

## **PARALLEL SESSION 1.1**

**ADDRESSING THE BEHAVIOURAL DETERMINANTS OF NCDS: EMPOWERING OR VICTIM-BLAMING?**



## | BACKGROUND

It is emphasized from the outset that the multiplicity of inter-dependent determinants of NCDs need to be considered and addressed together as part of a comprehensive framework. This session, however, will focus on the behavioural determinants of NCDs, which encompass individual lifestyle factors, and the promotion of health and nutrition literacy and behavior change communication to address them. Four major NCD risk factors have significant behavioural dimensions at the level of the individual: tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets. NCDs impose a disproportionate burden that on poorer populations in upper income countries and across all populations in low and middle income countries. Given the evidence of greater impact of the behavioural determinants on populations with low socio-economic status, these groups require greater focus and appropriately tailored approaches. Despite the proliferation of health information on the Internet, there is often a lack of evidence-based and tailored information that is easily available to the general public, while on the other hand the public is receiving a huge amount of marketing information on unhealthy products from the various industries.

Health literacy refers, broadly, to the ability of individuals to “gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health” for themselves, their families and their communities. Health literacy is particularly important in order to prevent and control NCDs and their shared risk factors. For example, people with higher levels of health literacy are better able to understand available nutrition information and to be empowered to make healthier choices, thus contributing to preventing both undernutrition and overweight and associated NCDs. At the same time, the availability and affordability of healthier choices and the socio-cultural contexts need to be considered and addressed – aspects covered in other parallel sessions.

A strand of narrative that has dominated the (industry promoted) discourse is that NCDs are primarily caused by poor individual choices on lifestyles, and that the strategy to prevent them is focused primarily on promoting healthy lifestyles, placing the onus (or blame) on the individual. This narrative still holds sway in certain contexts and among certain stakeholders – for example, in case of Governments which choose or are influenced to avoid addressing the wider socio-cultural, commercial and policy determinants, or among private sector stakeholders and the researchers they fund, which have vested interests in preventing those wider determinants from being addressed. The session will aim to explore this aspect of the narrative and reiterate that behavior change interventions support and complement strategies that address wider determinants of health.

Social and behavior change communication – often in the form of “health education” – is one of the health promotion strategies to modify the behavioural risk factors through the life course and improve health and nutrition literacy. “Health education” is often the dominant form of behavior modification strategy in many countries. It should be considered one strategy among a comprehensive package which includes the legislative and policy measures addressed in other parallel sessions of the conference. It should be based on a thorough analysis of the epidemiological situation in each country by identifying the distribution of risk factors among different population groups and developing a national risk profile. Analysis of the social norms, socio-economic factors and motivators that influence individual behaviours should also be assessed, as well as the channels and communication approaches that are most likely to be accessed and successful among different groups. It should also assess the relative importance to different groups – including children and adolescents – of prevailing marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages, tobacco and alcohol. Another tactic to change individual behaviour is “nudging” to encourage people to make healthy choices, be more active, and eat better, among others, drawing on behavioural insight theory.

The session will emphasize the critical importance of starting early with health education interventions – during pregnancy, in early childhood and in adolescence – to create positive health related behaviours. It will discuss the evidence of the impact of early interventions on later NCDs.

This session will summarize the evidence on behavioural determinants in terms of data on prevalence of smoking, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets in different contexts – e.g. lower, middle and upper income countries, by income, age, sex etc – and evidence on various education/communication approaches to modify them. It will consider the question raised by the title of the session, whether behavior change interventions are empowering or victim-blaming. It will showcase examples of best practices, innovations and documented success from a range of countries in modifying NCD-related behaviours across the life course as well as potentially addressing failed strategies, and will identify knowledge gaps for further research and suggest recommendations going forward.

## | OBJECTIVES

- To examine the current state of evidence on various behavioural determinants of NCDs
- To explore the evidence on strategies to address various behavioural determinants: what works, what does not work, and why; plus suggestions for national strategies
- To discuss examples of national strategies to address behavioural determinants, particularly from LMICs
- To analyze the political economy of “promoting healthy lifestyles” and explore whether strategies are empowering or victim-blaming
- To identify knowledge gaps and research priorities





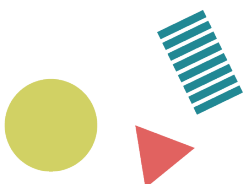
Moderator

## Jane Badham

*Managing Director*

JB Consultancy  
South Africa

Jane is a dietitian and nutritionist with a Masters degree in Nutrition. Jane has been running her own global health communication and strategy business, JB Consultancy, for 26 years. JB Consultancy focuses on advising development agencies, NGOs, and the food industry on issues pertaining to nutrition with a special focus on trends, food law, micronutrient malnutrition and maternal, infant and young child nutrition. JB Consultancy is well known for its skills in taking the evidence-based science of health and nutrition to diverse audiences and for its commitment to towards policy, practice and behaviour change, for ultimate improved health. Jane is also globally in demand as a strategy and meeting facilitator and has a passion for transformational leadership development. She is actively involved with the African Nutrition Leadership Programme.





