



# BEYOND THE CALL TO ACTION EVENT

## Towards School Policies in support of Childhood Obesity Prevention

November 20<sup>th</sup> 2018, Hilton Hotel, Barbados

### CONCEPT NOTE & PROGRAMME

**PARTNERS:** Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness | Barbados Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training | Barbados National NCD Commission | Barbados Wellness Task Force | Barbados Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition | PAHO | CARPHA | UWI Open Campus | Jamaica Moves | Caribbean Moves

**SPONSORS:** Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados | Healthy Caribbean Coalition | Sagikor Life

## Background

### *HCC Background*

Childhood obesity is an emerging crisis facing our region with up to 1 in 3 children being overweight or obese. Childhood overweight and obesity has serious complications in childhood and adolescence, and tracks into adulthood placing individuals at higher risk for non-communicable diseases. The Caribbean has some of the highest adult obesity rates in the world and yet no country has been successful in halting or reversing this trend raising important questions around how governments will effectively address obesogenic environments impacting children and young people. The global and regional public health community has responded with clear evidence-based guidance for a multisectoral whole of society response taking into consideration the social and commercial determinants linked to this problem. In recognition of the critical role of civil society in this process, the HCC developed a [Civil Society Action Plan 2017-2021: Prevention Childhood Obesity in the Caribbean](#) (CSAP) to provide a blueprint for civil society action in support of national responses. The goal of the CSAP is to *halt the increase in childhood obesity by 2025 through improved development and implementation by CARICOM countries of policies, and/or legislation, and/ or regulations to prevent childhood obesity, by 2021*. The overall expected outcome of the plan is *strengthened contribution of Caribbean civil society to the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national and regional policies, legislation, regulations, programmes, and interventions related to childhood obesity prevention by 2021*.

The CSAP covers seven priority areas: trade and fiscal policy; nutrition literacy; marketing of healthy and unhealthy foods and beverages to children; school - and community-based interventions; resource mobilisation; and strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The key policy asks are: SSB taxation; mandatory front of package labeling; enacting legislation related to The International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes; banning the marketing of unhealthy foods to children; banning the sale and marketing of unhealthy foods in schools; and mandatory physical education in schools.

As part of the CSAP, and with support from Global Health Advocacy Incubator, the HCC launched a regional online petition or 'Call to Action' asking Heads of Government and State across the Caribbean to prioritise policies aimed at reducing the growing burden of overweight and obesity among children in the region. The CTA was developed to respond to and support the CARICOM leadership's stated commitment to addressing this urgent emerging crisis in the region. In 2016 at the 37<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government "***pledged to address issues such as banning advertisement of potentially harmful foods which specifically target children***". One year later at the 38<sup>th</sup> CARICOM Summit, in the 10-year anniversary of the Port of Spain Declaration, Heads "***noted with***

*concern that obesity in children represented the greatest threat to the health of future generations with the level of overweight and obesity being more than 30 % in both primary and secondary school populations in many Member States...and urged the promotion of Physical Exercise in school-age children".* This year at the 39<sup>th</sup> Summit, Heads endorsed a number of priorities for the 3<sup>rd</sup> UN High Level Meeting on NCDs including: *"implementing policies geared to preventing childhood obesity, including for health-promoting school environments and Front of Package (FOP) labelling"*. In support of this significant expression of concern, the HCC has already gained and will continue to garner support for the implementations of key policies and programmes to create healthier food environments for our children.

The Call to Action was launched on social media on April 16<sup>th</sup>, followed by a ceremonial launch at the Jamaica NCD Forum (April 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>), with the primary aim of raising public awareness about childhood obesity in the Caribbean and garnering public support for the key policy asks mentioned above. Over the course of the CTA implementation, a number of innovative strategies were adopted to inform the public while canvassing signatures for the online petition. To date the CTA has garnered over 25,000 signatures of support from influencers; high-level policymakers; members of the public and secondary school students across the region. However, beyond the signatures, the CTA has increased local and regional dialogue around childhood obesity and the need for effective prevention programmes and policies. The CTA has also facilitated the building of local and regional coalitions to further promote increased public awareness around childhood obesity and to effectively advocate for the implementation and enforcement of key prevention and control policies. As part of the CTA, the HCC launched the CSO Regional Action Team for Childhood Obesity Prevention in May 2018. The team currently includes civil society members in eight countries: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia and St Kitts Nevis. Together, the Action Team created social media video messages, coordinated volunteer outreaches, mobilised their local media and developed school initiatives and used every opportunity to gain support from both the public and private sectors and non-governmental organisations. The collaboration has been inspiring and effective.

