

# Concept note

## **Webinar on the Human-Rights Based Approaches (HRBAs) for the promotion of healthier food environments and prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases in East Africa to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 from 2:00- 4:00 pm EAT via zoom**

### **Background**

In the last two decades, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) have been ranked as one of the leading causes of mortality globally. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) NCDs annually kill 41 million people, representing 74% of all deaths globally. Worst of all, of the global NCD deaths, 77% are reported in Low and Medium Income Countries (LMICs). These glaring mortality numbers pose a setback to Sustainable Development Goal 3.4 which is aimed at reducing by one-third, premature mortality from NCDs using prevention and treatment by 2030. The World Bank classifies Sub-Saharan Africa as home to 20 of the LMIC countries globally. Evidence shows that Africa has not been spared in the significant rise of diet-related NCD cases.

In Kenya, NCDs account for 39% of annual deaths<sup>1</sup> and 33% for both Tanzania<sup>2</sup> and Uganda<sup>3</sup>. The rising burden of NCDs in these three countries is largely driven by unhealthy dietary habits resulting from the rapid nutrition transition, and changing food environments and dietary behaviours.

There is an increasing recognition that a human-rights-based approach can be a potentially powerful tool that can be leveraged to improve the healthfulness of diets and food environments. While human rights have been used to address other health challenges in the region, including HIV/AIDS, there has not been the same development of their use to improve diets. There is particular value in adopting a human rights-based approach where the interventions to prevent diet-related NCDs are regulatory in nature such as taxation of sugary beverages, front-of-package labelling, and restricting marketing to children. A contributor to this lacuna in the use of human rights-based approaches may be a lack of knowledge and capacity of the existing frameworks amongst key stakeholders in NCD prevention efforts. Information on how these interventions have incorporated a human-rights approach remains limited and evidence on the implementation of initiatives on the promotion of healthy diets and prevention of NCDs remains scant.

Against this backdrop, the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) in collaboration with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the University of Liverpool, and in-country research partners from Makerere University School of Public Health in Uganda, Ifakara Health Institute in Tanzania Conducted a study to generate knowledge on stakeholder experiences, barriers, capacity gaps, and opportunities for using Human Rights-Based Approaches to advance the promotion of healthy diets and prevention of NCDs in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Health Kenya, 2021. The Kenya National NCD Strategic Plan (NSP) 2021/22-2025/26. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/3c7my2uj>

<sup>2</sup> WHO, 2018. Non-communicable Diseases (NCD) Country Profiles. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/2fb9h4nw>

<sup>3</sup> WHO, September 2019. UN supporting Uganda to halt the rise of Non-communicable diseases. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/9u2d868r>

## Rationale

This webinar on the key findings of the study conducted between March –June 2022 comes at a time when chronic diseases, and specifically diet-related non-communicable diseases are risk factors for developing severe complications of COVID-19 as well as becoming a growing disease burden in East Africa. This research further contributes to work in the Region to support the adoption and implementation of evidence-based measures to prevent diet-related NCDs such as nutrition labelling, taxation of sugary beverages, and restricting food and non-alcoholic beverages marketing to children. The study findings also contribute to the Human Rights and Healthy Diets (HRHD) initiative as it aims to support civil society organizations and policy-makers to strengthen their understanding and application of human rights-based approaches to promote healthy diets through regulatory and fiscal interventions in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The information on knowledge gaps and implementation barriers, as well as opportunities, will help stakeholders identify the entry points to apply human rights-based approaches to promote healthy diets and prevent the spread of NCDs in the three countries and across sub-Saharan Africa.

## Overall Goal

The overall goal of the webinar is to present and solicit feedback from stakeholders on key findings from the study on Human-Rights Based Approaches for the promotion of healthier food environments and prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

## Webinar Objectives

The objectives of the webinar are:

- Showcase key findings from the study on stakeholder experiences, barriers, capacity gaps, and opportunities for using Human Rights-Based Approaches to advance the promotion of healthy diets and prevention of NCDs in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- Ignite critical conversations on the necessary actions needed to inform policy intervention and industry regulation in the promotion of healthy diets and prevention of NCDs.
- Enhance multi-sectoral ownership, collaboration, and synergy in advancing Human Rights-based approaches in the promotion of healthy diets.

## Participants

The participants of the webinar will be drawn from government ministries, Departments and Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, the Media, Youth organizations, research institutions, RECAP project partners, research respondents, and multinationals.

## Webinar Format

Time EAT	Agenda Item
2:00 –2:10 pm	Logging in of participants  Webinar registration Link: <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UIQv7lv-R_i98xNYBlmXCg">https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UIQv7lv-R_i98xNYBlmXCg</a>
2:10 – 2:35 pm <i>(5 minutes per partner)</i>	<b>Opening Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction of participants and agenda</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming remarks by partners: APHRC, Makerere University Uganda, Ifakara Health Institute Tanzania and IDLO.</li> </ul>
2:35- 3:15 pm <i>(40 minutes)</i>	<p><b>Main session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the HRHD research initiative</li> <li>• Presentation of Background, methodology, and key findings from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania studies on stakeholder experiences, barriers, capacity gaps, and opportunities for using Human Rights-Based Approaches to advance the promotion of healthy diets and prevention of NCDs in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania.</li> </ul>
3:15 - 3:30 pm	Comments, questions and reflections by webinar participants
3:30 - 3:40 pm	Responses by the study researchers
3:40 - 3:50 pm	Menti poll on webinar feedback
3:50- 4:00 pm	Closing remarks and end of webinar

## Partners Brief

### HRHD Research Support Initiative

*This study is undertaken with the financial and technical support of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) through the Human Rights and Healthy Diets Research Support (HRHD) Initiative. The HRHD Initiative is implemented in collaboration with the Law & NCD Research Unit of the University of Liverpool and aims to support researchers, civil society organizations, and policy-makers to strengthen their understanding and application of human rights-based approaches to promote healthy diets through regulatory and fiscal interventions in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The Initiative highlights knowledge gaps and implementation barriers, as well as opportunities and entry points to apply human rights-based approaches to promote healthy diets with a view to identifying priority areas in research and policy where additional support is needed. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IDLO or its Member Parties.*

### IDRC

*This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of IDRC or its Board of Governors.*