

# PAHO's Response to Childhood Obesity

## Accelerating Nutrition Policies in the Caribbean: Creating Supportive Environments for Healthy Children

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*Director, Department of  
Noncommunicable Diseases and  
Mental Health*



**PAHO**

# Presentation Outline



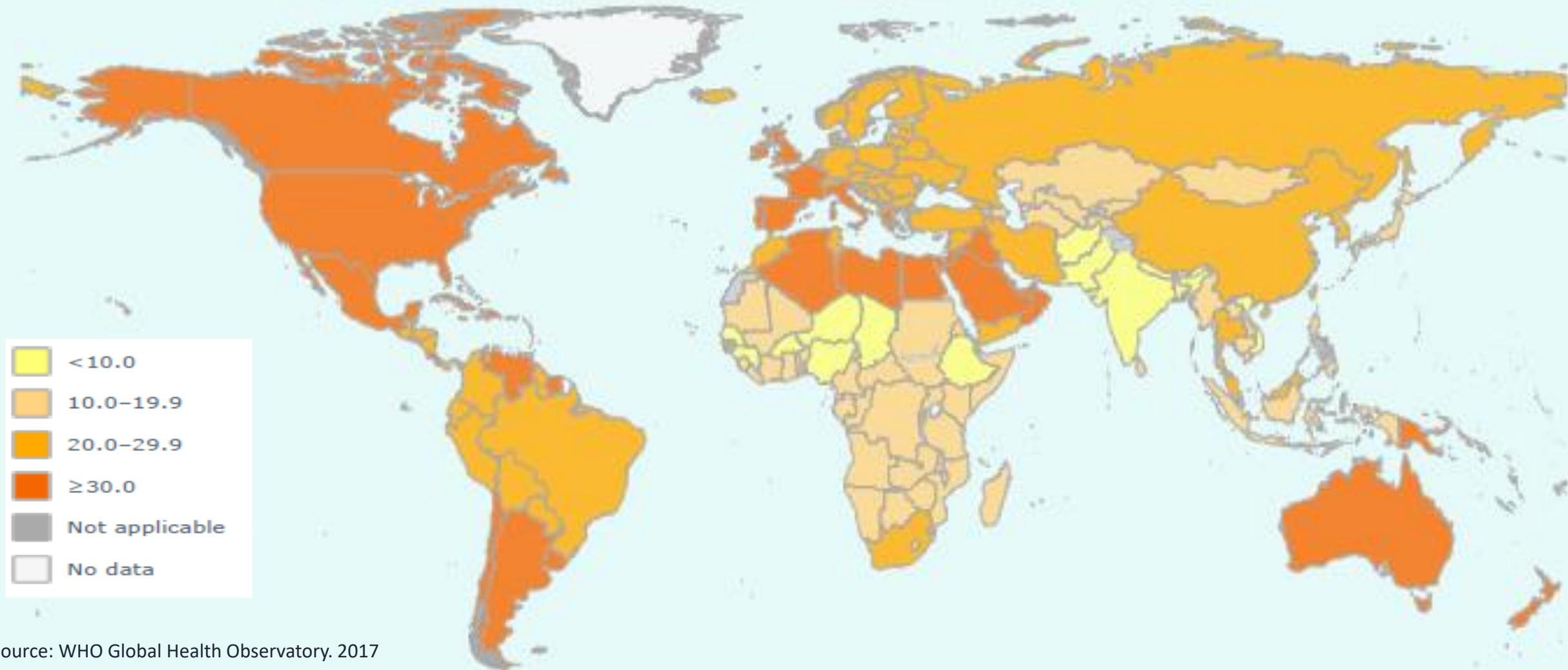
Situation analysis

Global and regional mandates,  
recommendations and commitments

Response

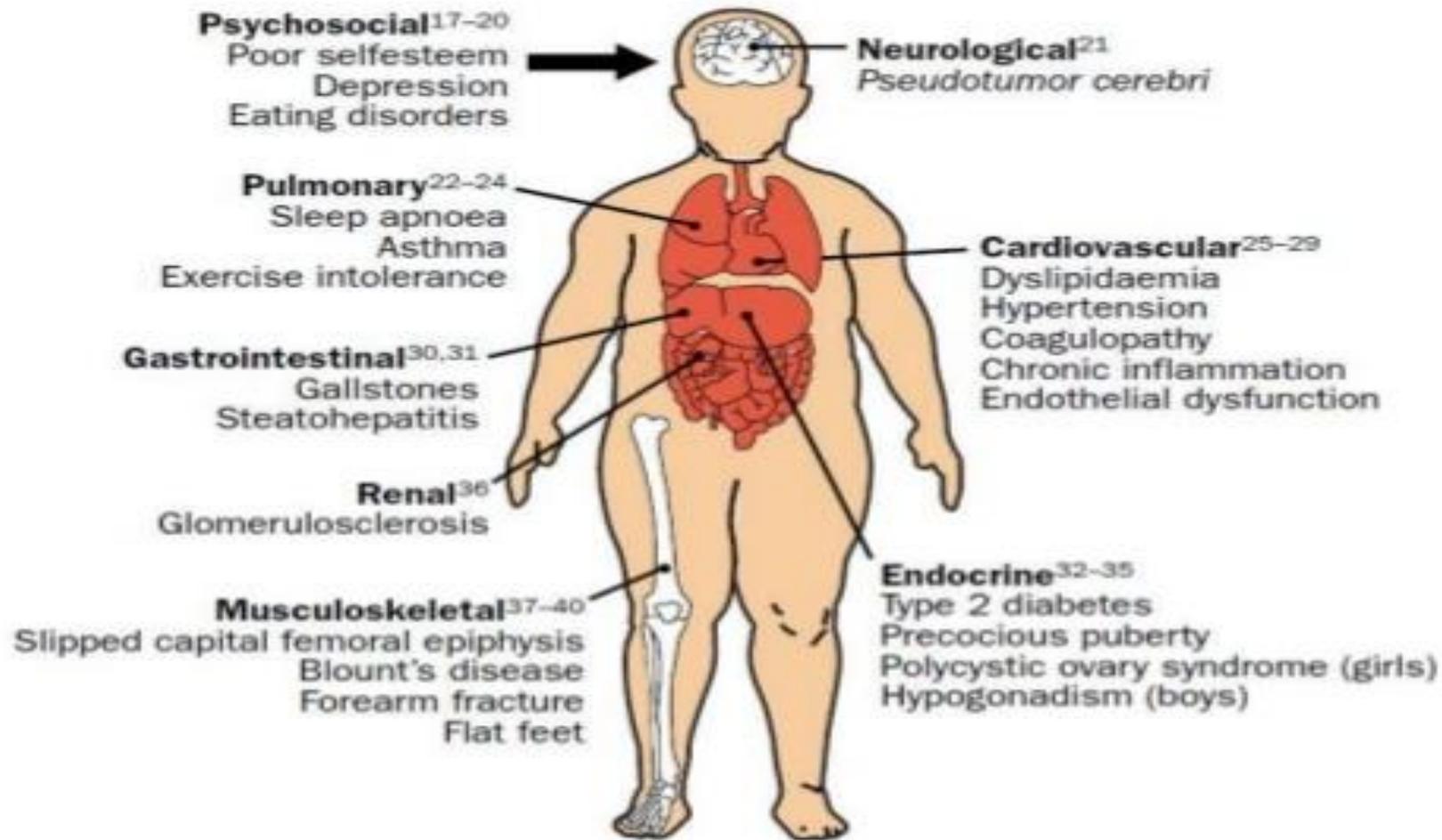
Conclusions

# Prevalence of overweight in children and adolescents aged 5-19 years



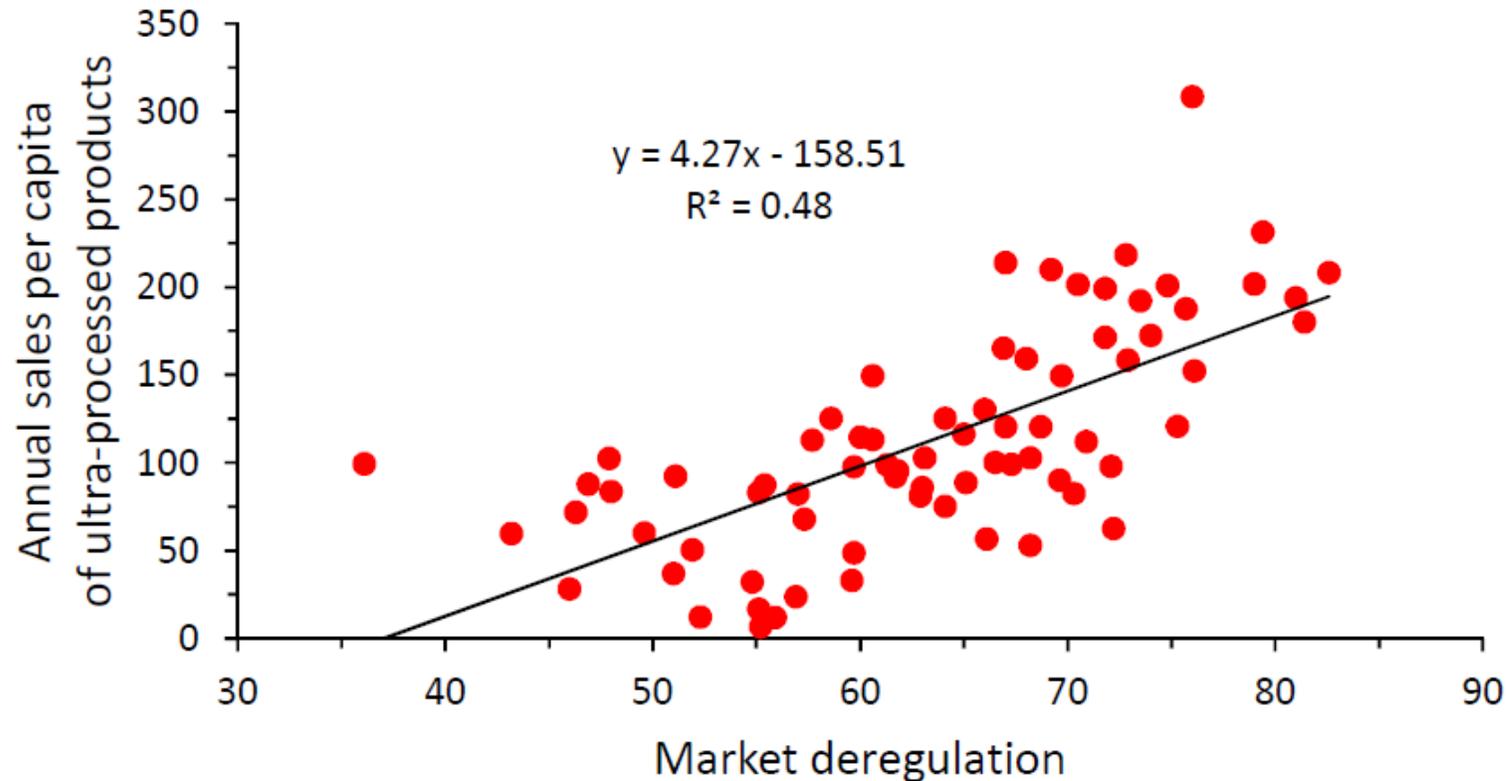
Source: WHO Global Health Observatory. 2017

# How does obesity affect children?



*Ebbeling, Pawlak, Ludwig (2002) Childhood obesity: public-health crisis, common sense cure Lancet, p 475*

Annual retail sales per capita of ultra-processed food and drink products as a function of market deregulation in 74 countries, 2013



Ultra-processed products here include carbonated soft drinks, sweet and savory snacks, breakfast cereals, confectionery (candy), ice cream, biscuits (cookies), fruit and vegetable juices, sports and energy drinks, ready-to-drink tea or coffee, spreads, sauces, and ready-meals. Quantity in liters is converted into kilograms. Sales data are from the Euromonitor Passport Database (2014) (38). The 74 countries included all those listed in Annex B except United Arab Emirates (because of the extremely large proportion of expatriates); Singapore and Hong Kong (because they are city-states); and Argentina, the Philippines, and Taiwan (because of incomplete data on social and economic factors). Market deregulation is represented by the Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation and the Wall Street Journal (41).

Ultra-processed food and drink products in Latin America: Trends, impact on obesity, policy implications



PAHO, 2015

2007



**HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS of the UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY on PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NCDs**



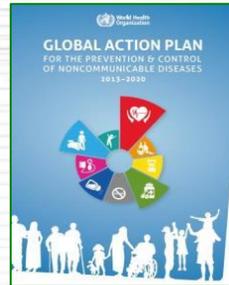
2011



2014



2018



2013



**2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA (2015)**



**ADDIS ABABA ACTION AGENDA (2015)**



PAHO/WHO

# MANDATES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

## GLOBAL STRATEGY ON DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH



World Health Organization

Guideline:

