

Need to ban reckless nutrition adverts

By **MASEMBE TAMBWE**

‘IF wishes were horses, then beggars would ride’ goes a common English adage, and if nutritionists in the country had three wishes, one would certainly be to have a comprehensive policy that covers human health.

Luck has it for nutritionists, because the 1992 Food and Nutrition Policy is currently under review and is in its advanced stages to meet the current demands.

The plan shall be incorporating new health trends like Non Communicable Diseases (NDCs), over nutrition complications and advertising.

“As nutritionists, we look forward to getting this new policy because from its various inputs, our prayers are that it shall push for legislation change” a nutritionist from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives, Ms Margaret Natai says.

Ms Natai adds that in the current policy, only under nutrition was highlighted, while evidence today shows that over nutrition has proved to be major health challenge to many Tanzanians, including lifestyle illnesses like kidney complications, diabetes, obesity and tobacco related diseases.

She said that something that is clearly lacking in the present policy is a section that talks about advertising, particularly things considered unhealthy in areas like schools or children’s recreational places.

“It saddens me to see soft drink companies plastering their adverts on school walls, selling their products to children and the allowance of oil cooked foods to be sold freely to children. In other countries, this is totally forbidden, and one can lose their licences,” she explained.

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