Experiences with Advocating for taxes on sugary drinks

ACCELERATING NUTRITION POLICIES IN THE CARIBBEAN
Creating Supportive Environments for Healthy Children
September 18, 2019

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GLOBAL HEALTH ADVOCACY PROJECT

Building public awareness and promoting policy change amongst decision makers in regards to the role of proper nutrition in enhancing the development of a healthy and productive country in keeping with Jamaica’s Vision 2030 goal of “building a healthy and stable population”.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Raise public awareness of the health impact of sugar consumption and build public support for policies.

2. Build support of policymakers and other key stakeholders in support of sugar sweetened tax and other policy priorities.

3. Form a Coalition of key organizations...

4. Counter industry opposition...

5. Improve the school food environment ....

4. Develop, implement timely mass media campaign(s) (MMC)....
POLICY PRIORITIES

Sugary drinks tax (advocacy, awareness, policy support)

Front of Package Labelling (work with BSJ and MOHW)

Restriction of the marketing of unhealthy foods to children (Broadcasting Commission)

Support for healthy nutrition in schools (work with MOHW and MOEYI)
### Background to Mass Media Campaign

<table>
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<th>Phase 1 – Stage Setting</th>
<th>Phase 2 – Amplifying the Message</th>
<th>Phase 3 – Focus the Message</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Create an awareness of the harms of sugary drinks.</td>
<td>1. Increase awareness of the harms of sugary drinks.</td>
<td>1. Increase awareness of the harms of sugary drinks-tooth decay.</td>
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<td>2. Show how many teaspoons of sugar are present in these drinks.</td>
<td>2. Encourage parents/guardians’/gov’t responsibility to help protect children’s health</td>
<td>2. Support government restriction of sugary drinks in schools</td>
<td>2. Call for support of a sugary drinks tax (direct)</td>
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<td>3. Call for support for government restriction of sugary drinks in schools</td>
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<td>3. Call for support of a sugary drinks tax (indirect)</td>
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MASS MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Phase 1 – Journey
Rosie November 2017

Phase 2 – Dad Knows Best
February 2018

Phase 3 – Cut out those sugary drinks
November 2018

WHERE WE ARE NOW
Phase 4 – Support a sugary drinks tax, February 2019
Materials produced

WE NEED TO REDUCE AND PREVENT OBESITY NOW AND AVOID THE CONSEQUENCES LATER

A tax on SSBs is a proactive method which can support activities designed to help stem the tide of overweight-obesity in the country. Here are some ways in which these taxes can be used...

20% TAX on SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGES REDUCES CONSUMPTION BY ABOUT 20%

A sugary drink tax can support programmes, that deal with childhood obesity prevention

CHILDHOOD OBESITY
- Increases risk of Diabetes, Heart Disease, Stroke and Cancer

Sugary Drinks Taxes:
- An Effective Public Health Solution

In addition to significantly reducing consumption of unhealthy beverages, sugary drink taxes have been found to increase demand for non-sugar sweetened beverages, such as water and milk. In Berkeley, California, bottled water sales increased by 15.9% while sugary beverage sales declined by 18% in Berkeley stores in the first year of the tax.40 Sugary drink taxes are particularly effective in reducing consumption and improving health among lower-income and minority communities because they give the group that is more responsive to price increases.41

Moms of GENOMIC have also praised their support of public health measures like sugary drink taxes and historic high in sugar to address NCDs.

28 Beechwood Avenue, Kingston 5, Jamaica W.I. Tel: 876-930-5200, 876-926-5499 / info@heartfoundationja.org www.heartfoundationja.org

#tax4health

Support programmes for childhood obesity prevention

Reduce consumption of sugary drinks – prevent obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases,

Helping people live healthier lives

Support our school feeding programmes and keep our children healthy and learning

Boost local food production for our school feeding programme

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#tax4health
Support for continued government leadership to tackle obesity in Jamaica

An open letter to the Government of Jamaica

We, the undersigned organizations dedicated to public health, urge our leaders to fight the growing obesity epidemic in Jamaica.