Keynote Speaker

## Karen Glanz

*George A. Weiss University Professor, Schools of Medicine and Nursing*

University of Pennsylvania

United States of America

Karen Glanz, PhD, MPH is George A. Weiss University Professor, Professor in the Perelman School of Medicine and the School of Nursing, and Director of the UPenn Prevention Research Center, at the University of Pennsylvania. She is also Associate Director for Community Engaged Research and Program Leader for Cancer Control, at the Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania. A globally influential public health scholar whose work spans psychology, epidemiology, nutrition and other disciplines, her research in community and healthcare settings focuses on obesity, nutrition, and the built environment; reducing health disparities; and health communication technologies. Her research, funded for over \$40 million over the past 25 years, focuses on cancer prevention and control, theories of health behavior, obesity and the built environment, social and health policy, and new health communication technologies. Her research and publications about understanding, measuring and improving healthy food environments, beginning in the 1980's, has been widely recognized and replicated. She is a member of the NHLBI Advisory Council and served on the US Task Force on Community Preventive Services for 10 years. Dr. Glanz was elected to membership in the National Academy of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences in 2013. She was designated a Highly Cited Author by ISIHighlyCited.com, in the top 0.5% of authors in her field over a 20-year period, and was named a Highly Cited Author from 2007 to the present and was designated as one of The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds 2015 by Thomson Reuters.



Keynote Speaker

## Theresa Marteau

*Director of Behaviour and Health Research Unit, Department of Public Health and Primary Care*

University of Cambridge  
United Kingdom

Professor Theresa Marteau is Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit in the Clinical School at the University of Cambridge, and Director of Studies in Psychological and Behavioural Sciences at Christ's College, Cambridge. She studied psychology at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the University of Oxford (Wolfson College). Her research interests include: i. development and evaluation of interventions to change behaviour (principally diet, tobacco and alcohol consumption) to improve population health and reduce health inequalities, with a particular focus on targeting non-conscious processes ii. risk perception and communication, particular of biomarker-derived risks, and their weak links with behaviour change iii. acceptability to publics and policy makers of government intervention to change behavior. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences and the Academy of Social Sciences. In 2017, she was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her contribution to Public Health.



Panelist

## Carolina Casas

*Regional Director of Education and Research*

Sesame Workshop, Latin America  
Colombia

Carolina Casas is a researcher and education specialist with sixteen years of experience designing and implementing scalable educational interventions and developing innovative educational content, focused mainly in Latin America. Having joined Sesame Workshop in 2010, Ms. Casas currently serves Director of Education and Research for Latin America (Sésamo), charged with working with multidisciplinary teams to ensure that all social impact projects in the region advance Sesame Workshop's mission of helping children grow stronger, smarter and kinder. Ms. Casas also oversees the development of educational content for diverse children's programming and the design and implementation of community engagement programs throughout the region, seeking to ensure the educational effectiveness of each project and demonstrate and document lessons learned on the ground.



Panelist

## Elin Bergstrom

*Policy Officer*

EAT Foundation  
Norway

Elin Bergstrøm is a Policy Officer at EAT, a global non-profit startup based in Oslo, Norway, dedicated to transforming our global food system to be able to feed a growing population healthy diets from sustainable production. Elin has been actively involved in EAT's engagements in the Asia-Pacific, in particular the inaugural EAT Asia-Pacific Food Forum that was held in Jakarta in 2017 and co-hosted by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. Elin is also coordinating EAT's involvement in the EU Horizon 2020 project called CO-CREATE. The project uses a societal systems approach to understand how factors associated with obesity interact at various levels and will work directly with adolescents to create, inform and disseminate policies to tackle obesity among their peers. EAT will work to connect youth with other stakeholders to action commitments and policies to enable healthy nutrition and physical activity habits among adolescents. Elin has a MSc. in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science from Lund University, Sweden.





Panelist

## Lori Foster

*Professor of Industrial-Organizational Psychology*

North Carolina State University  
United States of America

Lori Foster, Ph.D. is a Professor of Industrial-Organizational psychology at North Carolina State University (USA) and the University of Cape Town (South Africa) who recently completed posts as a Fellow with the White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team, and as a Behavioral Sciences Advisor to the United Nations. In her academic role, she oversees the 4D Lab, which focuses on research at the intersection of work, psychology, technology, and development. In the private sector, she is Head of Behavioral Science at pymetrics, a company that uses neuroscience and AI to make the recruitment process as effective, efficient and unbiased as possible. Lori is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), the Association for Psychological Science (APS), and the Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology (SIOP). She has held visiting scholar appointments at a number of universities around the world, including the London Business School, Singapore Management University, and the Universities of Valencia, Barcelona, and Bologna. As a scientist-practitioner, she has more than 20 years of experience as a consultant, applying the science of work behavior to regional, state, national, and international organizations in the private and public sectors. She has delivered hundreds of papers and talks to audiences in countries spanning six continents. Her printed scholarship has taken the form of refereed journal articles, book chapters, authored, and edited books, and her work has been featured in popular media outlets such as The Wall Street Journal, Folha de São Paulo, ARS Technica, Fast Company, Fortune, Science, U.S. News and World Report, and Scientific American.



