



Workshop Report

Title: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Engagement Workshop on the Taxation of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs) and Other Ultra-Processed Products (UPPs)

Date: June 2, 2025

Venue: CBC Resource Center, Mvan, Yaoundé

Supported by: Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA)

Organized by: CSO Coalition for Healthy Diets in Cameroon

1. Introduction

On June 2, 2025, a national workshop was convened at the CBC Resource Center in Mvan, Yaoundé, with the participation of over 40 civil society organizations, researchers, public health professionals, and media representatives. The workshop focused on strengthening CSOs' capacity to advocate for a health tax on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) and ultra-processed products (UPPs) in Cameroon. The session was both technically and financially supported by the **Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA)**.

2. Opening Session

The day began at **9:30 AM** with:

2.1 Opening Prayer

Led by a participant, setting a respectful and solemn tone for the day's discussions.

2.2 Welcome Address & Session Overview

The facilitator **Ms Clariss Chenwi** welcomed participants and provided a brief overview of the day's agenda, emphasizing the goal of building CSO capacity for impactful health advocacy in line with national and global efforts to curb non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

2.3 Opening Remarks

Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy, President/CEO of RADA, gave the keynote opening, highlighting the importance of CSOs as watchdogs and drivers of public policy. He emphasized the urgent need for coordinated advocacy to influence the fiscal and health policy space in Cameroon.



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3. Workshop Goal and Objectives

Goal:

To strengthen the capacity and raise awareness of civil society organizations on the importance of health taxes and their role in advocating for the taxation of SSBs and UPPs in Cameroon by September 2025.

Specific Objectives:

1. Build awareness of the negative effects of unhealthy diets and the preventive role of fiscal measures like taxation.
2. Provide CSOs with evidence, knowledge, and tools for effective advocacy.
3. Strengthen coalition-building and unify advocacy efforts toward healthier food policies in Cameroon.

4. Detailed Sessions

4.1 Context and Landscape Analysis of SSBs and UPPs in Cameroon

Presented by: *Dr. Mapa Clarisse*

Key Points:

- NCDs cause **71% of global deaths**; **77% occur in LMICs**, including Cameroon.
- **17 million people** die prematurely (before age 70) annually due to NCDs.
- Cameroon's current excise duties target imported SSBs and unhealthy products, suggesting the primary aim is **revenue generation** rather than health protection.
- **Effective interventions** globally include:
 - Sugar taxes
 - Advertising restrictions
 - Front-of-package warnings
 - Awareness campaigns
 - Subsidies for healthy products



4.2 Health Economic Analysis of SSB and UPP Taxation

Presented by: *Prof. Ndamsa Dickson*

Overview:

This session unpacked the **economic rationale** behind health taxes, showing how they can both reduce consumption of harmful products and generate revenue for health systems.

Analysis Included:

- Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA)
- Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)
- Cost Utility Analysis (CUA)
- Elasticity Analysis
- Social Cost-Benefit Analysis (SCBA)

Key Findings:

- Gradual content-based taxation (Year 1 to Year 3) is optimal.
- Taxes should be part of a **broader fiscal health policy** strategy.
- Advocacy must be **informed**—grounded in evidence, not assumptions.

4.3 Stakeholder Analysis and Advocacy Strategy

Presented by: *Ferdinant M. Sonyuy, RADA*

Objective:

Equip CSOs with tools to **analyze, engage, and manage stakeholders** in policy advocacy.

Stakeholder Categories:

- **High Power / High Interest (HPHI):** Key allies to be fully engaged.
- **High Power / Low Interest:** Industry and potential opposition—must be kept in check without overwhelming.
- **Low Power / High Interest:** Supportive groups that may become powerful advocates.
- **Low Power / Low Interest:** Low priority, minimal engagement.

Industry Interference:

Defined as actions by corporate actors to **influence, delay, or derail public health policies**.

Tool Introduced: RIIMROP Platform (<https://riimrop.recdev.org>):

- Used for reporting and tracking industry interference.
- Participants were trained on registration, action logging, and using the dashboard.



4.4 Communication Campaign and Advocacy Engagement

Presented by: *Merveille Ngueubou*

Session Focus:

- Overview of ongoing campaigns
- Key campaign messages and goals
- Use of physical and digital advocacy tools
- Dos and Don'ts of public engagement

Tools Reviewed:

- Posters, infographics, social media kits, and campaign videos.

5. Question & Answer Session

Participants engaged presenters on:

- How to frame tax messaging without backlash from consumers
- Clarification on the legal process of tax reforms
- How CSOs can collaborate across sectors (health, education, media)

6. Key Workshop Outcomes

1. **Capacity building** on economic and health rationale for SSB/UPP taxes.
2. **Understanding of industry interference** and tools to monitor it.
3. **Launch of RIIMROP platform** as a CSO tool for reporting interference.
4. **Commitment to co-host advocacy webinars and district-level workshops.**
5. **Strengthened CSO coalition** with shared strategies and messaging alignment.

7. Recommendations

- Adopt **content-based, phased taxation** on unhealthy products.
- CSOs must maintain **consistent messaging** using evidence and human-interest stories.
- Use stakeholder maps to engage power centers and form **strategic alliances**.
- Routinely use the **RIIMROP app** to document interference and support policy transparency.

- Coordinate regular **follow-up meetings** and develop a national advocacy calendar.

8. Closing Remarks

In his closing, **Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy** urged all CSOs to remain vigilant, strategic, and united in the campaign for healthier diets in Cameroon. He emphasized that CSOs are not spectators, but **active change agents**. He closed by saying:

“Our role is shared—and Cameroonians depend on us to act. Let’s push for a healthier future.”

9. Conclusion

A strategic shift in fiscal policy is essential to prioritize public health, particularly through the effective implementation of health-driven taxation measures such as Sugar-Sweetened Beverage (SSB) taxes. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) must lead advocacy efforts to ensure these fiscal tools are not perceived merely as revenue-generating mechanisms, but as vital public health interventions. This requires pushing for targeted taxation policies that encourage healthier consumption behaviors, while simultaneously strengthening campaign messaging through evidence-based tools, alignment with coalition narratives, and audience-specific communication strategies. To maximize impact and sustainability, advocacy must be grounded in thorough stakeholder analysis, enabling CSOs to build strong alliances, enhance policy influence, and anticipate and counter industry opposition effectively.

Prepared By:

Ongla Diane Pascaline / Value Health Africa

Date: June 5, 2025



Controlled and signed by Ongla Diane Pascaline
National Coordinator - VAHA





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10. APPENDICE

Agenda Session

S/N	Time	Activity	Person Responsible
1	9:00-9:05	Opening Prayer	CBC Chaplain
2	9:05-9:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome /Overview of the Session and Objectives Opening Remarks 	Chenwi Claris, Project Coordinator, Taxation, RADA Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy, CEO, RADA
3	9:25-9:55	Presentation of the context and landscape analysis of SSBs and UPPs in Cameroon.	Dr. Mappa Clarisse
4	9:55-10:25	Breakfast	All
5	10:25-10:55	Presentation on the Health Economic Analysis of a tax increase on Sugary Drinks and Unhealthy Packaged foods in Cameroon	Prof Ndamsa Dickson
6	11:55-12:15	Icebreaker	Nguebou Merveille
7	12:15-14:25	Session on the importance of taxing SSBs: Campaign and Advocacy Engagement	Mr. Ferdinand M. Sonyuy Nguebou Merveille Marlen Wango
9	14:25 - 14:35	Question and Answer Session	Ferdinant M. Sonyuy Chenwi Claris
10	14:35-14:40	Closing Remarks	-Ferdinant M. Sonyuy
11	14:40-15:00	Networking session and refreshments	-All



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Invitation Letter



Ref: RADA/R/C-L/25/195
May 15, 2025

From:

Ferdinant M. Sonyuy
President/CEO, RADA/SG. Cameroon NCD Alliance



To: The Communication Officers:

Rural Doctors	Recherche Santé De Développement (RSD)
Cameroon Diabetes Association (CDA)	Health and Development (HEAD/SADEV)
Cameroon Coalition to Counter Tobacco (C3T)	Goofirm Foundation
Health Of the Population in Transit (HOPIT)	Community Sustainable Health Solution, COSUHS
Value Health Africa	BIAKA University
Humanity at Heart	FAHEDEF
Family Health DF	CONACOL Yaoundé
Cameroon Consumers Association (CCC)	HRF Buea
CHAI	Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS)
CATUC Diabetes Association	Société Camerounaise de Cardiologie (SCC)
SOPISDEW	Lachofit
Integrated Health for All Foundation (IHAF) Cameroon	Community Vision Group
AgriFood Safety and One Health Agency (AFS1HA) CA	BioVital Association

SUBJECT: Invitation to Participate in a CSO Engagement Workshop on Healthy Food Policy Advocacy in Cameroon

You are cordially invited to participate in a workshop session with the Reconciliation and Development Association (RADA) on healthy food policy advocacy, focusing on a health tax increase on Sweetened drinks and other unhealthy packaged food products in Cameroon. This session is scheduled for **June 2, 2025**, from **8:30am to 3:00pm** at the **CBC Resource Center Mvan, Yaoundé**.

RADA has been actively advocating for policies that encourage healthier eating habits in Cameroon, aiming to curb the rise of non-communicable diseases. This workshop is designed to strengthen the capacity and raise awareness of civil society organizations on the importance of the health tax and its impact on the population's health, as well as their role and power in this advocacy and campaign as part of the coalition for the promotion of healthy diets in Cameroon.

A per diem will be provided to support your active participation, covering transportation and lodging costs. Attached to this invitation is the event concept note for more insights.

We look forward to your participation and engagement during this workshop. Should you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact us via email: info@recdev.org or WhatsApp: +237(651927969).

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