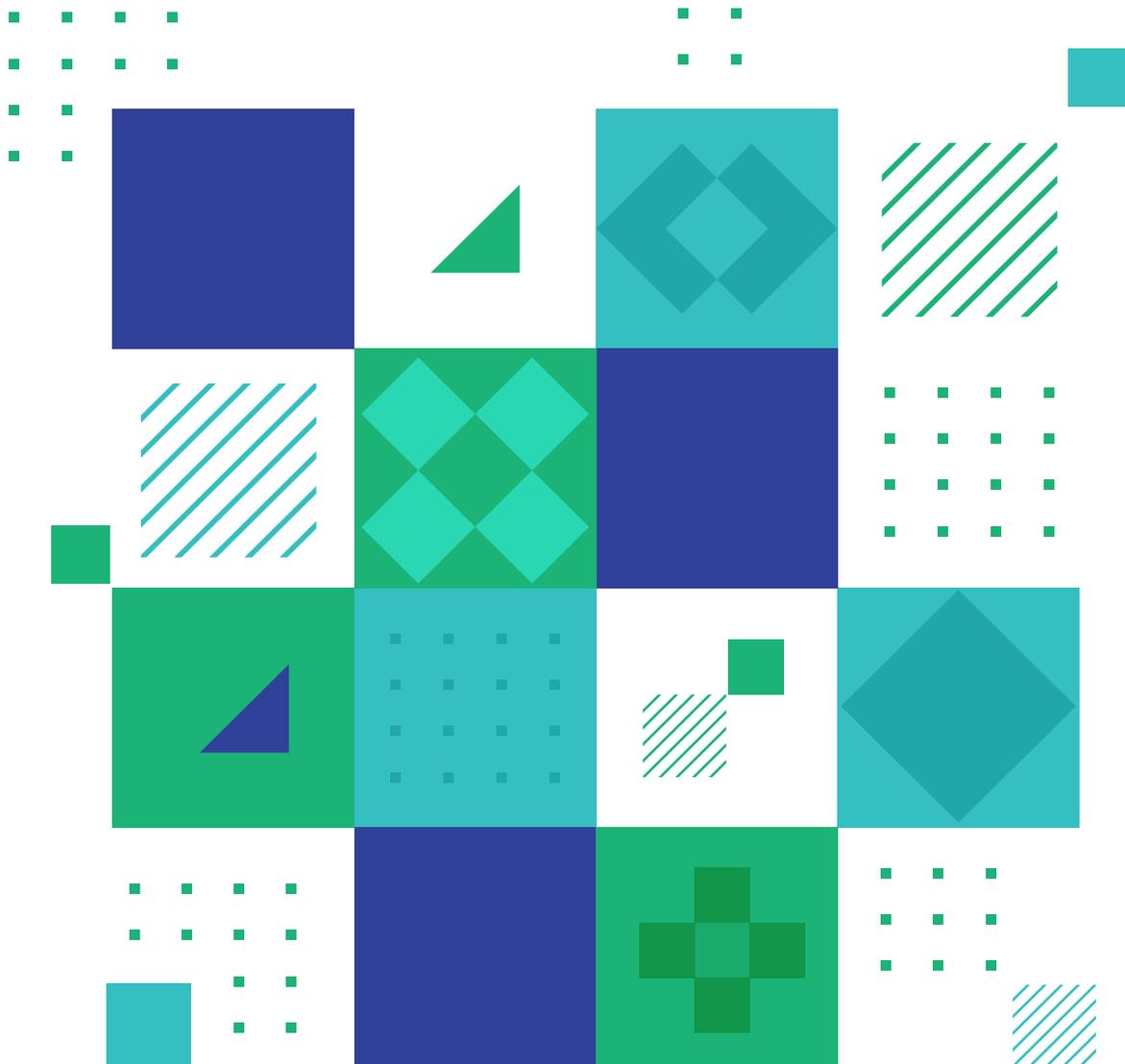


Health

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Glossary

of Terms 2021

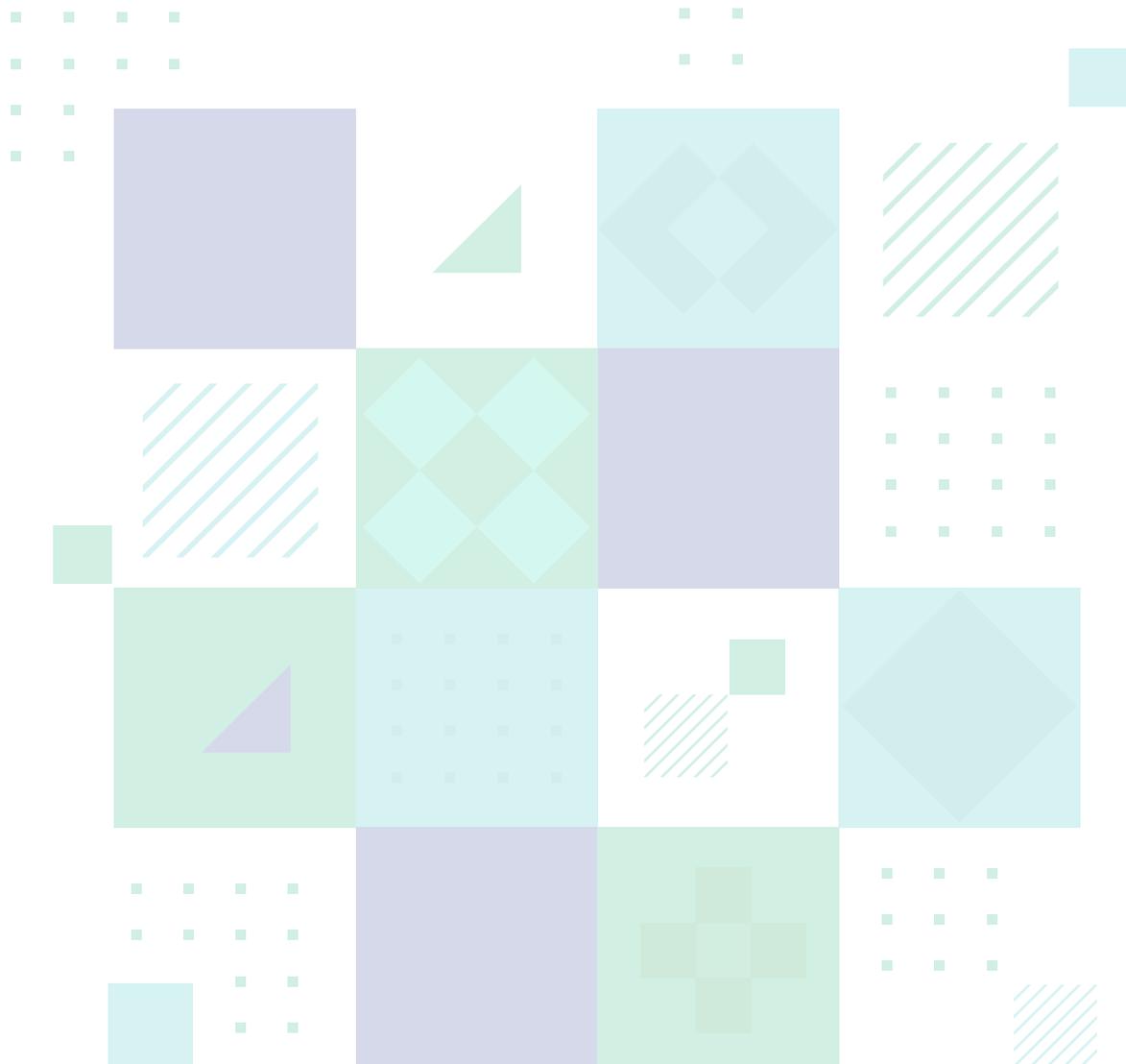


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Introduction

The first edition of this *Health promotion glossary* was commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1986 as a guide to readers of WHO publications and other materials. It was published in the first volume of the *Health Promotion* journal in the same year (Nutbeam 1986). Its original purpose was to help clarify the meaning and relationship between many terms that were then not commonly used. The original glossary supported preparatory work for the first WHO International Conference on Health Promotion, held in Ottawa in 1986, and the subsequent development of the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*. It underwent a full revision in 1998 following the 4th International Conference on Health Promotion, held in Jakarta in 1997 (Nutbeam 1998). An addendum report on new terms in health promotion was published in 2006 (Smith, Tang, Nutbeam 2006).

An updated glossary of terms contributes to discussions around the forthcoming 10th Global Conference on Health Promotion, to be held in December 2021. Especially since its focus on well-being will include many stakeholders with professional perspectives outside of the health sector.

With more than 35 years of experience, and continued evolution and development of ideas since the production of the first glossary, this current version provides an updated overview of the many concepts and terms that are central to contemporary health promotion. As previously, the basic aim of the glossary is to facilitate communication both between and within countries, and among the professions and sectors directly and/or indirectly contributing to the promotion of health.

Many terms will undergo further refinement and new terms will need to be included. Notably, terms that relate to the health impacts of digital transformation and other technical innovations shall require further attention. We invite broad and active involvement in future shaping of the glossary so it continues to reflect the most up-to-date understanding of health promotion concepts, strategies and their practical application in countries.

