

Reporting Summary

Nature Portfolio wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Portfolio policies, see our [Editorial Policies](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a Confirmed

- ☒ ☐ The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
- ☒ ☐ A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
- ☒ ☐ The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.
- ☒ ☐ A description of all covariates tested
- ☒ ☐ A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
- ☒ ☐ A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
- ☒ ☐ For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.
- ☒ ☐ For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
- ☒ ☐ For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
- ☒ ☐ Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection

Data analysis

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Portfolio [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A description of any restrictions on data availability
- For clinical datasets or third party data, please ensure that the statement adheres to our [policy](#)

All data supporting the findings of this study are included in the manuscript or the supplementary information. Due to privacy concerns, individual participant and de-identifiable data will not be made publicly available. The GoPA! Policy Directory, which serves as a publicly accessible surveillance resource, is available at: <https://new.globalphysicalactivityobservatory.com/directory.php>

Research involving human participants, their data, or biological material

Policy information about studies with [human participants or human data](#). See also policy information about [sex, gender \(identity/presentation\), and sexual orientation](#) and [race, ethnicity and racism](#).

Reporting on sex and gender	Efforts were made to ensure gender balance and regional diversity in the sample of key informants.
Reporting on race, ethnicity, or other socially relevant groupings	Efforts were made to ensure gender balance and regional diversity in the sample of key informants.
Population characteristics	We aimed at recruiting participants including influential leaders, experts, and actors within and beyond the community of physical activity such as government officials, civil society representatives, academics, and experts, among others. Interviewees were selected based on their expertise and delineated by the ISPAH 'best investments that work' for physical activity. Interviewees included experts in public health topics historically and currently linked to physical activity, such as nutrition, tobacco, obesity, disability, and climate change. Participants were categorized as either within or outside the physical activity community. Actors within the physical activity community were identified as: 1) Leaders of organizations within government or supranational organizations with responsibility for policy issues and decision making (e.g., resource allocation). For example, policymakers (national or subnational decision makers) that inform public policy, technical officials, heads of unit/department/office, directors, presidents, ministers from sectors directly concerned with physical activity - usually health, education (minimally via physical education), and sport; may have influenced the policy agenda; may be employed by prominent international organizations (governmental, non-governmental), agencies, foundations. 2) Experts that have observed the dynamics and that have influence in decision making. For example, researchers, advisors, consultants, advocates. Their research/work is aligned with physical activity-relevant topics or aimed at informing physical activity policy; may have carried out policy evaluations; may be known for their leadership in working to translate and disseminate their work to policymakers; may be part of societies, networks, collaborating centers, associations, academic institutions. Actors outside the physical activity community were identified as: individuals who potentially have the resources that the physical activity community needs to understand their perceptions and interests. For example, policymakers (national or subnational decision makers) that inform public policy, technical officials, heads of unit/department/office, directors, presidents, ministers from other sectors (transport, environment, urban/rural planning, tourism, work and employment, public finance); may be employed by prominent international organizations (governmental, non-governmental), agencies, foundations; may have first-hand experience of developing, implementing or evaluating interventions that directly or indirectly promote physical activity.
Recruitment	Previous research by Shawar and Shiffman, examining the global priority of a health issue, required around 25-30 key informant interviews. In this study, we aimed at recruiting a similar number of participants including influential leaders, experts, and actors within and beyond the community of physical activity such as government officials, civil society representatives, academics, and experts, among others. The exact number of key informant interviews was established upon reaching theoretical saturation.
Ethics oversight	This study was approved by the IRB from The University of Texas Health Science Centre at Houston (UTHealth Houston) School of Public Health, USA and Johns Hopkins University, USA (IRB #HSC-SPH-24-0032). All participants provided oral and written consent to participate in the study.

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☐ Life sciences ☒ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	Qualitative case design that triangulated data from key informant interviewees and literature from peer-reviewed research and grey literature including organizational reports, media, and policy documents organized as the Global Observatory for Physical Activity – GoPA! Policy Directory.
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Research sample	Interviewees were selected based on their expertise and delineated by the ISPAH 'best investments that work' for physical activity. Interviewees included experts in public health topics historically and currently linked to physical activity, such as nutrition, tobacco, obesity, disability, and climate change. This strategic decision aimed to incorporate diverse and broad perspectives from professionals who understand the interconnectedness of these issues and their relationship to physical activity and policy. Efforts were made to ensure gender balance and regional diversity in the sample of key informants.
Sampling strategy	We used purposive sampling until reaching theoretical saturation.
Data collection	Interviews lasted an average of 1 hour and took place over Zoom in a quiet, non-public place throughout March and April 2024. An audio recording was taken (upon receiving consent from the key informant), and we also took notes during the interview. We uploaded the recording and notes on a shared drive, within a password-protected file. In addition, we uploaded an Excel file with the actual names of participants and codes to recognize them in the transcribed documents; the word documents were referenced via a code rather than the actual participant's name. No repeat interviews carried out and no transcripts returned to participants for comment, correction, or feedback. As each transcript was completed and available, the lead author made a close reading of the transcript, carried out a deductive thematic or theory-driven analysis, drawing on social science scholarship. The de-identified transcripts of the interviews were coded by the lead author with co-authors' support on Microsoft Office Word (April 2024).
Timing	Interviews were conducted throughout March and April 2024.
Data exclusions	No data were excluded from the analyses.
Non-participation	Non-participation (n=14, 23.3%) was due to conflicting schedules. 46 were interviewed (response rate = 76.7%).
Randomization	Participants were not allocated into experimental groups.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology and archaeology
☒	☐ Animals and other organisms
☒	☐ Clinical data
☒	☐ Dual use research of concern
☒	☐ Plants

Methods

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging

Plants

Seed stocks	n/a
Novel plant genotypes	n/a
Authentication	n/a