of people living with obesity projections; namely USA, Egypt, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

Global Preparedness - Obesity-NCD Preparedness Index

National governments must take action to prevent the rise of obesity, while also ensuring that people already living with obesity have access to appropriate health services to support weight management and related diseases.

The World Obesity Atlas has developed the first measurement of a country's preparedness for high levels of obesity, 'The Obesity-NCD Preparedness Ranking', using evidence of a country's health system relating to non-communicable diseases.

The preparedness rankings vary significantly across national income levels and geographical regions. While the 30 most prepared countries are all high income, the 30 least prepared countries are, unsurprisingly, all lower middle and low income countries, adding to concerns about the impact of inaction on already vulnerable populations.

The prevention of obesity, as well as early intervention and treatment, through government policy is vital. This is critical to ensure that health services are not overwhelmed and are able to provide the necessary care to those who need it.

Calling for a Global Action Plan on Obesity

In response to the report's findings, global health experts and advocates have made a united call for a Global Action Plan on Obesity through an open letter to health leaders, ahead of the World Health Assembly in May 2022.

Over 150 individuals have signed the letter to date, including World Obesity Federation President, Professor John Wilding, with their shared voice stating:

“For too long we have all failed on obesity, and have witnessed generations of misunderstanding, fragmentation, underinvestment in and stigmatisation of obesity and those affected by it. As a result, the world is catastrophically now off track to meet the WHO

2025 obesity targets which all world leaders committed to in 2013. It is time to deliver a comprehensive, cohesive and integrated approach to prevent and treat obesity.”

The Global Action Plan on obesity would bring together existing actions, including WHO’s draft recommendations and wider work to develop an Acceleration Plan on obesity in priority countries, under one framework. The plan should put individuals at the centre, cover prevention and treatment across the life course, be adaptable for different contexts and serve as the backbone for national action on obesity.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Spokespeople and experts are available on request for analysis and response to the Global Obesity Atlas 2022.

1. Global Obesity Atlas 2022

- [Embargoed link to report](#)
- Public link to use once embargo lifts: www.worldobesityday.org/policy-makers
- Social: #WorldObesityAtlas #WOD22 #WorldObesityDay

2. Images

- Our Image Bank forms a gallery of free-to-use images to ensure accurate, non-biased, respectful images.
- <https://www.worldobesity.org/resources/image-bank>

3. Open Letter – Calling for a WHO Global Action Plan on Obesity

- [Embargoed copy of letter](#)
- Public link to use once embargo lifts: www.worldobesityday.org/policy-makers

4. World Obesity Federation

The World Obesity Federation (<https://www.worldobesity.org/>) is the only global organisation focused exclusively on obesity. It brings together member organisations dedicated to solving the problems of obesity, representing professional members of the scientific, medical and research communities from over 50 regional and national obesity associations. The World Obesity Federation is a lead partner to global agencies on obesity, including WHO – with which it has formal consultative status, approved by the World Health Assembly.

5. World Obesity Day

World Obesity Day takes place on 4th March every year to increase awareness of obesity as a disease, encourage advocacy to change the way obesity is addressed across society, improve policies by creating a healthy environment that prioritises obesity as a health issue, and creating platforms to share experiences.

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Headline Data Tables

Source: World Bank

	number of countries	2010 OB30+ prevalence	2025 OB30+ prevalence	2030 OB30+ prevalence	2010 OB30+ number	2025 OB30+ number	2030 OB30+ number
High income	61	21.8%	28.9%	31.5%	191,093,859	279,666,212	310,033,422
Upper middle income	54	11.2%	17.0%	18.8%	189,751,964	329,816,019	375,081,815
Lower middle income	54	6.7%	10.7%	11.7%	111,290,435	238,274,062	283,296,858
Low income	26	6.4%	10.0%	11.1%	14,435,572	36,521,181	47,412,188
unclassified	5	24.7%	31.0%	33.3%	4,728,429	7,477,582	8,912,331
GLOBAL	200	11.4%	16.1%	17.5%	511,300,259	891,755,056	1,024,736,614

Table 1.0: Estimated global prevalence and numbers of adults living with obesity in 2010–2030

Adult obesity prevalence	2010		2025		2030	
	% adults	number	% adults	number	% adults	number
Obesity (Class I, II and III) BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$	11.4%	511m	16.1%	892m	17.5%	1,025m
of which, severe obesity (Class II and III) BMI $\geq 35\text{kg/m}^2$	3.2%	143m	5.1%	284m	5.7%	333m
and of these, severe obesity (Class III) BMI $\geq 40\text{kg/m}^2$	0.9%	42m	1.7%	93m	1.9%	111m

Source: NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (2017), UN Population Division and World Obesity Federation projections

Table 2.3: Estimated prevalence of obesity BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$ - top 20 countries globally amongst men and women by 2030

Women			Men		
Country	Prevalence %	Number	Country	Prevalence %	Number
American Samoa	69	17	Nauru	67	3.3
Cook Islands	69	3.4	Cook Islands	66	3.3
Nauru	68	3.4	American Samoa	66	16
Palau	68	3.5	Palau	65	3.2
Tuvalu	67	3.4	Tuvalu	61	3.1
Niue	66	0.3	Marshall Islands	60	3.0
Marshall Islands	65	3.3	Niue	58	0.3
Samoa	65	39	French Polynesia	58	63
Tonga	65	22	Tokelau	54	2.74
French Polynesia	63	69	Kiribati	54	20
Tokelau	63	3.2	Tonga	54	17
Micronesia (Federated States of)	62	24	Micronesia (Federated States of)	52	20
Kiribati	61	25	Samoa	52	33
Kuwait	52	706	United States of America	47	61,100
Jordan	52	1,730	Qatar	43	906
Egypt	52	18,425	Kuwait	42	960
Saudi Arabia	51	5,790	Saudi Arabia	41	6,840
Qatar	51	314	New Zealand	40	756
United Arab Emirates	50	1,209	Australia	39	4,080
Turkey	50	16,346	Canada	39	6,265

Source: NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (2017), UN Population Division and World Obesity Federation projections

Table 2.4: Estimated number of adults with BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$ - top 20 countries globally for women and men by 2030

Women			Men		
Country	Number	Prevalence %	Country	Number	Prevalence %
GLOBAL	586m	20	GLOBAL	434m	15
United States of America	64m	47	United States of America	61m	47
China	60m	10	China	55m	10
India	40m	8	India	24m	4
Brazil	29m	33	Brazil	21m	26
Mexico	21m	41	Mexico	15m	32
Egypt	18m	52	Russian Federation	12m	24
Russian Federation	18m	30	Egypt	11m	31
Turkey	16m	50	Turkey	11m	34
Indonesia	14m	14	Germany	10m	32
Iran	14m	42	United Kingdom	10m	37
Pakistan	13m	17	Iran	9m	28
Nigeria	13m	20	Indonesia	8m	8
South Africa	11m	50	Pakistan	7m	9
United Kingdom	10m	37	France	7m	29
Germany	9m	25	Saudi Arabia	7m	41
Algeria	7m	46	Italy	6m	26
France	7m	26	Canada	6m	39
Colombia	7m	34	Spain	6m	32
Argentina	6m	36	Argentina	6m	35
Iraq	6m	45	South Africa	5m	23

Source: NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (2017), UN Population Division and World Obesity Federation projections