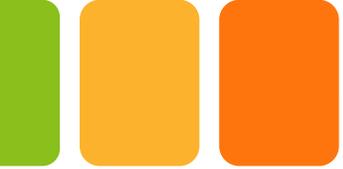


# The Journey



**Exploring The Impact Of**  
**SUGAR SWEETENED**  
**BEVERAGES**

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St. Kitts and Nevis  
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## Background

- In the Federation, 83% of total deaths are a result of NCDs.
- According to the 2016 analysis of the Federation's health situation, five of the six leading causes of death in the Federation were cancer, stroke, complications of diabetes, heart disease and hypertension.



# Background

Prevalence of diabetes and related risk factors for St. Kitts and Nevis are indicated below.

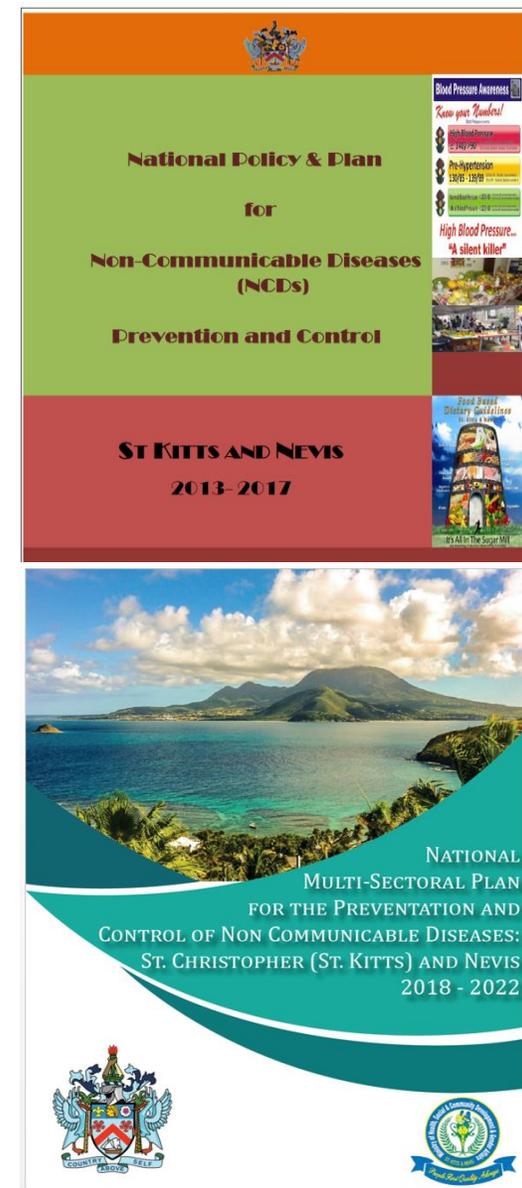
	Females	Males	Total
Diabetes	17.0%	12.8%	14.9%
Overweight	65.2%	53.0%	59.1%
Obesity	35.6%	21.2%	28.4%
Physical Inactivity	46.6%	28.0%	37.3%

Source: WHO, Diabetes country profiles, 2016. Available at: [http://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/kna\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/kna_en.pdf)

- In St. Kitts and Nevis, **32.5% of children (13-15) were overweight** while **14.4% were obese** (GSHS 2011).
- **61.6%** of students drank carbonated soft drinks one or more times per day during the past 30 days.
- Only **25.6%** of students were found to be **physically active** for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more days during the past seven days.

# Background

- Owing to the trends in the region and in country, St. Kitts and Nevis adopted the mandate to stimulate inter-sectoral action that promotes the availability, accessibility and consumption of safe, healthy, tasty foods to the people.
- One such action is the implementation of fiscal policies, specifically taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.





# Partnership

- The Ministry of Health consulted with the Pan American Health Organization advisor, Dr. Tomo Kanda, and Professor Lisa Powell of the University of Chicago.



