



Wellness & Government Initiative Briefing Paper 2017

What is the aim of your initiative?

To empower wellness worldwide, the Wellness & Government Initiative is capturing and sharing inspiring stories and best practices from well-being leaders – people who are striving to use government as an instrument for making well-being a priority, from small towns to entire nations.

What or who are the current “news makers” or trends in the initiative’s industry/sector?

The fact that governments today are taking wellness seriously is newsworthy in itself. A better life for everyone supports the cultural development and economic growth of towns, regions and entire nations. In fact, we’ve identified 20+ tools governments are utilizing to set new standards and strategies for the wellness of their citizens. Governments are creating pioneering roles, such as the United Arab Emirates’ Minister of the State of Happiness and Ecuador’s Minister of Good Living, to make citizen well-being a priority alongside economic vitality.

Name some (high level) challenges facing your industry/sector?

Concrete wellness initiatives are taking place in governments/countries around the world. However, turning initiatives into everyday realities that benefit all demographics is a big hurdle to overcome. This is a leadership challenge of “walking the talk” through strategy, policy, values, collaboration and action.

Where do you see the opportunities for industry/sector?

One of the chief opportunities is to maintain the positive wellness momentum. We are collectively engaged in a global wellness revolution—it takes time and will happen over time. For sustainable change, governments must create their wellness narrative and key messages, equip people with the appropriate tools, and use their strategic platforms and viral tools to communicate about wellness in ways that are authentic, clear and repeated. The higher aim? Governments at all levels become an invitation to wellness for their citizens.

Are there any “heroes” (either companies or individuals) who stand out in your industry/sector?

This past year, we’ve seen governmental wellness heroes from:

- **Japan:** Yoshihide Esaki, Director, Healthcare Service Industries Division, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and Naoko Nakajima, Director, Hot Spring Conservation and Use Promotion Office, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment
- **Bhutan:** H.E. Mr Jigmi Thinley, Former Prime Minister
- **United States of America:** Serge Dedina, Mayor, Imperial Beach, California
- **United Nations:** Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, University Professor, Columbia University, and Senior Advisor on Sustainable Development to the Secretary General of the United Nations
- **United Kingdom:** Dr. Jan Emmanuel De Neve, Associate Professor of Economics and Strategy, Saïd Business School & Fellow, Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford
- **Mexico:** Alejandro Ortiz Carbajal, Key Wellness Leader of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

We will continue to capture and share stories of more wellness heroes in the future.

Is there noteworthy investment happening in your industry/sector?

Many governments are investing in wellness through internally-focused metrics, strategies, and policies for better living conditions and quality of life for citizens. Plus, they are investing in externally-focused efforts to increase wellness tourism, attract new business and promote economic development in their regions.

Name any key accomplishments (milestones) made by your initiative?

Our interviews reflecting inspired well-being leadership at a governmental level are available on the website:

<https://www.globalwellnessinstitute.org/wellness-and-government-resources>.

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