Building the Evidence: Implementing Comprehensive Obesity Prevention Strategies

María Eugenia Bonilla-Chacín
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Child overweight prevalence, 1990-2013
Global and regional trends (Children < 5 years) 1990-2013

Comprehensive strategies for obesity prevention

Ending Childhood Obesity

Early childhood diet and physical activity

Promote physical activity

Weight management

Preconception and pregnancy care

Health, nutrition and physical activity for school-age children

Promote intake of healthy foods

Population-based interventions often are multisectoral
Challenges in the design of multisectoral actions to prevent obesity

- Multiple, diverse –and often powerful– stakeholders with diverse views and incentives
- Multiple levels of government action
- The health sector is often not directly involved in the implementation of some of these policies
- Health advocates often lack skills and levers that are held by different agencies/sectors
- Impact on trade and other high level policies
The World Bank is currently initiating a global study program to assess:

- what is needed to effectively develop, implement, and scale-up policies and interventions in low- and middle income countries, and
- how the World Bank can best support client countries in their efforts to prevent and control overweight/obesity
Aim to document factors that facilitate implementation of effective obesity prevention strategies and individual interventions

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<th>challenge</th>
<th>vision &amp; goals</th>
<th>approach</th>
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<td>Gap in knowledge on how to effectively develop, implement, and scale-up</td>
<td>Support client countries in their efforts to prevent and control overweight and obesity through</td>
<td>Connect practitioners and facilitate sharing of delivery know-how.</td>
<td>Disseminate evidence-based and actionable policy options adapted to client countries on factors to facilitate the implementation and scale-up of effective obesity prevention and control interventions and strategies.</td>
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<td>comprehensive obesity-prevention and control strategies in low- and middle income countries.</td>
<td>a better understanding of complex delivery challenges.</td>
<td>Develop country case studies to draw lessons from these experiences.</td>
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<td>Better understand how the World Bank can best support these efforts.</td>
<td>• Identify Stakeholders.</td>
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<td>• Incentives they face.</td>
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<td>• Factors that facilitated or hindered the design and implementation processes.</td>
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Example of school-based food and beverage regulations in Mexico

- Aims to ensure that foods prepared and sold at school contribute to a healthy diet
- This regulation were part of the National Agreements for Food Health. The guidelines are mandatory for all public and private basic education schools. They govern:
  - The criteria for foods and beverages recommended for consumption and sale
  - Limitations on distribution of food and beverages (including processed industrialized goods as well as those prepared by school cooperatives)
Stakeholders in Mexico spanned sectors

Regulations on what can be sold and distributed in schools

- Finance
- Education
- Food Industry
- Health
- Research Institutions
- Parent Teacher Associations
Position of main stakeholders for school food regulations in Mexico

**Food and Beverage Industry**
- Requested creation of negotiation committee for implementation and follow-up
- Argued disproportionate economic impact of restrictions on consumer industry
- Argued for more in-country evidence on correlation between obesity and NCDs before imposing restrictions

**Health and Education Secretaries**
- Created committee that could respond to the regulatory concerns raised by the consumer industries
- Evaluated economic impact and demonstrated policies were economically sound
- Demonstrated policies were aligned with WHO recommendations and evidence-based

Examples of fiscal and food reformulation policies in Latin America

- Agreements between the government and industry to reduce sodium and reform the Food Code to reduce trans fats in processed foods in Argentina

- Taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages and foods of low nutritional value in Mexico
Stakeholders in Mexico and Argentina spanned sectors

Food Reformulation

- Universities
- Commerce & Industry
- Health
- Food Industry
- Trade

Fiscal Policy

- Agriculture
- Civil Society Organizations
- Retail Industry
- Finance
- Food Industry
Position of main stakeholders for sodium and trans-fat reduction in Argentina

Coordinator for Food Product Industries

- Acknowledged international trend of reducing sodium and trans-fat in processed foods and the potential to improve company image
- Argued small and medium sized businesses would have difficulty reformulating products
- Concerned about reducing sodium since salt is needed to season and preserve food with few substitutes

Ministry of Health

- Promoted value added of healthy food which generated consumer demand for less salty products
- Agreed to provide assistance to small and medium sized businesses throughout the retrofitting process
- Financed training to bakeries on reduced sodium recipes and agree to gradual reductions of sodium

Thank you!

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