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Global Health Challenge made me healthier: Grace Fombad



 Dr. Grace Fombad, Chief Medical Officer from UNECA



The Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health held the very popular UN Global Health Challenge from October to December 2019, in an effort to encourage physical activity among UN staff members around the globe through walking.

Within these two months, participants reported many positive changes, not only in their physical health, but also in their mental and emotional well-being.

We will be featuring some of their stories in the following weeks.

The first in the series is Dr. Grace Fombad, Chief Medical Officer from the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Addis Ababa, who shares her experience:

Thank you for this motivational move. The target of walking and running 10,000 steps a day has been my habit for years.

However, doing it in a group and in a competition gives a different impetus to it. I felt an obligation not to let my group down even when I felt lazy to embark on the activity.

This is the benefit of doing it together.

As the days go by, I continuously lost the kilos I have been fighting with. Colleagues in the duty station have consulted me to know what I do to make the 10,000 steps every day.


It takes me a little over one hour to clock the figure and whatever additional steps done during the day are a bonus.

To me, this is a lifestyle and I will continue even without the competition.

The UN Global Health Challenge may be finished for now, but you can still improve your own health by choosing to walk a little more each day.

Get ready to join in the next challenge!

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Submitted by JSONGE on Thu, 02/06/2020 - 07:02

congratulations this is very inspiring!

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Wednesday, 12 February 2020 | Phnom Penh | DOS | DHMOSH

The Global Health Challenge made me healthier: Kimlong Sain



📷 "I get up early and start walking. I feel very relaxed and very happy," says Kimlong Sain.



This is the second in a series of articles on how the 2019 UN Global Health Challenge, organized by the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH), encouraged physical activity among UN staff members and made a positive impact on staff.

Kimlong Sain, UNICEF Education Officer in Phnom Penh, shares his experience:

It was the greatest challenge I've ever done in my life and it has changed my habits dramatically!

I used to hate walking since childhood. Until recently, I went everywhere by motorbike or car even if it was not very far, even if it was only a few hundred metres.

Now, after doing this Global Health Challenge, I feel that I can walk much faster and I am much healthier. I can walk 5 – 7 kilometres without feeling tired.

I've become very strong and I feel that I can walk longer and longer every day. I get up early and start walking. I feel very relaxed and very happy. I am now fit physically and mentally.

My weight has stayed the same (at 67kg) and I feel much faster than before I joined the walking event.

From the Global Health Challenge, I learned that I feel very happy when I walk, and I now want to walk more and more. I have continued to walk even after the event concluded on 15 December.

Many thanks for allowing us to participate in this useful and important event.

Even though the UN Global Health Challenge is finished for now, you can improve your own health by choosing to walk a little more each day.




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Wednesday, 19 February 2020 | New York | DOS | DHMOSH

The Global Health Challenge made me healthier: Mario Gatti



📷 Mario Gatti, Senior Language Reference Assistant in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in New York.



This is the third in a series of articles on how the 2019 UN Global Health Challenge, organized by the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH), encouraged physical activity among UN staff members and made a positive impact on staff.

Mario Gatti, Senior Language Reference Assistant in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) in New York, shares his experience:

Thanks for organizing this event. It was fun and I feel really great after 2 months of walking all over New York City.

I've started using my health app, which I never ever checked before.

I started to walk to work and back and take some walks in the evening and weekends. Some of my family members also joined me on my walks. They were a great time for a good conversation.

I was able to double my average daily steps - culminating with my personal best on the last day...15 December!

Although I've already crossed the finish line, I will try to continue walking, but will add more gym and bike time instead of just silly walking around the block and the coffee table just to add more steps!

Even though the UN Global Health Challenge is finished for now, you can improve your own health by choosing to walk a little more each day.




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Wednesday, 26 February 2020 | Bamako | DOS | DHMOSH

The Global Health Challenge made me healthier: Ruth Chidyagwai



Ruth Chidyagwai, Senior Staff Assistant from United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)



This is the fourth in a series of articles on how the 2019 UN Global Health Challenge, organized by the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH), encouraged physical activity among UN staff members and made a positive impact on staff.

Ruth Chidyagwai, Senior Staff Assistant at the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), shares her experience:

Thank you for organizing this Global Health Challenge. This is a very good initiative to encourage staff members to take care of ourselves. Connecting with others globally and seeing their progress really helped to keep us motivated.

Every day, I would walk for half an hour while watching the sun rise. It is very meditative. Just being outside, connected with nature, cleared my mind and started my day with positive energy.

By the time I get to the office, I've already reached my target of 6000 steps. I feel energized. I have zen. I feel happier and full of enthusiasm.

At work, I am on and off my desk, walking to other people's offices instead of calling. By lunch time, I am at 10-12k steps and by the end of day, I am at 21k.

Walking, doing yoga, exercising, and eating healthy have become part of my daily routine.

I feel light all the time and my body feels strong, toned, and relaxed. My lower back pain is gone, and my sleep has improved tremendously.

Resisting a sedentary lifestyle has relieved me of stress, boosted my creativity and problem-solving skills, and gave me new perspectives.

My life has completely changed, and I shall continue to walk even after [the end of the programme].

Even though the UN Global Health Challenge is finished for now, you can improve your own health by choosing to walk a little more each day.




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Wednesday, 4 March 2020 | Worldwide | DOS | DHMOSH

The Global Health Challenge made me healthier (part 5)



 Hebatallah Zohni from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management



This is the fifth in a series of articles on how the 2019 UN Global Health Challenge, organized by the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH), encouraged physical activity among UN staff members and made a positive impact on staff.

Nadeem Hassan, from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in Islamabad, Pakistan, writes:

It is an immense pleasure to announce that the UN Global health Challenge brought life in me.

I was 94 kg and now I am 83.8. I finished second in my team, Team Pakistan. It's simply an awesome feeling.

What a great ending to the year! Looking forward to doing more for my well-being. Thank you, GHC2019!

For Hebatallah Zohni, from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, she feels:


The Global Health Challenge made me more committed. I wake up every day with a target in mind – to achieve 10,000 steps. I had to organize my day accordingly and make sure that I reach my target or exceed it.

GHC made me more motivated. When the clock strikes 8 pm and I still hadn't achieved my 10k steps, I would run to the gym to reach it.

GHC made me healthier. I lost weight, I eat healthier, I feel lighter, and I am much happier.

Even though the UN Global Health Challenge is finished for now, you can improve your own health by choosing to walk a little more each day. Get ready to join in the next challenge!

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