



## **Campaign briefing: Obese Planet**

### ***Raising the priority of obesity on government agendas***

#### **1. What is the campaign?**

Obese Planet is World Obesity's campaign to encourage political leadership on obesity. We are working to change the narrative on obesity, towards one which focuses on shared societal responsibility requiring Governments to implement a strong set of comprehensive policies to prevent, manage and treat obesity. The campaign aims to help people move beyond the myth that obesity is simply the result of individual choices, rather it is the result of a complex set of factors, including physical, social, commercial and political determinants.

The key asks of the campaign are that Governments:

- Recognise obesity as a disease and integrate it into Universal Health Coverage
- Reaffirm commitment to reducing childhood obesity
- Prioritise policies that tackle the social and commercial determinants of obesity

#### **2. Why is the campaign focused on obesity?**

**Obesity is both a risk factor for NCDs, as well as a disease in its own right.** Obesity acts as a gateway disease to NCDs, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes and liver disease, which are responsible for over 70% of deaths worldwide. No country is currently on track to meet the target to halt the rise in obesity based on 2010 levels and the global medical bill to treat the consequences of obesity is estimated to rise to \$1.2 trillion a year by 2025. The prevalence of obesity is most alarming in low and middle income countries, which now face a double burden of undernutrition and obesity.

#### **3. Why now?**

**In September 2018, the third UN High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) will take place, during the United Nations General Assembly.** This is an opportunity for governments to commit to implementing strong policies to reduce the prevalence of NCDs. We are encouraging Political Leaders to use this meeting as an opportunity to make bold commitments to ensure that the prevention, management and treatment of obesity is integrated into their work on NCDs. There are a number of evidence-based solutions, including fiscal measures and marketing restrictions, which have been successfully implemented in a number of countries already. The rest of the world must follow the lead and commit to adopt strong policies which address the social and commercial determinants of obesity and other NCDs.

**In December 2018, the annual summit of the G20 will take place.** The current presidency is held by Argentina, who has set childhood obesity as a key health priority for this year's G20.

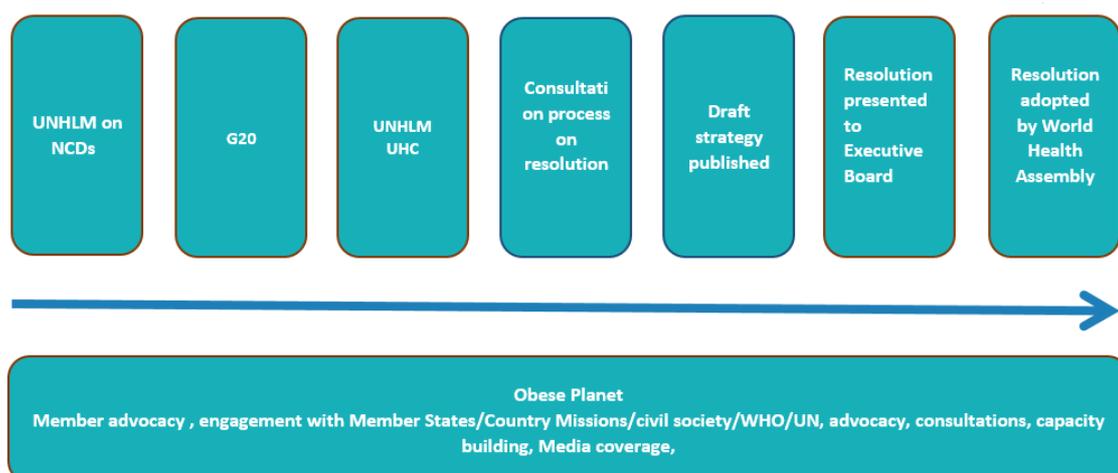
This is further opportunity for Heads of States that form the G20 to commit to strong action on childhood obesity, between on the recommendations of the WHO's Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity. In particular, we will be looking for commitments to implement strong policies, including marketing restrictions, sugar taxes and labelling restrictions.

**In September 2019, there will be a High-level meeting on Universal Health Coverage as part of the UN General Assembly.** This is an opportunity for governments to acknowledge obesity as a disease, and their responsibility to ensure equitable access to obesity management and treatment services for all who want it. Health services should provide access to appropriate and safe treatments, medicines and support services as well as provide adequate access to specialist health workers. Provisions should be made to ensure health services and staff are sensitive to and do not perpetuate weight stigma, which has impacts for both physical and mental health. Improving the treatment and care for people with obesity will in turn improve health outcomes and reduce disability and premature mortality that results from obesity its consequences.

All three of these meetings provide an important opportunity for the world's leaders to engage with and commit to a whole-of-government approach to addressing obesity, as well as NCDs and UHC. It is an opportunity to integrate health into all policies, rather than it being the sole responsibility of Health Ministries alone. The WHO is playing an important role in both of these meetings by providing technical expertise and guidance.

#### 4. Next steps?

Obesity has emerged as a global health challenge in parallel with the wider NCD agenda. While there is overlap with the NCD and nutrition strategies that already exist at a WHO and national level, the complexity of obesity means that the drivers and solutions require their own focused strategy. Building on the commitments that are made at the 2018 UN HLM on NCDs and the 2019 UN HLM on UHC, World Obesity will be working with Member States to get a resolution on obesity to be adopted by the World Assembly. A resolution would help provide a roadmap for obesity prevention, management and treatment and would support governments in taking comprehensive action to reduce obesity in their country.



#### 5. How can members become involved with the campaign?

We encourage you to get involved with our campaign and help raise the priority of obesity on government agendas. You might consider

- Writing to you political leaders to encourage attendance at the UN High-level meetings
- Supporting the campaign on twitter and other social media
- Visit [www.obeseplanet.org](http://www.obeseplanet.org) for more information on how to engage with the campaign and to get updates on the campaign and progress made

## **6. Acronyms**

CHO	Childhood Obesity
CVD	Cardiovascular Disease
ECHO	Ending Childhood Obesity
HLM	High Level Meeting
NCDs	Non-communicable Disease
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UN	United Nations
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization