

PREVENTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN LATIN AMERICA

AN AGENDA FOR REGIONAL RESEARCH & STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

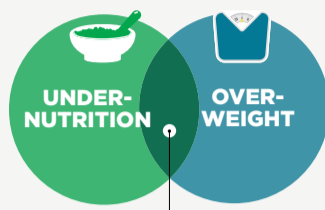
NIH FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The rise in childhood obesity in Latin America poses a major public health challenge. Limited scientific evidence inhibits development and implementation of new, effective interventions across the region. To address this gap, the *NIH Fogarty International Center* engaged researchers to analyze the knowledge translation needed for evidence-based policy initiatives, review the research agenda, and evaluate research capacity in the region.

NUTRITION STATUS OF CHILDREN IN LATIN AMERICA



CHILDREN ARE OVERWEIGHT *or* OBESE and this proportion is increasing rapidly



Latin America faces the dual burden of UNDERNUTRITION & OVERWEIGHT

CAUSES



Sedentary lifestyles and diets rich in energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods



Changes in socioeconomic conditions, urbanization and private vehicle ownership, and retail foods and food marketing



Biological and genetic factors, including ethnicity and gender

WHAT ARE THE RESEARCH NEEDS IN LATIN AMERICA?

Latin American researchers should...



BUILD

evidence for effective dietary and physical activity policies



EVALUATE

childhood obesity prevention policies and regulatory actions



ENHANCE

dissemination of proven approaches



IMPLEMENT

comprehensive, multilevel interventions to promote healthy child growth



IMPROVE

collection of public health data and the infrastructure related to obesity prevention



UNDERSTAND

the biological challenges to healthy growth across the life cycle and the role of diet and physical activity

WHAT ARE SOME LESSONS LEARNED FROM DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES?



Case studies throughout Latin America demonstrate that **scientific evidence**, **evaluation**, **political will**, and **cross-sector collaboration** are essential for launching and sustaining effective policy.



MEXICO

Through the cooperation of academia, civil society, and the legislative and executive branches of government, approval of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and nonessential energy-dense food was possible.



ARGENTINA

Evidence that almost all food in Argentina contains high level of trans fatty acids (TFAs) led to the decision to significantly reduce TFAs from the food supply.



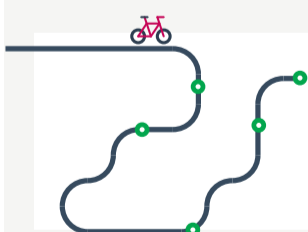
CHILE

Public health researchers and advocates were key to passing front-of-package labeling legislation.



ECUADOR

Motivated by data from a national nutrition survey, the Ministry of Health and Government of Ecuador demonstrated strong political will to enact a traffic light label regulation.



ACROSS LATIN AMERICA

Because of the documented success of **Ciclovías** (open streets) in Bogotá, the initiative has spread to

461



CITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

WHAT CAN WE DO TO ADVANCE CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA?



INVEST

in research capacity, training Latin American researchers to pursue locally relevant research and maintaining a career pipeline for scientists



DEVELOP

research networks within and among countries in the region



PROMOTE

a research environment that fosters multidisciplinary collaboration



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