HIGHLIGHTS OF THE IDF SIDE EVENT TO THE 71ST WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Nutrition education and IDF action to tackle obesity and prevent diabetes

22nd May 2018, InterContinental Hotel (Geneva)
BACKGROUND

Lifestyle changes, in particular a shift to processed and energy-dense foods, rich in saturated fat, salt and carbohydrates with a high glycaemic index, coupled with decreased physical activity, have been shown to be the leading cause of the rising prevalence of obesity, insulin resistance and Type 2 diabetes. Obesity affected 41 million children under the age of five in 2016, a figure set to reach 70 million by 2025 if the appropriate measures to tackle this global issue are not put in place.

Diabetes management and care greatly depend on the quality of the nutrition education received. Since it is an integral component of preventing diabetes, all health professionals need access to proven, effective, professional education about diabetes. Nutrition education for the general public and specifically school-age children also plays a vital role in people living a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

OBJECTIVES OF THE IDF EVENT

Nutrition experts, government representatives and people living with diabetes were convened to discuss how quality nutrition education can be part of the solution to overcome the global health challenges posed by diabetes and obesity. The event also provided the opportunity to showcase recent developments in the Kids and Diabetes in Schools (KiDS) initiative, a project that aims to foster a safe and supportive environment in schools for children with diabetes and encourage the adoption of good healthy habits from an early age.

The purpose of the event was to highlight the urgent need to tackle obesity in the school environment and current gaps in nutrition education in order to achieve global health targets including a 0% increase in diabetes prevalence by 2025 and a reduction in diabetes-related premature mortality by 30% by 2030.
Prof Nam Han Cho

IDF’s President, opened the event, reminding the audience of the scale of the diabetes and obesity epidemics. IDF estimates that 425 million adults lived with diabetes in 2017, a figure expected to increase to 522 million by 2030 without concerted action. He outlined the key risk factors for diabetes and the causes for poor nutrition. He specifically singled out unhealthy, calorie-dense foods, large portion sizes and sugar-sweetened beverages and recommended that comprehensive lifestyle interventions be put in place to tackle the problem.

“We need to tackle the obesity epidemic, promote healthy and balanced diets and advocate for more education and awareness amongst our children.”

Prof Cho
Dr. Ophra Rebiere
Sanofi Vice President and Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, presented the KiDs programme, detailing the success of this initiative which has, since its launch, been used in 175 schools globally including in Brazil, Egypt, India, Japan, Pakistan, Poland, United Arab Emirates, and has educated 60,000 children and 8,000 teachers and school staff. The initiative will soon be starting in Hungary.

Dr. Tatjana Milenkovic
President of the Macedonian Diabetes Association, focused her talk on the effects of junk food on children and women’s health. Dr Milenkovic also emphasised the fact that portion sizes, which have increased tremendously over the past two decades, do not simply increase calorie consumption but also affect an individual’s ability to accurately assess what they are eating and in which quantity. Not only does this lead to obesity in children but also to insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes and increased cardiovascular morbidity and mortality.

Dr. Lawrence Haddad
Executive Director of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), focused his intervention on the ways of creating demand for healthy foods through a hybrid solution of behaviour change programme and consumer advertising campaign. An example of such a campaign was the lulun project in Ecuador, which resulted in increased egg consumption amongst children.
These talks were followed by a series of engaging conversations from the panel, consisting of Dr Francesco Branca, WHO Director of Nutrition for Health and Development, Ms Taru Koivisto, Director of Wellbeing and Services, Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Dr Monika Arora, Health Promotion Director, Public Health Foundation India, Dr Tatjana Milenkovic, President of the Macedonian Diabetes Association, and Paula Chinchilla, Nutritionist and Mentor of the IDF Young Leaders in Diabetes Programme, and Member of the Blue Circle Voices.