Panelist

## Nithya Solomon

*Executive Lead, Innovation Office*

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation  
Australia

Nithya Gopu Solomon is the Executive Lead of Innovation at the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and shapes the organisation's agenda to discover how to accelerate health outcomes for Victorians. This includes stewardship over flagship Innovation initiatives based on practices such as behavioural insights, participatory democracy and collective impact. In particular VicHealth's Leading Thinkers Initiative is in its sixth year of applying behavioural insights to aspects of health promotion, such as healthy eating, alcohol culture change, physical activity and gender equality. Nithya has 20 years of international leadership experience in Australia, USA and Latin America, gained through roles at NIKE, Inc., Ernst & Young, Accenture and ANZ Investment Bank. As the Nike Foundation's Director of Strategy, Operations & Finance she managed a multi-million-dollar venture philanthropy engine to provide adolescent girls a clear path out of poverty. In 2010 Nithya was appointed by Nike to lead the production of the Designed to Move Framework for Action, an unprecedented collaboration with 70+ multi-sector organisations and a catalyst for a global movement to increase worldwide physical activity. Nithya holds a Masters of Administration degree from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management and Bachelor degrees in Chemical Engineering and Performing Arts from Monash University.





Panelist

## Roy William Mayega

*Lecturer, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics*

Makerere University  
Uganda

Dr. Roy William Mayega MB.ChB, MPH, PHD Dr. Roy William Mayega is a Lecturer in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, at the School of Public Health in Africa's premier university, Makerere University, Uganda. He is also the Instructional Materials Designer and Editor for the School of Public Health's MPH Distance Education program. He underwent basic training as a Medical Doctor at Makerere's Medical School. Later, he received a Master's Degree in Public Health at the School of Public Health, Makerere (2006). He holds a PhD in Medical Science from Karolinska Institutet Sweden through an institutional collaboration with Makerere University. Since starting his medical career as an intern doctor in 1998, Dr. Mayega has accumulated at least 19 years of experience in public health related work, 6 of which were spent at primary care level. He worked as a Medical Officer, Assistant Director District Health Services and acting District Health Officer, Kiboga District Local Government in rural mid-western Uganda. Dr. Mayega teaches Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Research Methods, Disease Control, Leadership and Disaster Management to graduate and undergraduate students. Dr. Mayega's current research interests include non-communicable disease control, disaster risk reduction, resilience and innovation. The focus of his PhD studies was type 2 diabetes, resulting into a thesis entitled: Type 2 Diabetes in Rural Uganda: Prevalence, risk factors, perceptions and implications for the health system (published May 2014). His formative work has informed subsequent efforts to design possible interventions for improving type 2 diabetes prevention and care in resource constrained settings like Uganda. Dr. Mayega is currently a co-investigator of a multi-country research group that is testing an innovative package of facility and community interventions for improvement of prevention and care for type 2 diabetes at primary care levels in different socioeconomic settings. This cluster randomized trial is now in its third year of implementation. The Uganda part of this study is being implemented in a rural low income district. Dr. Mayega has also been part of several initiatives to improve policy and programs for NCDs in Uganda, and is part of a team exploring the feasibility of establishing a long-term NCD risk factor surveillance and intervention cohort in Uganda.



Panelist

## Supreda Adulyanon

*Chief Executive Officer*

Thai Health Promotion Foundation  
Thailand

Dr. Supreda Adulyanon is one of the leading experts in innovative health financing and health promotion movement in Thailand and in Asia. He is well known internationally for his work in on supporting countries on sustainable health financing mechanism, and on addressing major health risks control for NCDs in Thailand, such as tobacco and alcohol. Currently, he is the Chief Executive Officer of the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), the forefront national agency which catalyzes, motivates, supports, and coordinates health promotion movement in Thailand to over 20,000 multi-sectoral partner organizations in Thailand and abroad since 2001. Prior to his current position, Dr. Adulyanon served as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of ThaiHealth and its Director of the Major Risk Factors Control section, overseeing Tobacco Control Plan, Alcohol Control Plan and Road Traffic Accident Prevention Plan at the Thai Health Promotion Foundation. He was instrumental in Thailand achievements and improvement in reducing the national health burden derived from those three major risk factors. On academia front, he has written and published numerous articles about health promotion and the innovative health financing model, with the following notable publication items. 1. Supreda Adulyanon, Funding health promotion and disease prevention programmes: an innovative financing experience from Thailand, WHO South-East Asia Journal of Public Health 2012;1(2):201-207. 2. Sakol Sopitarchasak, Supreda Adulyanon and Tananart Lorthong, Thai Health Promotion Foundation: Innovative Enabler for Health Promotion, World Health & Population, Vol. 16 No. 1, 2015, Longwoods Publication

