Global Governance of Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labelling: A Qualitative Analysis

Front-of-pack nutrition labelling is gaining momentum as a policy tool to respond to the growing global burden of diet-related noncommunicable diseases. Overall, such labels have the potential to impact a consumers' behaviour at the point of purchase and nudge them to make healthier choices. However, no consensus was reached regarding which type of labelling scheme should be used and multiple ones co-exist globally. In an attempt ensure the strongest impact possible of front-of-pack labelling, discussions are underway at Codex "regarding the potential development of guidance on front-of-pack nutrition labelling." This study therefore "seeks to explicitly consider the roles of institutional structures and the exercise of power by different actors in shaping the ongoing Codex discussions on front-of-pack nutrition labelling."

This study was conducted as a qualitative policy and governance analysis, "based on interviews with 28 stakeholders regarding ongoing discussions at Codex, including relevant subcommittees, regarding front-of-pack nutrition labelling." Overall, the results show that "Codex guidance was perceived as likely to have a high impact on front-of-pack nutrition labelling globally, either positive or negative depending on the nature of the guidance ultimately developed." The Codex could therefore be very valuable in developing national policies. Furthermore, the study also suggests that there is an opportunity for public health practitioners to increase their influence "through strategic participation, coordination, and communication of evidence." This research highlights that "guidance from Codex is likely to have a significant impact on global adoption of front-of-pack nutrition labelling."

Reference: Thow, A.M.M. et al. Global governance of front-of-pack nutrition labelling: A qualitative analysis. *Nutrients*. 2019;11(2) **https://doi.org/10.3390/nu11020268**