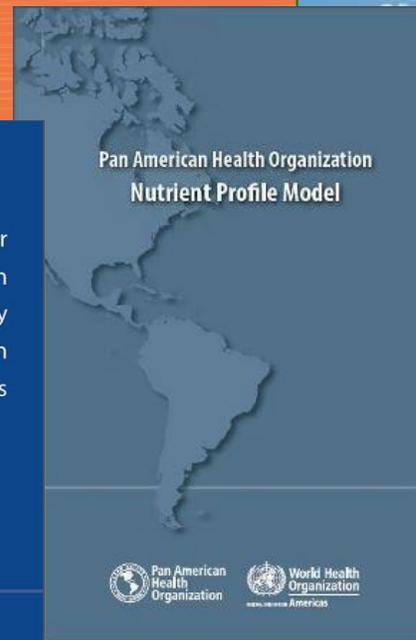
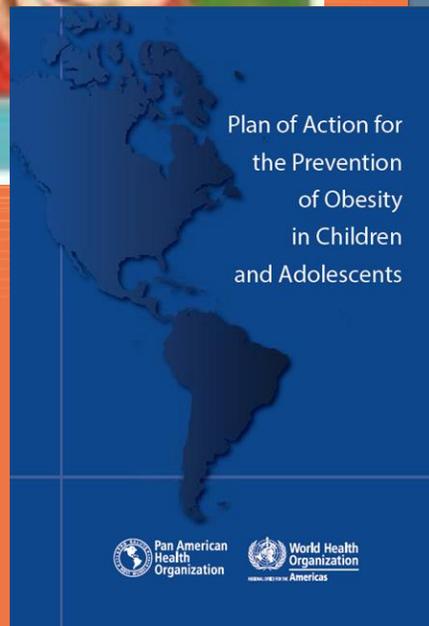
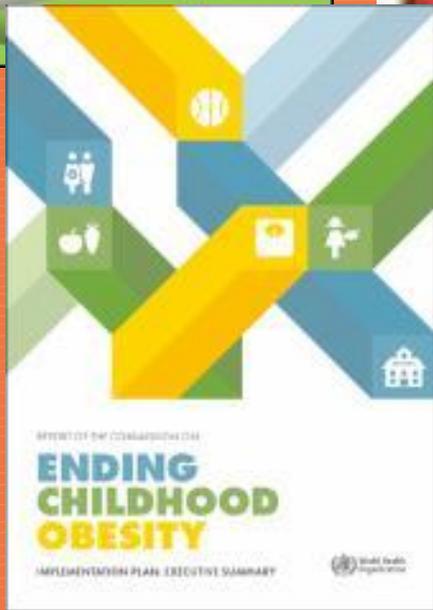
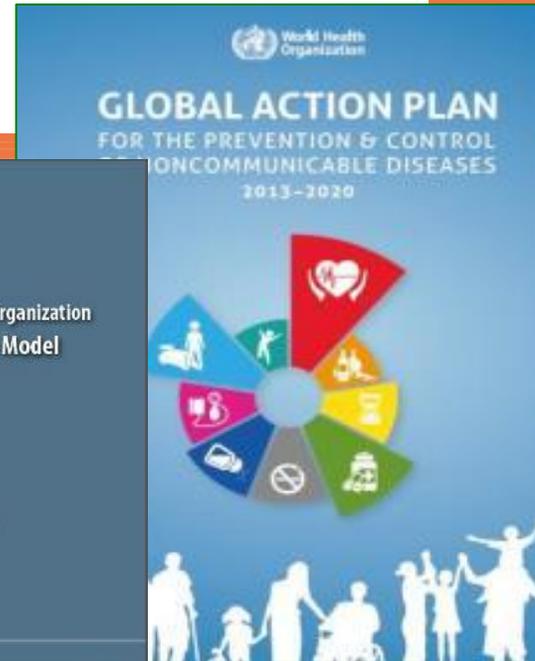
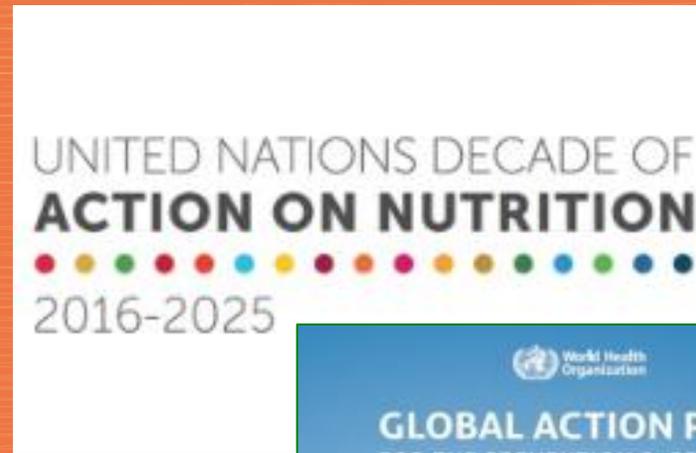
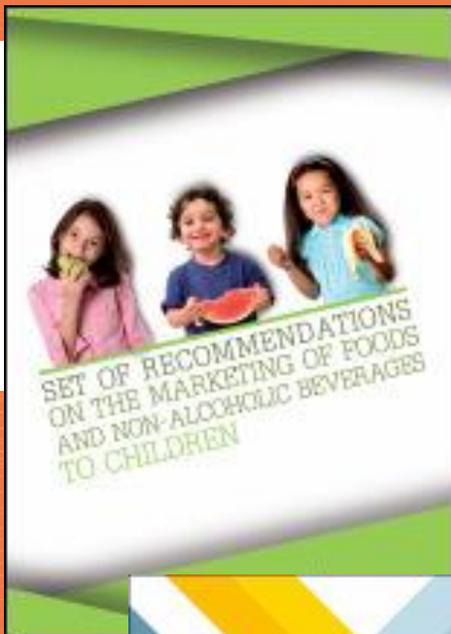
**Sodium intake  
for adults and  
children**



World Health Organization

Guideline:

**Sugars intake for  
adults and children**



**PAHO**

A dark blue map of the Americas, showing North and South America, is positioned on the left side of the slide. The map is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the title text.

Plan of Action for  
the Prevention  
of Obesity  
in Children  
and Adolescents



*Strategic Line of Action 1: Primary health care and promotion of breastfeeding and healthy eating.*

