

Marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children

The Sixty-third World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: implementation of the global strategy and its annexed set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children;¹

Recalling resolutions WHA53.17 on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and WHA60.23 on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: implementation of the global strategy;

Reaffirming its commitment to acting on two of the main risk factors for noncommunicable diseases, namely, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, through the implementation of the Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health, endorsed by the Health Assembly in 2004 (resolution WHA57.17), and the action plan for the global strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases,² endorsed by the Health Assembly in 2008 (resolution WHA61.14);

Deeply concerned about the high and increasing prevalence of noncommunicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries which, together with the communicable diseases still affecting the poor, contribute to a double burden of disease which has serious implications for poverty reduction and economic development and widens health gaps between and within countries;

Deeply concerned that in 2010 it is estimated that more than 42 million children under the age of five years will be overweight or obese, of whom nearly 35 million are living in developing countries, and also concerned that in most parts of the world the prevalence of childhood obesity is increasing rapidly;

Recognizing that unhealthy diet is one of the main risk factors for noncommunicable diseases and that the risks presented by unhealthy diets start in childhood and build up throughout life;

Recognizing that unhealthy diets are associated with overweight and obesity and that children should maintain a healthy weight and consume foods that are low in saturated fat, *trans*-fatty acids, free sugars, or salt in order to reduce future risk of noncommunicable diseases;

¹ Document A63/12.

² Document A61/2008/REC/1, Annex 3.

Cognizant of the research that shows that food advertising to children is extensive and other forms of marketing of food to children are widespread across the world;

Recognizing that a significant amount of this marketing is for foods with a high content of fat, sugar or salt and that television advertising influences children's food preferences, purchase requests and consumption patterns;

Recognizing the steps taken so far by segments of the private sector to reduce the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, while noting the importance of independent and transparent monitoring of commitments made by the private sector at national and global levels;

Recognizing that some Member States have already introduced legislation and national policies on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children,

1. ENDORSES the set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children;¹

2. URGES Member States:

(1) to take necessary measures to implement the recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, while taking into account existing legislation and policies, as appropriate;

(2) to identify the most suitable policy approach given national circumstances and develop new and/or strengthen existing policies that aim to reduce the impact on children of marketing of foods high in saturated fats, *trans*-fatty acids, free sugars, or salt;

3) to establish a system for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children;

(4) to take active steps to establish intergovernmental collaboration in order to reduce the impact of cross-border marketing;

(5) to cooperate with civil society and with public and private stakeholders in implementing the set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children in order to reduce the impact of that marketing, while ensuring avoidance of potential conflicts of interest;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to provide technical support to Member States, on request, in implementing the set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children and in monitoring and evaluating their implementation;

(2) to support existing regional networks, and where appropriate to facilitate the establishment of new ones, in order to strengthen international cooperation to reduce the impact on children of marketing of foods high in saturated fats, *trans*-fatty acids, free sugars, or salt;

¹ Document A63/12, Annex.

- (3) to cooperate with civil society and with public and private stakeholders in implementing the set of recommendations to reduce the impact of marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, while ensuring avoidance of potential conflicts of interest;
- (4) to strengthen international cooperation with other international intergovernmental organizations and bodies in promoting the implementation, by Member States, of the recommendations on marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children;
- (5) to use existing methodologies for evaluating the action plan for the global strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases to monitor policies on marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children;
- (6) to report on implementation of the set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children as part of the report on progress in implementing the global strategy on prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and the action plan for the global strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly through the Executive Board at its 130th session.

Eighth plenary meeting, 21 May 2010
A63/VR/8

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