



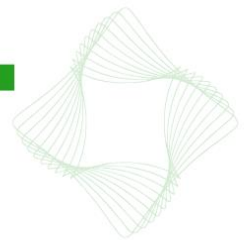
## WEBINAR ON:

# Government's Role in Restricting Unhealthy Diets and Promoting Healthy Options.

September 23, 2025



# RADA'S WEBINAR REPORT



In commemoration of the global week  
for Action on NCD's 2025

10:00 AM – 12:14 PM

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# INTRODUCTION

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Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading causes of death and disability worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2021, at least 43 million people died from NCDs, equivalent to 75% of non-pandemic-related deaths globally, recording about 18 million deaths before age 70. The burden of NCDs increases steadily in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with more than three-quarters (73%) of NCD-related premature deaths occurring in these countries. According to the 2022 WHO NCD Progress Monitor, NCDs claim between 100,000 and 450,000 lives annually in Africa's most populous nations and between 50% and 88% of annual deaths in smaller countries. It is predicted that by 2030, NCDs will become the leading cause of death in Africa.

In Cameroon, NCDs are a major public health concern and were responsible for an estimated 74,000 deaths in 2016, accounting for 35% of all deaths among individuals over the age of 50. Additionally, the likelihood of dying from a major NCD before the age of 70 is estimated at 21.6% (WHO, 2018). The growing burden of NCDs is strongly linked to unhealthy dietary patterns, driven by factors such as rapid urbanization, increased consumption of processed foods and sugary beverages, and the persistence of traditional diets high in starch, fats, and sugars.

Over the years, RADA has been working on Advocacy for Healthy Food Policies in Cameroon, one of its key projects being Advocacy for a Health Tax Increase on Sweetened Beverages and other Unhealthy Packaged Foods Based on Evidence for Public Health and Development Benefits. This aims to promote public health by discouraging the consumption of unhealthy products that contain excess sugars, salt, fats, and calories, which are associated with an increasing burden of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic non communicable diseases in Cameroon.

In commemoration of the Global Week for Action on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD's), the Reconciliation and Development Association (RADA) hosted a highly engaging webinar under the theme: "***The Government's Role in Restricting Unhealthy Diets and Promoting Healthy Options.***" The event brought together 48 participants, including journalists, government officials, health advocates, and stakeholders in public health and nutrition. The event sought to raise public awareness and stimulate multi-stakeholder dialogue on the pressing need for government-led policy intervention to curb unhealthy dietary habits and reduce the burden of NCDs in the country.

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The session served as a strategic platform to advocate for Cameroon’s meaningful participation in the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> United Nations High-level Meeting on NCDs. The dialogue emphasized the need for inclusive and coordinated efforts to strengthen national responses to NCDs and called for bold leadership and accountability in advancing health-promotion policies.

# WELCOME & SESSION OVERVIEW

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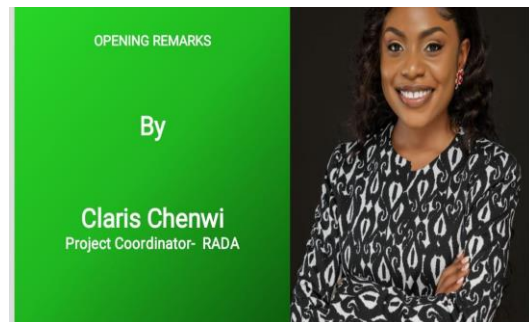
The session was moderated by Ms. Magdalene Nchangwi, who warmly welcomed participants and introduced the agenda. She provided an overview of the webinar’s structure and objectives, she equally presented key statistics on the rising burden of NCDs in Cameroon, which now account for approximately 35% of all deaths, highlighting the urgency for public health interventions that promote healthy diets and lifestyles. She further went ahead to invite the Project Coordinator Ms. Chenwi to present opening remarks.

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# OPENING REMARKS

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Miss Claris Chenwi, Project Coordinator at RADA, gave the opening remark. She set the tone for the discussion by highlighting the urgent need for stronger government action particularly in the area of taxing unhealthy food products and promoting access to healthier alternatives.



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# OBJECTIVES

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The objectives of the session were to:

- Raise awareness about the impact of unhealthy diets on public health.
- Provide a platform for stakeholders to share their views on the government's role in promoting healthy eating.
- Share ongoing policy work being carried out by RADA in this area.