**Strategic Line of Action 2: Improvement of school nutrition and physical activity environments**

**Strategic Line of Action 3: Fiscal policies and regulation of food marketing and labelling**

**Strategic Line of Action 4: Other multisectoral actions.**

**Strategic Line of Action 5: Surveillance, research, and evaluation.**

# Effective and cost-effective measures to improve diets

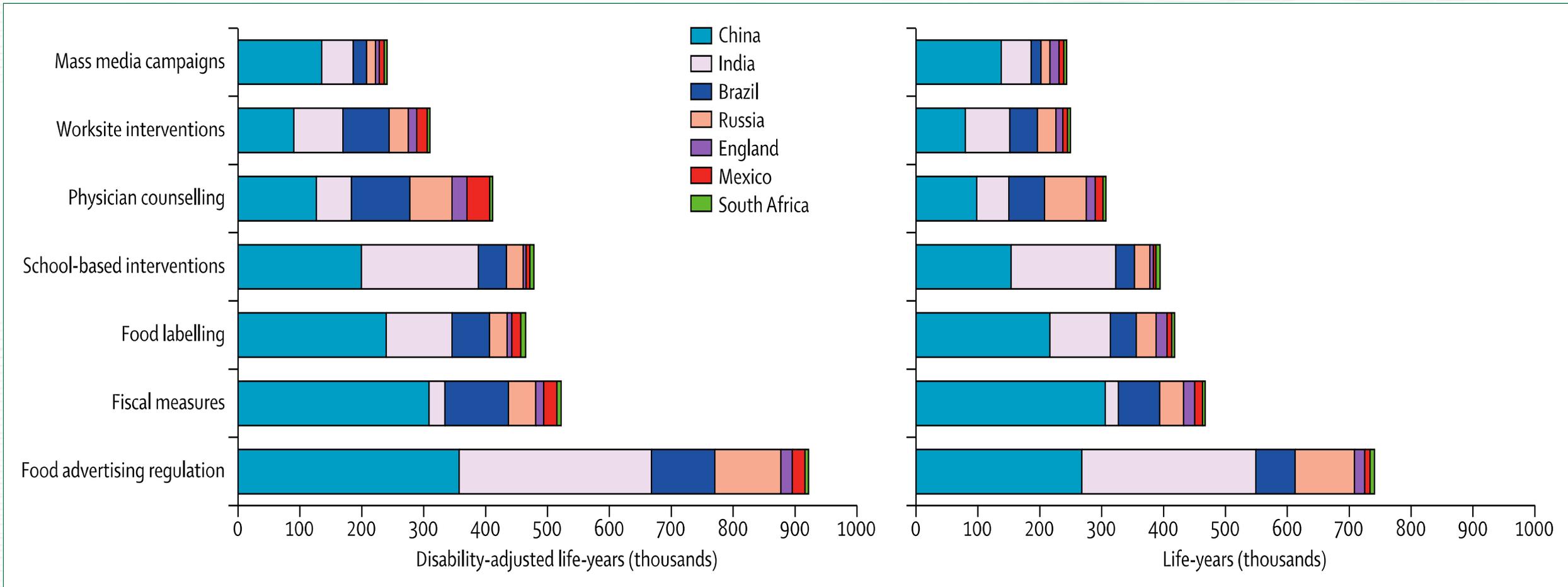
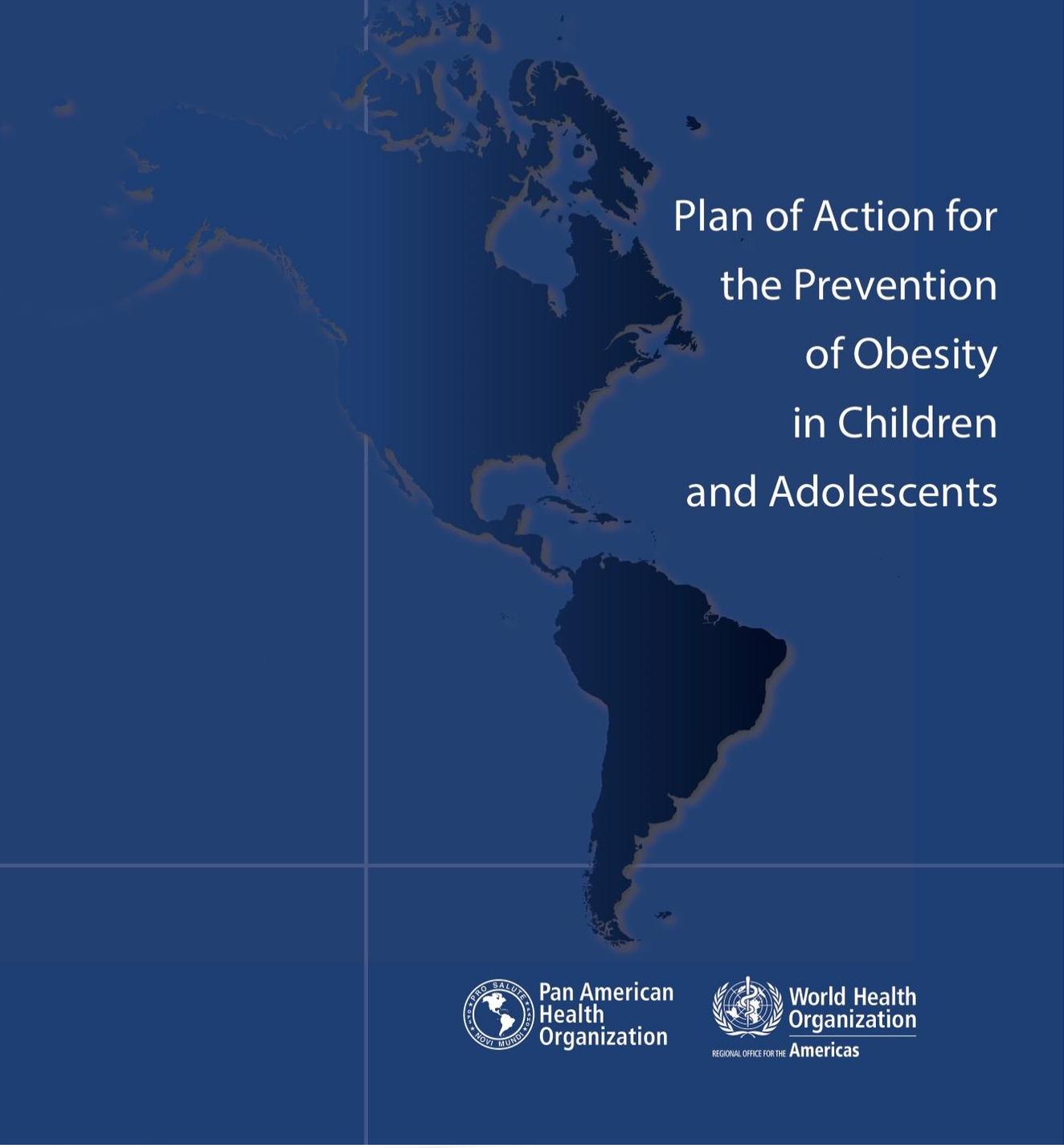


Figure 2: Health outcomes at the population level (average effect per year)

Lancet 2010; 376: 1775-84

# REGULATION FOR A HEALTHIER FOOD ENVIRONMENT



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*Strategic Line of Action 3:*  
**Fiscal policies** and regulation  
of food marketing and  
labelling



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE  
Americas

# TAXATION

At higher prices, products become less affordable... as products become less affordable, consumption decreases



- Taxes are the available policy instrument to increase prices
- Excise taxes raise relative price compared to other products and services

Note: As incomes increase products become more affordable. To reduce affordability, tax increases must result in real price increases that are greater than increases in real income & changes in inflation (if applicable, ex: specific tax)

# TAXATION Rationale: win-win-win-win

**“Appropriately” structured excise taxes on NCD risk factors have the potential to:**



Reduce consumption of health-harming products → **Improve health outcomes**

✓ **win**



**Reduce associated health care** → increase financial viability of health systems

✓ **win**



Reduce associated social costs → **increase productivity or workforce and wellbeing**