This version of the glossary is substantially changed from the original. Some terms have been omitted, many have been modified in light of practical experiences and the evolution in concepts, and new terms have been added. The list of terms is not intended to be either exhaustive or exclusive, and draws upon the wide range of disciplines in which health promotion has its roots. Wherever possible, definitions are sourced or derived from existing, publicly accessible WHO documents. Specific sources are referenced, and where possible a web link is also provided to facilitate access to source documents. Hyperlinks were correct at the time of publication but are subject

to inevitable change. In some examples the definitions have been adapted to reflect the application of a term to the current health promotion context. Where relevant, this focus is acknowledged in individual definitions.

The definitions are intentionally concise and are not intended as full interpretations, which may be found in other publications. For each definition, short notes of explanation have been added.

Definitions by their very nature are restrictive, often representing summaries of complex ideas and actions. The use of terms is often context-specific, and influenced by different social, cultural and economic conditions found in specific countries or communities. Despite these obvious restrictions, the glossary has been assembled to enable as wide an audience as possible to understand the basic ideas and concepts that are central to the development of health promotion.

Notes on the use of the glossary

The glossary comprises two sections. The first contains core definitions that are central to the concept and principles of health promotion, which are described in some detail. This is followed by the main section that provides an extended list of 47 terms that are commonly used in relation to health promotion.

Some of the definitions are original to the glossary or are composites of definitions that reflect different and evolving perspectives on individual terms. Some definitions remain the same as the previous (1998) version of the glossary (referred to as “unmodified”), many have been modified – either in the definition or accompanying commentary – to account for changes in use and evolution in concepts (referred to as “modified definition”/ “modified commentary”), and some are new additions to this edition of the glossary (referred to as “new term”).

Some terms are highlighted in *italics* to assist the reader in cross-referencing with other definitions. This cross-referencing is intended to improve understanding of the inter-relationships between different terms and concepts.

References

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