Multi-sectoral Action Influencing Public Policy

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Introduction of SSB Tax in Dominica
Context

• SSB tax viewed as one of several policy decisions taken by the Government of Dominica in efforts to maintain a healthy population and necessitating action from various sectors-Government, NGO ....

• Several initiatives may have led to the imposition of the SSB tax, notable, a multi sectoral workshop on obesity and ensuing recommendations
MULTI SECTORAL ACTION

Workshop on obesity - Objectives

• To review the current evidence relating to the overweight and obesity situation in Dominica.
• To review/assess successful intervention strategies in the prevention and management/control of overweight and obesity both regionally and globally.
• To develop recommendations for mainstreaming the prevention and management of overweight and obesity in all sectors
BROAD BASED PARTICIPATION

• Government – Health, Education, Agriculture, Finance, Trade, ICT
• Civil Society – Dominica Food and nutrition Council, Healthy Communities, Dominica Council on Aging, Dominica Cancer Society, Dominica Diabetes Association
• Institutions of Higher Education
• Media
• Private Sector
• Regional Organizations: PAHO, HCC
POLICY OPTION RECOMMENDATIONS

• The removal of processed foods from schools
• Promote healthy eating at schools
• No advertising of commercial products in schools
• Mandatory physical education at all schools
• Regulation of advertising of processed foods aimed at children
• Increase taxes on sugary nonalcoholic beverages.
RESULTS

• SSB Tax implemented as an amendment to the Excise Tax Act of 2005
• School Health and Nutrition Policy in advance stage of development; addresses *inter alia*
  – nutrition education
  – physical education
  – control of food and beverage marketing
• Dominica National Commission on NCD reactivated
OBSERVATIONS

• Insufficient Documentation of the Process
• Decision making at Policy level unclear to the outsider; eg A comprehensive Plan of Action was developed post Obesity Workshop, one aspect, the SSB tax implemented (so far).
• Much of the “push” seem to come from the voices of the influential and/or a powerful Political champion
LESSONS LEARNED

For success

• Many Voices—NGO, Public and Private Sectors, the influential, before and after imposition of tax

• Strong Political Will

• Stakeholder consultations and engagement of the population necessary - an informed public will likely make better choices

• Monitoring and evaluation must be considered at the policy development stage