✓ **win**



**Increase excise tax revenues** → to finance development

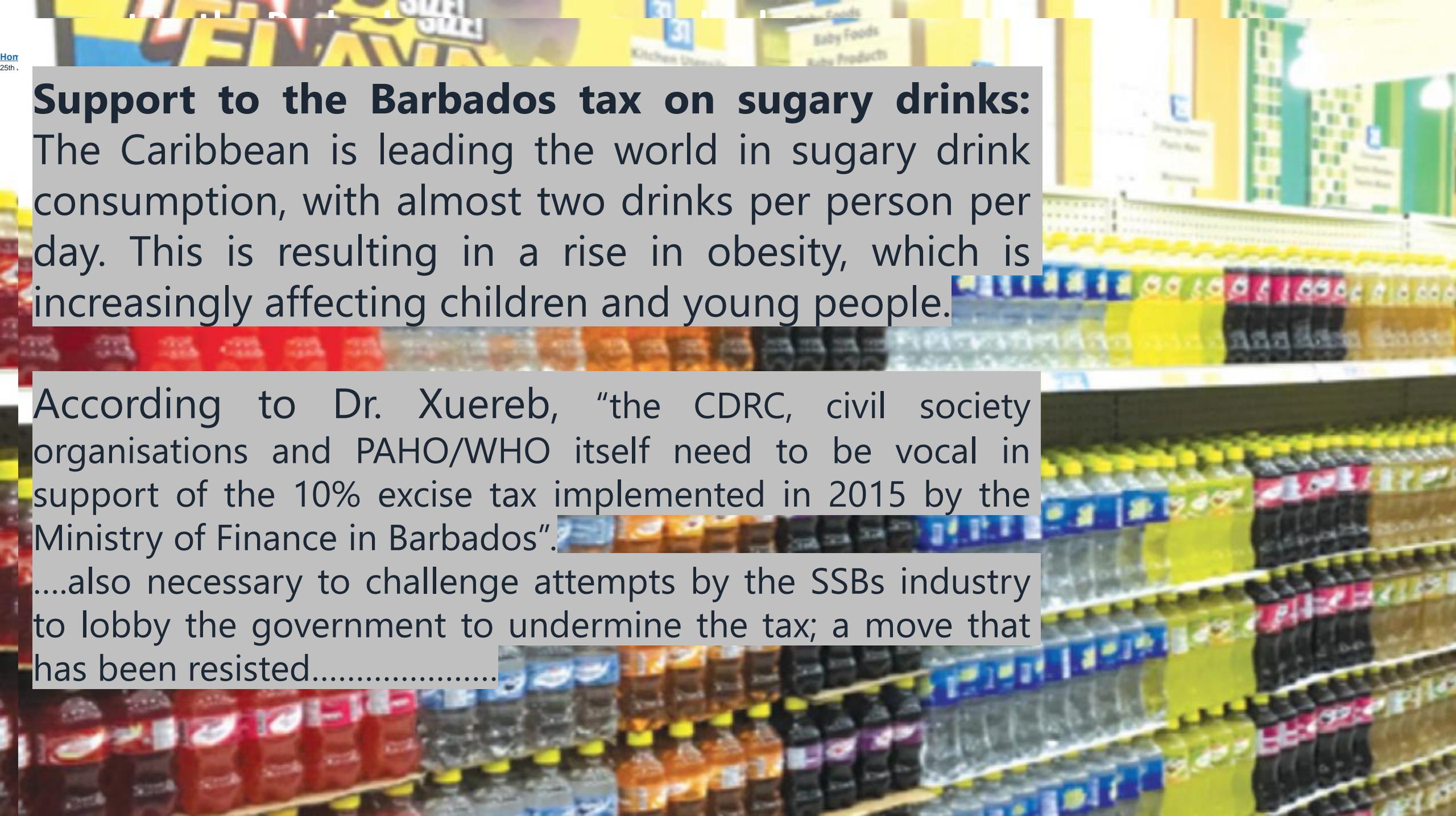
✓ **win**

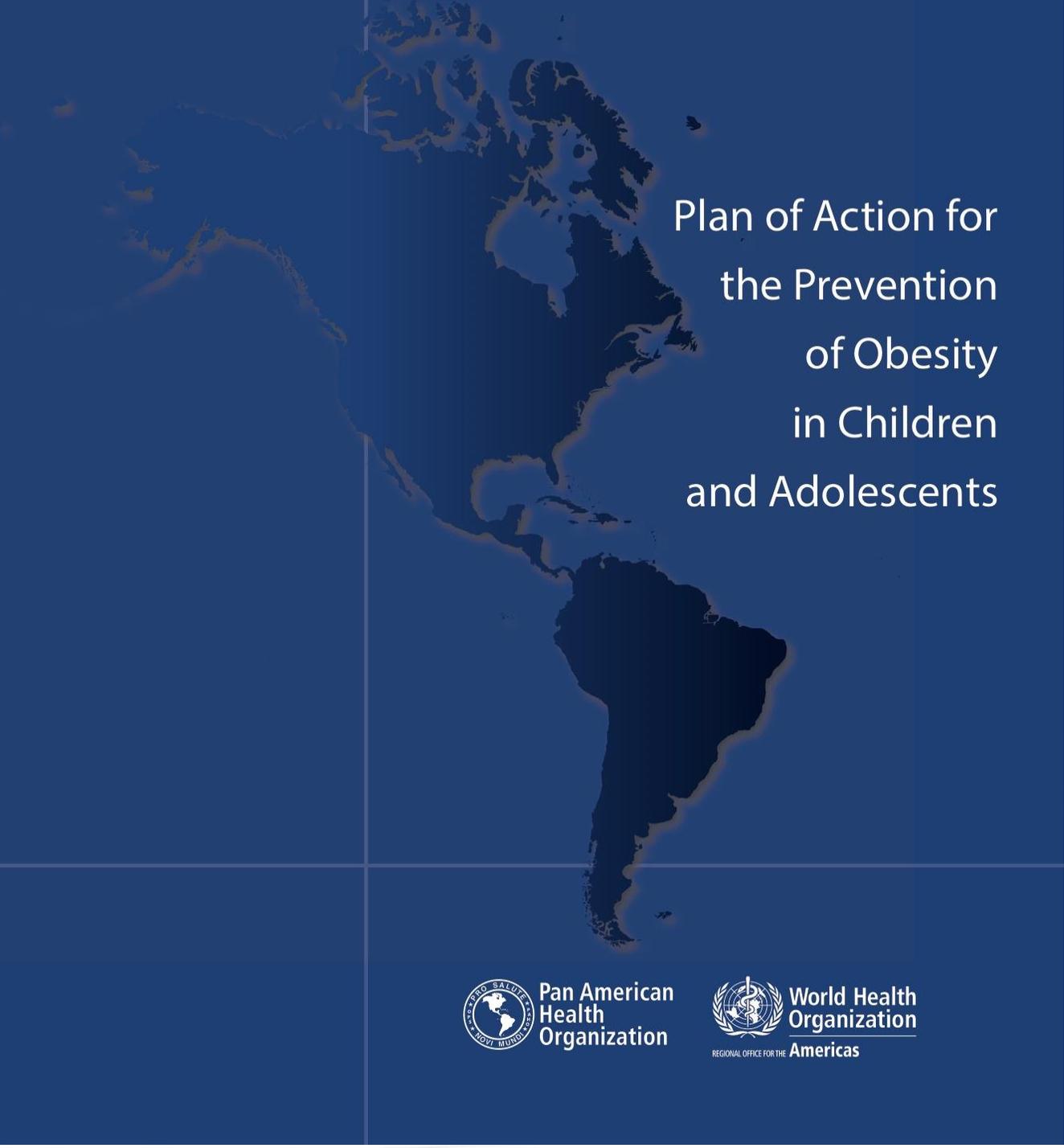
## **Support to the Barbados tax on sugary drinks:**

The Caribbean is leading the world in sugary drink consumption, with almost two drinks per person per day. This is resulting in a rise in obesity, which is increasingly affecting children and young people.

According to Dr. Xuereb, "the CDRC, civil society organisations and PAHO/WHO itself need to be vocal in support of the 10% excise tax implemented in 2015 by the Ministry of Finance in Barbados".

....also necessary to challenge attempts by the SSBs industry to lobby the government to undermine the tax; a move that has been resisted.....



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ALTO EM AÇÚCAR MIN. SAÚDE	ALTO EM GORDURAS TOTAIS MIN. SAÚDE
CONTEM GORDURA TRANS MIN. SAÚDE	CONTEM ADOÇANTE MIN. SAÚDE



High in / Élevé en	Sat fat / Gras sat
	Sugars / Sucres
	Sodium
Health Canada / Santé Canada	

High in / Élevé en	Sat fat / Gras sat
	Sugars / Sucres
	Sodium
Health Canada / Santé Canada	

ALTO EN AZÚCARES Ministerio de Salud	ALTO EN GRASAS SATURADAS Ministerio de Salud
ALTO EN SODIO Ministerio de Salud	ALTO EN CALORÍAS Ministerio de Salud