### ***HSFB Background***

The HSFb's advocacy campaign has been centred around creating a healthier school environment for our children. In line with HCC's CTA, HSFb has tailored its campaign to advocate for banning the sale and promotion of unhealthy beverages and foods in schools in Barbados. To support the implementation of school-based policies on childhood obesity the HSFb has engaged the Ministry of Health and Education in the project and has conducted stakeholder meetings through a campaign launch and a one-day conference on this policy area. Policy Champions have been enlisted to assist with project messaging and public awareness/sensitisation has been completed through a strategic communications plan. The HSFb has also collaborated with the HCC to form a national childhood obesity prevention coalition which will further drive efforts to change the current obesogenic environment that Barbadian children are exposed to at school.

As the advocacy campaign has developed it has been increasingly recognised that the stakeholders involved in school-based policies come from a wide variety of sectors and that

there was a need for clear multi-sectoral agreement on the next steps within the campaign. In bringing together this broad network of stakeholders the aim would be to collaboratively agree initially on the approach Barbados wishes to take to tackle this issue. The HSFB applauds the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training on its recent efforts to promote healthier school environments and it is hoped that an agreement can be reached on concrete next steps. These can include developing formal policies or legislation targeting specific groups such as canteen operators drawing on regional best practices and lessons learned from local and regional implementation of existing guidelines and policies.

### ***Caribbean Moves***

*Caribbean Moves* is a framework for promoting physical activity and healthy eating through exciting, fun and supportive programs where people live, work, study and play. It integrates culturally-sensitive and community-specific health promotion activities and screening for NCDs and their risk factors and seeks to create a culture of regular physical activity and healthy eating within Caribbean societies within the context of the desired Caribbean “Wellness Revolution”.

Caribbean Moves involves a recommitment to a regional approach to tackling the NCDs epidemic, one in which countries collaborate to make national health promotion programs more comprehensive, effective, equitable and sustainable.

The vision of Caribbean Moves is one of a Caribbean culture that reflects a more active and healthy society. Its purpose is to empower all people in the Caribbean to be more physically active in their daily lives and to make healthier eating choices, by taking advantage of increased availability of accessible, safe and enabling physical environments and of improved food security that makes the healthy choice the easy and affordable choice.

### **Barbados National Wellness Initiative / Barbados Moves**

The recently launched Barbados National Wellness Initiative seeks to raise awareness of healthy lifestyle behaviours and to engage the entire population in activities to address NCD risk factor reduction. The programme is intended to include awareness, behaviour change tools, community outreach and mechanisms for incentives and awards. The public sector, the private sector and civil society will be engaged through a multi-sectoral approach to planning and implementation.

The Wellness Initiative, branded as Barbados Moves, is coordinated by the Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness and will mobilise key partners in sectors such as education, agriculture, people empowerment, community development, youth, culture and sport, as well as the private sector and civil society, especially faith-based organizations.

The goal of the Barbados Moves is to promote health and well-being of all. The objectives are to encourage and facilitate the adoption of healthy behaviours; collaborate with all sectors to raise awareness and take action that promotes health and well-being; enable and develop personal skills and self-efficiency to support behaviour change; and highlight and strengthen the work of organizations engaged in health promotion across various settings, e.g. schools, workplaces, communities and non-governmental organisations.

### **The Event**

This year on United Nations Universal Children's Day, Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, as the world focusses on the welfare of its children, the Call to Action will officially close. The Healthy Caribbean Coalition and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados will bring together a wide cross section of national and regional stakeholders to celebrate the achievements of the CTA and to chart the way forward. The meeting is being held with various partners and in support of major regional and national developments namely Caribbean Moves and Barbados Moves.

The meeting will provide a unique opportunity for CSOs to take stock of progress made over the course of the implementation of the Call to Action and to share national and regional successes and lessons learned in childhood obesity prevention advocacy platforms. The one-day forum will also serve to leverage the energy and momentum of the past seven months and redirect it towards focussed evidence-based advocacy in support of creating healthy school environments in Barbados and across the region. Young people will be purposefully engaged in the event to ensure their voices are heard and integrated into all aspects of the planning, implementation, dialogue, outcomes and next steps.