## The Process

- A multi-sectoral team led by the Ministry of Health was formed as the working group,
- Multi-sectoral stakeholders were identified and,
- PAHO advisors did country visit and site tours,
- PAHO advisors met with key technical counterparts (National NCD Focal Point and selected technical officers in the Ministry of Health) to provide a comprehensive presentation on “Fiscal Policies on SSBs” and to seek political guidance/direction for development of a proposal for recommendation for fiscal policies on SSB in St. Kitts and Nevis.



# Stakeholder Meetings/Site Visits

- Scheduled visit to individual stakeholders.
- Sensitizing the stakeholders on their role (understanding of the required data, the background of fiscal policies and challenges etc.) and implementation of fiscal policies in the country, and how the revenues earned can be used to improve the health of our children.
- These individual meetings were the first of its kind to be done and served as useful awareness and education sessions to gain buy in from stakeholders.

## Key Stakeholders

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Trade
- Customs & Excise Division
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Senior Education Officers and Principals



## What Next?

- Based on the analysis of the findings, a multi-sectoral stakeholder meeting was concluded with an outcome document and the way forward for the development of a SSB Policy.
- Presentation of findings/report with recommendations were presented to key technical health officials.



## In-Country Consultations

- In October – November 2018 and April 2019 consultations were held in Nevis and St. Kitts respectively to gain feedback on the policy imperatives developed for the SSB policy.
  1. share the findings of the SSB survey,
  2. discuss policy imperatives as it pertains to SSB policy development and
  3. to gain commitment from stakeholders to ensure the successful development and implementation of the SSB fiscal policy.
- Based on the recommendations from the report these are the policy imperatives that the SSB committee provided.



# SSB Policy Imperatives – Focus Groups

- Town-hall Meetings
- Food Handlers
- Media
- Distributors
- Government Agencies
- NGOs & FBOs, Ecclesiastical Affairs
- Medical Doctors & Insurance Companies
- MoE – Parents, Teachers and Students



# Suggested Policy Imperatives

- **(PI 1) Tax Type** - Excise tax

Recommendation – Tax should be excise only of 32%

- **(PI 2) Tax Base** – Calorically Sweetened Beverages

Recommendation – Tax base should also include drinks sweetened with the artificial sweeteners as they are also harmful to the body.

## **(PI 2) Tax Base**

### Exclusions include:

- ✓ Fresh Fruit Juices,
- ✓ Unsweetened Milk/Milk Alternatives,
- ✓ Infused Water,
- ✓ Unsweetened Carbonated Water,
- ✓ Non Caloric Sweetened Drinks (i.e. diet varieties).

Recommendation – remove Non Caloric Sweetened Drinks from the exclusion list.



# Suggested Policy Imperatives

- **(PI 3) Alternatives –**

- ✓ Infused (fruit/vegetable) Unsweetened Water,
- ✓ Plain Water,
- ✓ Unsweetened Carbonated Water,
- ✓ Unsweetened Herbal (bush) Tea,

**Recommendation – Add fresh poured coconut water.**

**Remove Artificially Non-caloric Sweetened Beverages.**

- **(PI 4) Tax Revenue** - will be used towards providing:

- ✓ Water Infrastructure,
- ✓ Water Fountains in Schools,
- ✓ Reusable Water Bottles in Schools,
- ✓ Healthier School Meals,
- ✓ Public Health Campaigns,
- ✓ National Health Insurance,
- ✓ Marketing Ban to Children,
- ✓ Policy Development for Safe School Zones.

**Recommendation – Improve Agriculture Education especially in Primary schools**



## Next Step

- The Ministry of Health is in the process of compiling all information gathered from the various consultations that will add to the SSB policy document to be presented at a final stakeholder consultation before submission to PAHO for review.
- After PAHO review, the document will be submitted for Cabinet approval.



## Final Thought

- SSB taxation addresses a specific objective in the NCD action plan: *To reduce modifiable risk factors for NCDs and underlying social determinants through the creation of health-promoting environments, with the target being a 20% relative reduction in overall mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes, or chronic respiratory diseases by 2025.*



Questions, Comments, Emotional Outburst