Key points discussed by the panel included the best ways to communicate with children and the need for product labelling, how to engage governments, with examples given by Dr Arora from the KiDs programme in India. Paula Chinchilla stressed the need for tailored education of people living with diabetes, taking into account their age, relationship to the disease, and ability to procure healthy foods. She also emphasised how liberating this education can be for people living with diabetes, specifically in relation to their self-confidence and ability to lead an independent life.

Ms Koivisto detailed the way in which Finland tackles nutrition education. This includes the provision of free nutritionally-balanced school meals and compulsory education in cooking skills and nutrition, alongside nutrition guidelines for the public as well as for the procurement of food and food services, food labelling and a framework for maternity and child health clinics providing guidance on healthy lifestyles.
MEETING IMPACT

Attendance

A total of 133 people registered to attend the event, and some 80–90 attended. This represented very strong attendance for this type of event and compared favourably with the event organised the previous year during the 70th World Health Assembly (when 106 had registered and just over 75 had attended. This number excludes IDF staff and event partners).

Formal feedback was received from 11 attendees. All expressed great satisfaction with the conference. Ten of them were very pleased with the content of the event, which met all their expectations. For nine of them, participation in the event was mainly driven by the topic proposed and the speakers and panellists invited.

For future events, attendees expressed an interest in attending events discussing the prevention of type 2 diabetes, obesity and the role of physical activity and child nutrition.

“What I appreciated the most about the IDF side event was that the voice was front and center. The struggle of people with diabetes is not reflected in numbers and statistics, but in how it affects each person’s story.”

Chrysantus Herrera, Director of Global Health Policy, Merck KGaA

“I would choose to look forward and ask for a similar conference to be organized around physical activity.”

Derek Christie, Scientific Officer, Institute of Global Health, University of Geneva

“It is rare for an event to blend policy and science with engaging speakers and real-life success stories in diverse settings, but the International Diabetes Federation’s side event at the 71st World Health Assembly in Geneva achieved just that. I particularly appreciated the Youth Leader who gave voice to the young people living with diabetes in Latin America.”

Oana Scarlatescu, Programme Manager, Partnerships and Programmes, World Heart Federation

I enjoyed the session and even wrote an article about it. I also carried the literature, which is greatly helping me in my early childhood development and health fellowship.

Janet Otieno-Prosper, Features Editor, Nation Media Group
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Social media coverage

From April to May 2018, IDF used its three main media platforms – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn – to promote the nutrition education event.

**Facebook**

The seven posts published on the IDF Facebook page reached some 13,240 users. These posts were mainly focused on the event itself (programme, pictures during the event, broadcast link etc.).

**Twitter**

IDF had privileged Twitter to post the promotional messages for the IDF side event on nutrition education. More than 50,000 persons were reached with the 19 posts written for the occasion. Twitter was the most successful social network in terms of reach and engagement, as shown in the graph below.

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### Engagement by type of post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Post</th>
<th>Total Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event Programm</td>
<td>3131</td>
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<td>Share Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video link</td>
<td>3488</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Type of Engagements

- **Sum of Total Shares**: 9
- **Sum of Total Likes**: 5
- **Sum of Total Comments**: 183
- **Sum of Total Link clicks**: 143

Total reach for 7 posts: **13,240 users**  
Average reach per post: **1.9K**  
Total engagement*: **140**

Total reach for 19 posts: **50,910 users**  
Average reach per post: **2,679**  
Total engagements: **426**

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International Diabetes Federation
Promoting diabetes care, prevention and a cure worldwide
LinkedIn

The only post published on LinkedIn reached 1,743 users. LinkedIn proved to be the highest performing social network with regard to link clicks (one post about the event resulted in 40 clicks).

Below is a representation of the number of people reached, link clicks and engagements around the event across the three IDF social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn):
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

More information about the event can be found on IDF website: https://www.idf.org/our-activities/advocacy-awareness/activities.html

We invite you to watch again the event on our Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSO_84SL5bY

Disclaimer

The claims and opinions expressed by the speakers during this side event do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of IDF.