## **Event Goals, Objectives & Expected Outcomes**

### **Goal**

To celebrate the successes of the Call to Action and to build the capacity of civil society advocates and youth advocates to support the implementation of school-based nutrition and physical activity policies in Barbados and across the region.

### **Objectives**

1. **To celebrate the Call to Action**, reflecting primarily on its process and key outcomes and considering how the childhood obesity prevention policy landscape has changed since the CTA launch.
2. **To learn** about **regional experiences with school policy implementation** with a focus on the Bahamas, Bermuda, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.
3. **To bring together key stakeholders to discuss approaches to the banning of SSBs in schools in Barbados.**
4. **To explore key elements of a draft policy for the banning of SSBs in schools in Barbados.**
5. **To engage youth voices** in the dialogue around childhood obesity prevention.
6. **To further build a diverse coalition of advocates** in support of childhood obesity prevention.

### **Expected Outcomes**

1. To celebrate the Call to Action, reflecting primarily on its process and key outcomes and considering how the childhood obesity prevention policy landscape has changed since the CTA launch.

2. Increased awareness about regional experiences with school policy implementation in the Bahamas, Bermuda, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.
3. Various approaches to the banning of SSBs in schools in Barbados discussed and documented with a diverse group of stakeholders.
4. Key elements of a draft policy for the banning of SSBs in schools in Barbados discussed and documented.
5. Youth perspectives integrated into discussion sessions outcome documents.
6. Members of the Barbados obesity prevention coalition increased.

## **Parallel Youth Moderated Session**

While young people are not responsible for determining their food environments, they bear the consequences of the obesogenic environments created as result of non-existent or weak policies. Young people are key stakeholders who are often ignored. They must however be engaged in any dialogue around childhood obesity prevention to ensure that the policy and programming solutions arrived at are contextually appropriate and can respond to the specific needs and challenges faced by young people today. They must feel a sense of ownership of the solutions to ensure full buy-in and ultimately effective implementation. When we involve young people and children, they feel empowered as co-creators in solutions and as decision-makers in their own lives. In the absence of such consultation and collaboration school environment policies are likely to face significant resistance from those we need most to benefit.

During the event, a special session is being crafted for our participating students from 9.40 am – 10:20 am. During this session, which will be moderated by a young person, the students will be provided with information and evidence about the burden and consequences of unhealthy weights and the associated health implications in childhood and into adulthood. They will discuss their school environments with a focus on:

- The types of products sold and marketed and the levels of mandatory physical activity.
- The implications of these environments on their behaviours and health.
- Their perspectives on the barriers to modifying the environment.
- Their perspectives on solutions discussing the individual vs collective change ie. policy.
- The implications of policies which ban the sale and marketing of SSBs in schools.

After their closed discussion, they will return to the wider group to share their thoughts and ideas for inclusion in the outcome documents.

## **Participants & Beneficiaries**

Participants will be representatives of: local and regional Ministries of Health and Education; local civil society organisations including members of the Barbados COP Coalition; members of the HCC CTA Action Team; local schools; young people; Academia; Private Sector; HCC Board of Directors; HSF Board of Directors; HCC specialist advisors; PAHO; and the local media.

## **Sponsors**

This meeting is supported through a grant from the Global Health Advocacy Incubator with the HCC and the HSF and HCC's ongoing support from Sagacor Life Inc.

## **Partners and Supporters**

This meeting is being held in partnership with a number of partners: Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness, Barbados Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training, Barbados National NCD Commission, Barbados Wellness Task Force, Barbados Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), CARPHA, UWI Open Campus, Jamaica Moves and Caribbean Moves.

## The Forum Programme

### Objectives

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6. To further build a diverse coalition of advocates in support of childhood obesity prevention.

MEETING PROGRAMME		
NOVEMBER 20, 2018   HILTON HOTEL, BARBADOS		
8.00 - 8.30	REGISTRATION	
	MORNING SESSION GALVANISING A REGION AROUND CHILDHOOD OBESITY – THE CTA	MODERATOR: Dr. Kenneth Connell <i>President Heart &amp; Stroke Foundation of Barbados</i>
9.00 – 9:05	Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Kenneth Connell
9.05 - 9.15	Opening Remarks – Our Voices Matter	Sir Trevor Hassell <i>President, Healthy Caribbean Coalition</i>
9.15 - 9.25	Remarks: Tackling childhood obesity in Barbados – Ministry of Health and Wellness perspective	Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Bostic <i>Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness</i>
9.25 – 9.35	Remarks: Barbados Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training perspective on tackling childhood obesity in the school environment	Hon. Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training (Actg.), Lucille Moe <i>Barbados Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training (Actg.)</i>
9.35 - 9.50	Reflections on CTA Achievements	Mrs. Francine Charles <i>Healthy Caribbean Coalition</i>
9.50 – 9.55	HCC Childhood Obesity Prevention PSA	Video



