

WHO has organized an open forum event on unopposed marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to children which will take place from 13 to 14 September 2015 in Amman, Jordan.

The forum will be attended by famous and influential people, including TV personalities, athletes, TV/radio producers, journalists and representatives of marketing companies who will discuss what can be done about this problem. It is hoped that with their experience and influence, they can contribute to creating an environment for children that is free of commercial determinants of ill-health through social change.

Background

Children are one of the most targeted consumer groups by the fast food and soft drinks industries. These industries are driven by increasing the number of sales of their fast food and soft drinks throughout the world. Therefore, they use innovative tactics to influence children to purchase their unhealthy products (food high in fat, salt and sugar).

Child overweight and obesity in the Region has reached epidemic proportions and shows no sign of declining. The rapid rise – within the last 30 years – adds to the pre-existing burden of nutrition related diseases. While the levels of childhood overweight and obesity are the highest in high income countries with more than 50% of children being overweight, middle income countries are rapidly catching up.

What is unopposed marketing?

Industries are using sophisticated pervasive marketing techniques to influence people's choice without any legal restriction. These hidden tactics are targeting children towards purchasing and consuming food high in fat, sugar and salt. Unopposed marketing refers to the lack of control, legal and/or social, required for the community to respond to the commercially driven industrial epidemics.

Related link

[Read more about preventing childhood obesity](#)

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