## Presentation 1

# MR. FERDINANT M SONYUY, CEO/PRESIDENT OF RADA

The first presentation was delivered by Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy, President and CEO of RADA. He spoke on the theme: "***Policy Intervention for Healthy Eating in Cameroon and its Implications for the Country's Post-UNHLM Leadership on NCDs.***"

Mr. Sonyuy began by unpacking the burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) explaining what they are, their major risk factors, and specifically how unhealthy diets contribute significantly to their prevalence. Citing WHO 2021 statistics, he highlighted that NCDs account for 71% of all global deaths, making them the leading cause of mortality worldwide.

He then moved on to discuss the upcoming United Nations High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on NCDs scheduled for September 25, 2025, in New York, underlining why it is critical for Cameroon to take an active role in this global dialogue. He emphasized the significance of the outcome document which is a "***Political Declaration***" which will shape future commitments and actions.

Mr. Sonyuy went on to share key components of RADA's Healthy Eating Cameroon programs, which include:



- ❖ Front-of-Package Warning Labels on unhealthy packaged food products
- ❖ Taxation on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs) and other unhealthy packaged foods
- ❖ Advocacy for healthier public food procurement policies
- ❖ Campaigns for reformulating unhealthy food products

## Presentation 2

The second presentation was delivered by Miss Marlen Wango, RADA's Health Promotion Lead. Her presentation focused on leadership in promoting healthy eating in Cameroon, drawing on practical experiences from RADA's ongoing healthy eating campaign.



She spoke passionately about:

- The negative health impacts of unhealthy diets
- The structure and objectives of RADA's healthy eating campaign
- Key outputs and field experiences, including community feedback and local engagement
- Challenges encountered during implementation ranging from misinformation to limited access to healthier alternatives
- Opportunities for scaling up, especially through community leadership and partnerships with local institutions.

Her presentation offered a grounded perspective on the realities of promoting dietary change at the community level and emphasized the importance of education, advocacy, and policy support in driving lasting behavior change.

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# INTERACTIVE Q&A SESSIONS

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Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and share reflections. One notable question asked was whether there are any success stories from other countries, where health education has led to long-term improvements in dietary behavior. Miss Wango responded affirmatively, highlighting that yes, there are global examples where sustained public health education, coupled with strong policy action, has led to measurable changes in community nutrition habits.

## Closing Remarks &

# CALL TO ACTION

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Miss Marlen Wango concluded by encouraging everyone to lead by example, emphasizing that people often adopt healthier habits when they see them modeled by others in their environment.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy urged all participants to become champions for NCDs prevention, starting with their own communities. He stressed the need for local leadership, reiterating that Cameroon must not only participate in Global Week for Action on NCD dialogues but also take bold steps at home to lead in policy action.

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# CONCLUSION

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The webinar closed at 12:14 PM, leaving participants inspired and motivated to support policies that restrict unhealthy diets and promote healthier options. The discussions made it clear that addressing unhealthy eating is not just a health issue, it is a matter of leadership, equity, and long-term national development.

RADA extends its gratitude to all participants and looks forward to further collaboration in the push for healthier communities and stronger public health policies in Cameroon and beyond.

# APPENDIX

AGENDA- 10:00am



1	WELCOME/ SESSION OVERVIEW	6	ANNOUNCEMENTS
2	OPENING REMARKS	7	CLOSING REMARKS
3	PRESENTATION 1		
4	PRESENTATION 2		
5	QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION!		

**LIVE**

President/CEO, RADA

### Conclusion

- We can't be leaders outside without being leaders inside: Charity begins at home
- Pass Low hanging policies on healthy food choices in Cameroon to protect the population and Lead on NCDs
- Leadership in Central Africa, Africa and the world
- Post HLM Actions are clear given they didn't happen pre HLM


## Why should Cameroon participate in the 4th UNHLM on NCDs ?



Zoom

President/CEO, RADA

### TAXATION OF SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGES AND UNHEALTHY PACKAGED FOOD PRODUCTS IN CAMEROON

**RADA**  
Reconciliation and Development Association

Goal: To advocate for an evidence based health tax increase on sugar sweetened beverages and unhealthy packaged food products by 2025.

Objectives:

- To advocate for a change in tax law to introduce an evidence based health tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and unhealthy food products progressively within two years.
- To raise awareness and capacity of the community and relevant stakeholders, including decision-makers, about the health risks associated with consuming SSBs and unhealthy diets and the benefits of taxation to ensure buy-in and technical capacity engagement and to foster the promotion of access to healthier food options.