9.55 - 10.05	Galvanising action on childhood obesity in Jamaica	Dr. Simone Spence <i>Jamaica Ministry of Health</i>
10.05 - 10.10	Partnering with Civil Society to Address Childhood Obesity in the Caribbean	Mr. Ed Clarke <i>Chief Operating Officer, Sagikor Life Inc.</i>
10.10 - 10.15	Tackling Childhood Obesity Through Workplace Wellness	Mrs. Debra King <i>Director, Corporate Communications, CIBC First Caribbean</i>
10.15 - 10.20	Youth – Remember Us!	Youth Representative
10.20 - 10.35	HEALTH BREAK	
10.35 - 12.00	PARALLEL YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SESSION	MODERATOR: Mrs. Krystal Boyea HCC Youth Advocate
10.35 - 11.10	Stronger Together – Importance of Coalitions for Collaboration PANEL/ GROUP DISCUSSION	MODERATOR: Sir Trevor Hassell CSO Action Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belize Cancer Society</li> <li>• Lake Health and Well Being Foundation</li> <li>• Antigua and Barbuda Diabetes Association</li> <li>• Diabetes Association of Barbados</li> <li>• Grenada National NCD Commission</li> <li>• Heart Foundation of Jamaica</li> <li>• St. Lucia Diabetes and Hypertension</li> <li>• Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados</li> </ul>
11.10 – 11.25	Beyond the CTA: Building a regional CSO advocacy movement for childhood obesity prevention with a focus on school policies	Mrs. Maisha Hutton HCC
11.25 – 11.35	Advocacy for Healthy School Environments: Insights from Jamaica	Mrs. Barbara McGaw <i>Heart Foundation of Jamaica</i>
11.35 – 11.45	Rapid Assessment of Physical Activity Capacity of Primary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago	Mark Mungal <i>Caribbean Sport and Development Agency</i>
11.45 – 12.00	Advocacy for Banning SSBs in Barbadian Schools: Presentation of HSFB's CHOP Campaign	Mrs. Fiona Anthony <i>Heart &amp; Stroke Foundation of Barbados</i>
12.00 - 1.00	LUNCH & GROUP PHOTO	
	AFTERNOON SESSION TOWARDS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	MODERATOR: Nicole Foster <i>Healthy Caribbean Coalition</i>

1.00 - 1.15	School-Based Policies to Counter obesity and overweight – Regional and Global examples	Dr. Godfrey Xuereb <i>PAHO</i>
1.15 - 1.25	Bermuda Healthy Schools Policies	Mrs. Marie Beach Ministry of Health, Bermuda
1.25 – 1.35	Bahamas School Guidelines	Mrs. Camelta Barnes <i>Ministry of Health, The Bahamas</i>
1.35 - 1.45	Jamaica Guidelines for Restrictions on SSBs in Government Schools	Dr. Simone Spence <i>Ministry of Health, Jamaica</i>
1.45 – 1.55	Barbados Nutritional Guidelines	Dr. Natasha Sobers <i>George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre</i>
1.55 - 2.05	Childhood Obesity Prevention: The Policy vs Legislation Conundrum	Nicole Foster <i>HCC, UWI Faculty of Law</i>
2.05 - 2.35	Moderated Question & Answer Following Country Presentations	SESSION MODERATOR
2.35 – 2.50	The Schools We Want – Strategies for creating youth advocates and accelerating school policy. A youth perspective	Youth Representative
2.50 – 3.00	<b>HEALTH BREAK</b>	
3.00 - 4.15	<b>GROUP WORK AND FEEDBACK</b> I. A Review of the current policies regarding nutritional guidelines and practices within the educational system in Barbados. II. Based on regional and global best practices and the local context, what is the best approach to modify school environments? III. What are the key components of guidelines or policies?	MODERATOR: Fiona Anthony
4.15 – 4.25	Reflections on Childhood Obesity Prevention policy and the way forward	Maisha Hutton <i>HCC</i>
4.25 - 4.30	<b>CLOSE OF MEETING</b>	