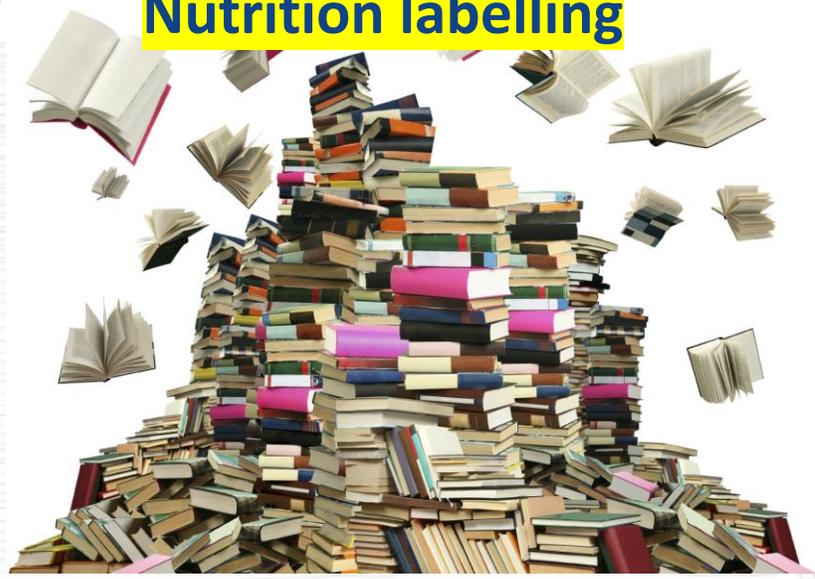
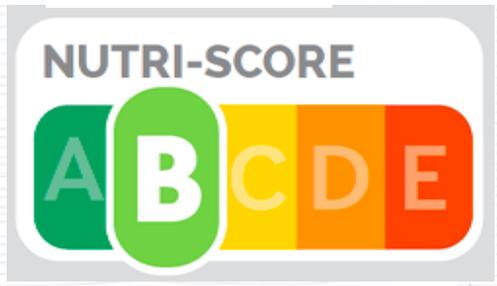


## Nutrition labelling

Each grilled burger (94g) contains

Energy 924kJ 220 kcal	Fat 13g	Saturated 5.9g	Sugars 0.8g	Salt 0.7g
11%	19%	30%	<1%	12%

of an adult's reference intake  
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: Energy 966kJ / 230kcal



ALTO en AZÚCAR

MEDIO en GRASA

BAJO en SAL

Por ración de 30 g

Energía 466 kJ 110 kcal	Grasas 0,4 g	Grasas Saturadas 0,2 g	Azúcares 3,5 g	Sal 0,34 g
6%	1%	1%	4%	6%

esta de referencia de un adulto medio (8400 kJ / 2000 kcal)  
Energía por 100 g de producto: 1553 kJ / 367 kcal

High in / Élevé en	Sat fat / Gras sat
	Sugars / Sucres
	Sodium
	Health Canada / Santé Canada

High in / Élevé en	Sat fat / Gras sat
	Sugars / Sucres
	Sodium
	Health Canada / Santé Canada

Each 100g serving contains

Calorias 142 kcal	Azúcares 22 g	Grasas	Sodio	887 kcal	6
73%	19%	0%	23%		148

of an adult's guideline daily amount

Una cucharadita de 15ml aporta:

Grasa saturada Cal/kcal	Otras grasas Cal/kcal	Azúcares totales Cal/kcal	Sodio mg/g	Energía Cal/kcal	Energía por envase Cal/kcal
%	%	%	%	%	XX porciones por envase

% de los nutrientes diarios

We are consulting on these four nutrition symbols.

**High in / Élevé en**

**Sat fat / Gras sat**

**Sugars / Sucre**

**Sodium**

Health Canada / Santé Canada

▶ [Figure 1 - Long description](#)

**High in / Élevé en**

**Sat fat / Gras sat**

**Sugars / Sucre**

**Sodium**

Health Canada / Santé Canada

▶ [Figure 2 - Long description](#)

**High in / Élevé en**

**Sat fat / Gras sat**

**Sugars / Sucre**

**Sodium**

Health Canada / Santé Canada

▶ [Figure 3 - Long description](#)

**High in / Élevé en**

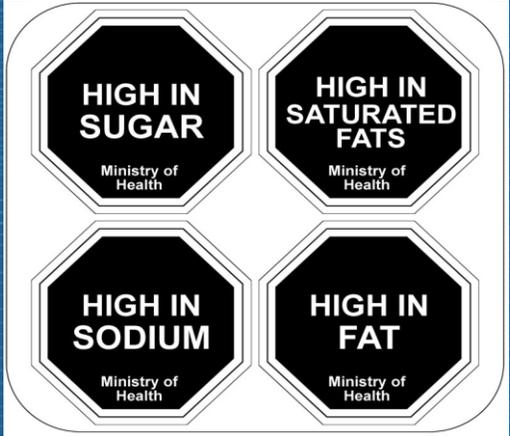
**Sat fat / Gras sat**

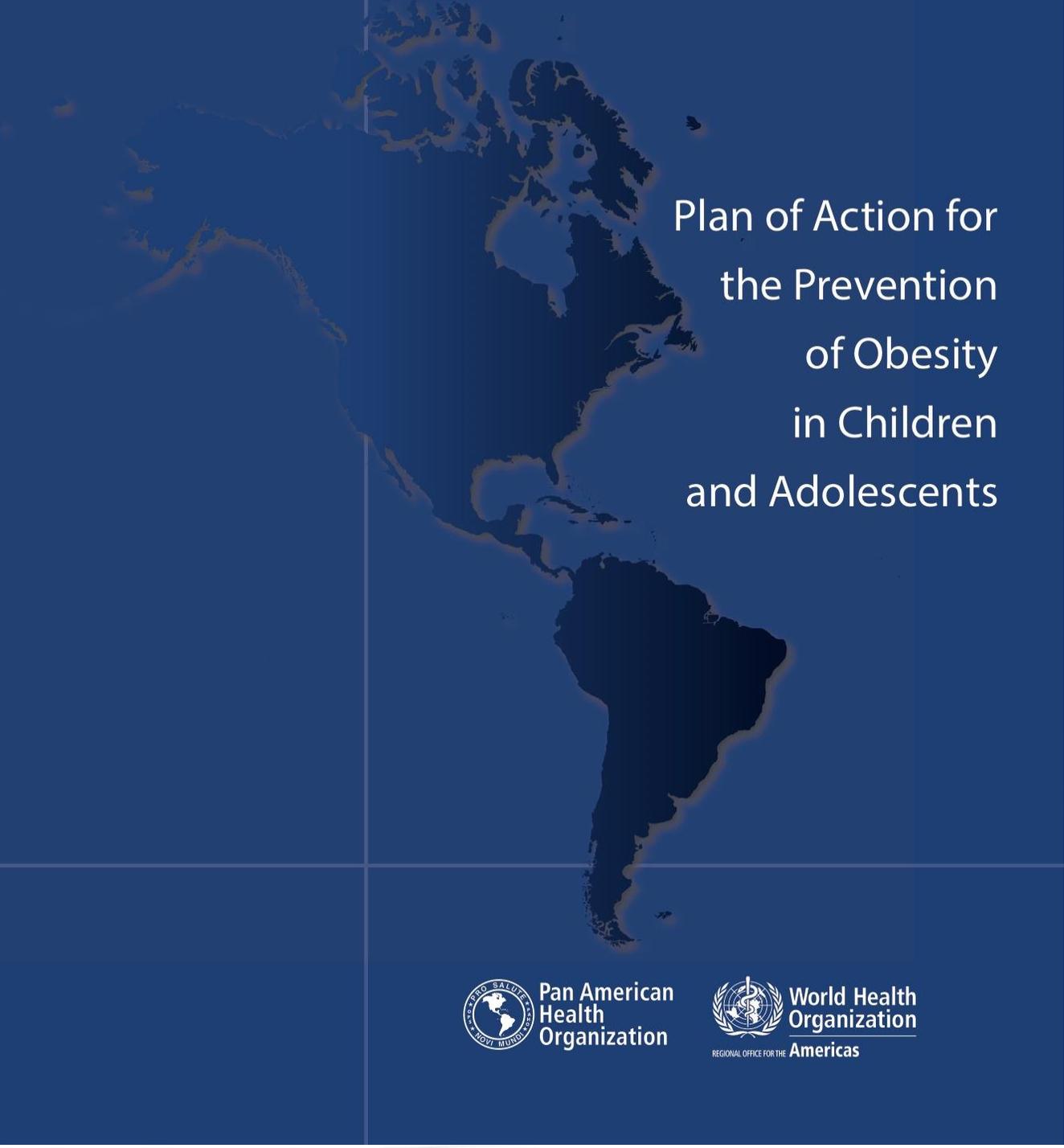
**Sugars / Sucre**

**Sodium**

Health Canada / Santé Canada

▶ [Figure 4 - Long description](#)



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*Strategic Line of Action 3:*  
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# Examples of techniques used to market food and non-alcoholic beverages to children

## Advertising

Broadcast: including TV and radio.

Print media: including newspapers, magazines and comic books.

Online: including on-search engines, social networking sites, news sites and blogs, as well as television programmes, films and media clips watched online.

Outdoors: including billboards, posters and moving vehicles.

Cinemas.

## Product placement and branding

Product placement, e.g. in TV, radio, films, computer games.

Publicity.

Branded books, e.g. counting books for pre-schoolers.

Branded toys e.g. fast food store as a playhouse.

Branded computer games.

Interactive web sites, e.g. with puzzles and games.

## Sponsorship

TV and radio programmes.

Events: including community and school events and contests.

Educational materials and equipment.

Programmes: including public health campaigns and school breakfast or lunch programmes.

Venues.

Sport teams.

## Direct marketing

Promotional emails.

Promotional sales by telephone.

Text messaging to mobile phones.

Home catalogues, leafleting and canvassing (also known as “doorstep selling”).

Contests or sweepstakes.

“Money off” vouchers.

Promotion and sampling schemes in schools, e.g. chocolate drives.

## Product design and packaging

Product design: colours and shapes, e.g. dinosaur-shaped products.

Packaging design: imagery, colours, playshapes.

Product portions: e.g. king size, duo packs.

In-pack and on-pack promotions: e.g. gifts, puzzles, vouchers.

## Point-of-sale

On-shelf displays.

Displays at check-outs, pay-points, end-of-aisles in supermarkets.

Special offers and pricing incentives.

Vending machines in schools and youth clubs.

Loyalty schemes.

Free samples and tastings.

Unilever (2014)  
*‘We spend about  
€7 billion annually  
on marketing,  
making us one of  
the world’s biggest  
advertisers.’*

# **Marketing** increases the **Purchase** and **Consumption** of food and drink products

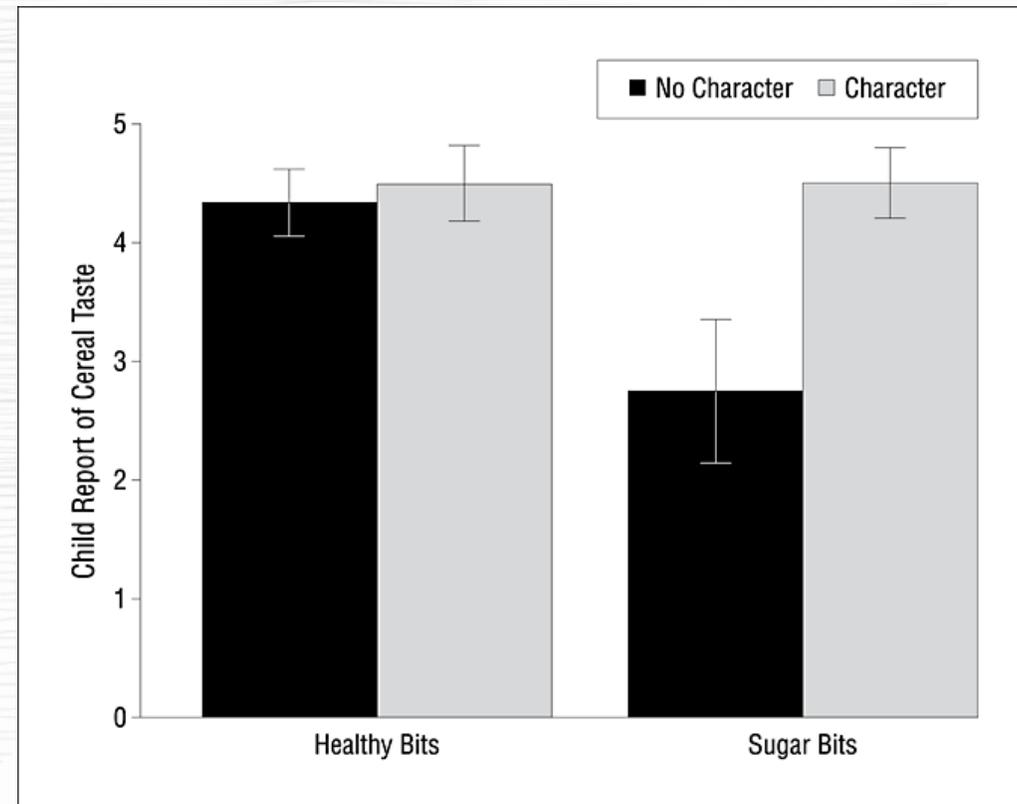
- Food ads comprised 11-29% of advertisements.
- Foods high in undesirable nutrients/energy featured in 53-87% of food ads.
- Ads shown more frequently during children's peak viewing times
  
- **In-Store Advertisement** Point-of sale çpromote on more than doubled the effect of price-reduction
  
- **School surroundings**
  - students with fast-food restaurants within half mile of their schools
    - consumed fewer servings of fruits and vegetables,
    - consumed more servings of soda, and
    - were more likely to be overweight

[Journal of Marketing Research; Vol XXI \(February 1984\), 65-74](#)  
[Am J Public Health. 2010 September; 100\(9\): 1730–1736.](#)  
[Journal of Advertising Research 1975; 15\(3\):29-33.](#)  
[Am J Public Health. 2009 March; 99\(3\): 505–510.](#)

# Sensation transfer

## Influence of Licensed Spokescharacters and Health Cues on Children's Ratings of Cereal Taste

Matthew A. Lapierre, MA; Sarah E. Vaala, MA; Deborah L. Lineberger, PhD



Children (5-6 year old)

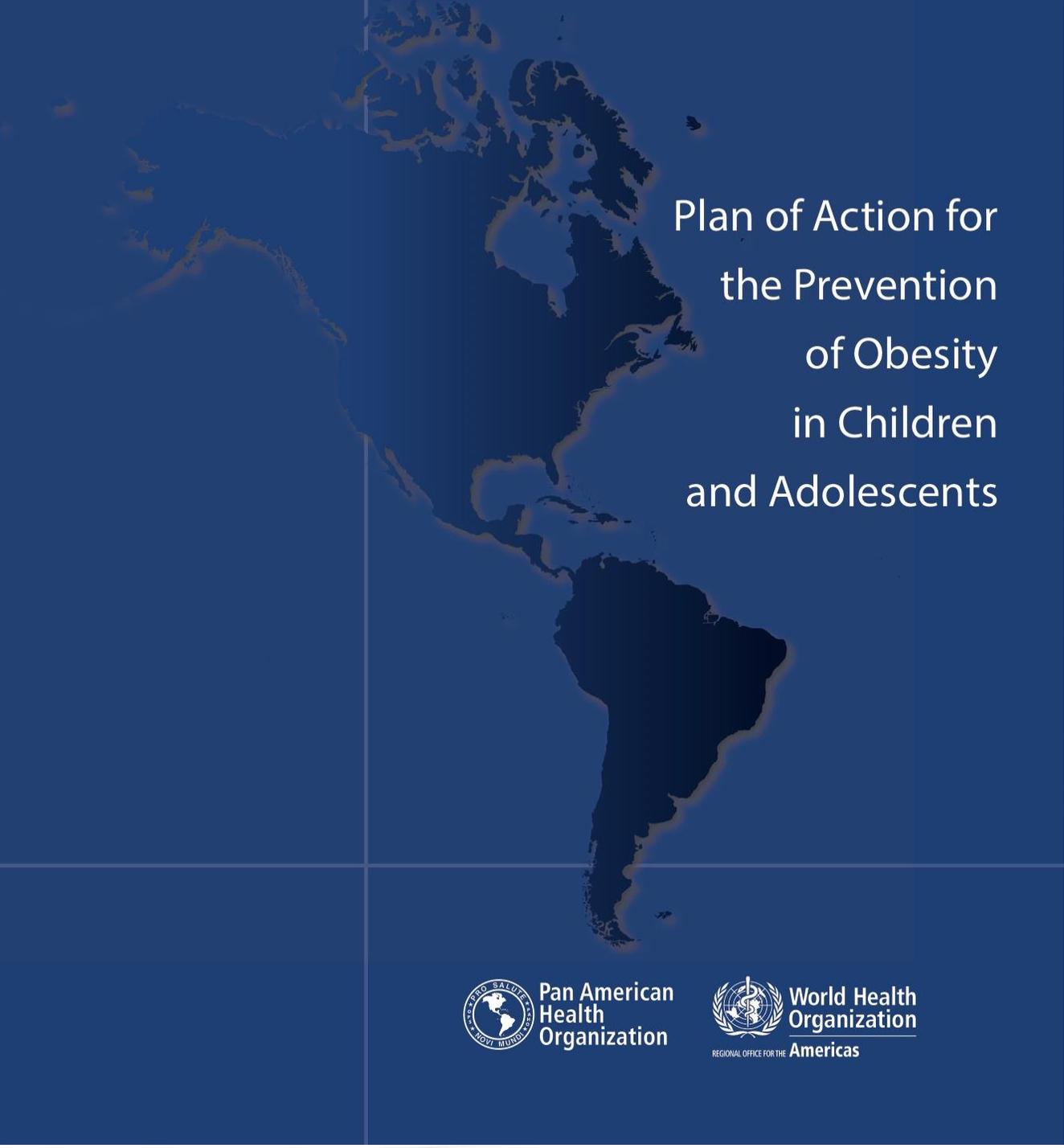
# REGULATION OF MARKETING

A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING  
THE SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS  
on the marketing of foods and  
non-alcoholic beverages to children



Recommendations from a Pan American Health  
Organization Expert Consultation on  
the Marketing of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages  
to Children in the Americas



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*Strategic Line of Action 2:*  
**Improvement of school  
nutrition and physical  
activity environments**



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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON

# ENDING CHILDHOOD OBESITY



 World Health  
Organization

## **IMPLEMENT COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMES THAT PROMOTE HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS, HEALTH AND NUTRITION LITERACY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.**

**5.1**

Establish standards for meals provided in schools, or foods and beverages sold in schools, that meet healthy nutrition guidelines.

**5.2**

Eliminate the provision or sale of unhealthy foods, such as sugar-sweetened beverages and energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods, in the school environment.

**5.3**

Ensure access to potable water in schools and sports facilities.

**5.4**

Require inclusion of nutrition and health education within the core curriculum of schools.

**5.5**

Improve the nutrition literacy and skills of parents and caregivers.

**5.6**

Make food preparation classes available to children, their parents and caregivers.

**5.7**

Include Quality Physical Education in the school curriculum and provide adequate and appropriate staffing and facilities to support this.

# The Brazil experience on school environments:

Children in public (80%) vs. private

78% more likely to eat *beans* 5+d/week

21% more likely to eat *fruits*

35% more likely to eat *vegetables*

2% less likely to regularly consume *sugary drinks*



Source: *Ciênc. Saúde Coletiva* 2010;  
15(supl.2):3085-97  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S1413-81232010000800013>



# The InterAmerican Task Force on NCDs and Opportunities for Collaboration in the Inter-American Education Agenda:

## The School environment as an opportunity



# Opportunities for Collaboration in the Inter-American Education Agenda

1. Comprehensive approach: coordination between health and education.
2. Promotion of:
  - a. Guidelines and recommendations
  - b. Healthy eating during childhood and adolescence
3. Regulatory framework to make school environments consistent with healthy eating and physical activity, and health promotion.



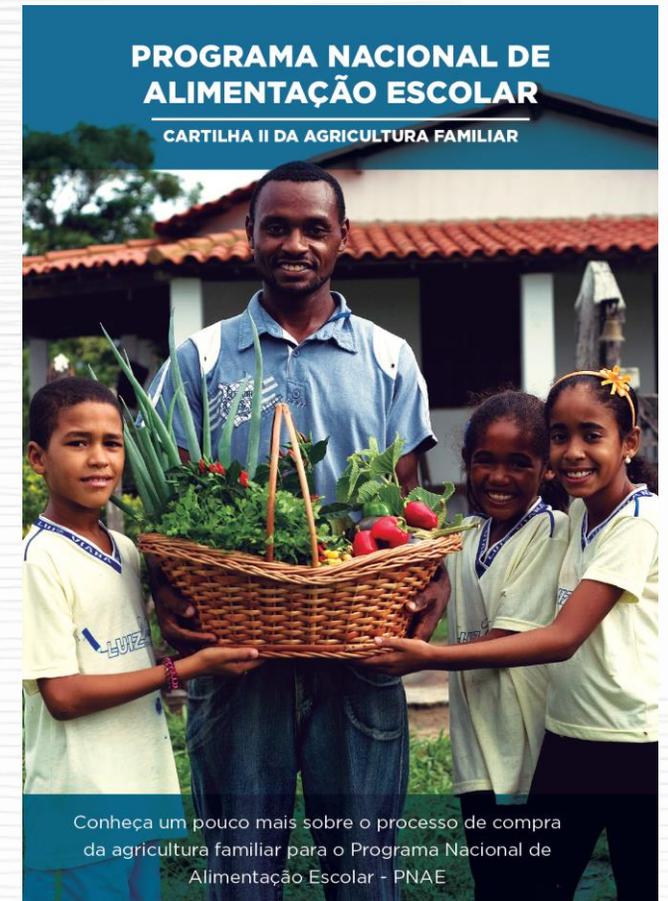
# Opportunities for Collaboration in the Inter-American Education Agenda



4. Promote:
  - Public procurement policies for food
  - Cooking and growing food in school and community gardens
5. Mainstreaming nutrition, physical activity and health issues in the school curriculum and teacher training
6. Support countries to develop and implement comprehensive plans to support Early Childhood Development in schools.

# PAHO's role in the prevention of childhood overweight and obesity in school settings

- Raise awareness
- Support development of policies and regulatory frameworks (nutrition and physical activity)
- Facilitate the updating of feeding, nutrition and health programs
- Promote inter-programmatic and multi-sectoral coordination



PAHO/WHO



The time to act is now!

Thank you!