We strongly support the recent decisions by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information to increase the time in schools and education system for physical education by February 2023. This is an important measure to fight the growing obesity rates among our children and adolescents. In the Caribbean, the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, and Trinidad, obesity varies dramatically. Agriculture, crop yields, and climate patterns have been identified as key factors contributing to the problem. A Food Security Strategy has been developed to support the growth of 19 NGOs

Materials produced -support from 19 NGOs

WE CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT
TO HONOUR THEIR COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT A SUGARY DRINKS TAX

We, the undersigned organizations dedicated to public health, urge our leaders to fight the growing obesity epidemic in Jamaica. A sugary drinks tax is the next step towards promoting the health of Jamaicans and is in keeping with the following commitments made locally, regionally and internationally:

- MOH - National Aids Secretariat's Plan for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCMD) in Jamaica 2015 - 2020
- WHO - Global Monitoring Framework for NCDs 2016 - 2018
- CARICOM - Plan of Action 2017 - 2019
- The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) - Blueprint for NCD Prevention and Control in the Caribbean 2016 - 2025
- GAIN - Global Action on悠悠饮料 Taxation (GATT) 2016 - 2019
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to which Jamaica is signatory
- CARICOM Heads of Government commonalities at the 35th Meeting of the Conference in May 2019

Seventy-eight percent of all deaths are caused by NCDs. Jamaica's economic progress is projected to over 157.1 billion USD over the next 15 years (2015 - 2030) in terms of direct treatment costs and indirect costs that prohibitive due to cardiovascular disease will contribute to economic growth of the population.
SUCCESSES

• Overwhelming public support for campaign and earned media coverage

• Meetings with MOHW, MOF & Ministry of industry

• Support for tax - Minister of Health and Wellness, NGOs

• Reformulation

• Restriction of SSBs in schools

Post campaign evaluation July 2019

• 1500 adults (18-55)

• 71% - support of a tax on sugary drinks.

• 82% - also agree that tax revenue should be spent on obesity reduction, especially among children.

• > Half - would increase their support if the government committed to spend some of the revenue on primary school education and school feeding programs

• 59% - agree to impose taxes on unhealthy foods to reduce obesity in Jamaica.
CHALLENGES

• Food industry
  - Aggressive pushback
  - Erroneous information shared
  - Umbrella groups JEMA (Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association) and individuals
  - Industry interference
  - Conflicts of interest
March 8, 2018

- Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw, on Thursday (March 8) formally announced that the Government will not be introducing new taxes to fund the 2018/19 Budget
Feb. 2019
Launch of MMC Campaign – Phase 4 Call for tax
Feb. 2019

JMEA : Sugary drinks tax is rushed and would cost jobs

- Meeting on Feb 27, 2019 shortly after the launch of Phase 4

- A sugary drinks tax would only provide a *revenue windfall* for the Government, the “anti-sugar movement” is pursuing *policy imperatives in a rush*, and that the tax could *cost jobs* – Richard Pandohie, now president of JMEA/CEO of Seprod formerly of Carerras/BAT

- “We must act now. We must make our voices heard. The JMEA is ready, is willing and able to fight for you, fight with you. You must be ready for the fight as well” – Metry Seaga
Feb. 2019

Pandohie Chastises Advertising Attacks, Possible Levy

Rebuttal by Minister of Health & wellness

As it relates to behaviour and behavioural changes, there is no disputing the fact that legislation and regulating, including fiscal policy, does have the capacity to influence behaviour.

- Minister of Health, Jamaica

Dr. Christopher Tufton
March 2019

JMEA MEETING - “your business is at risk”

“Whether you are a small, medium and large businesses - once sugar salt or fats are contained in the products you manufacture or import you must act now”
March 2019

- JMEA Vows “fight to the death” re sugary drinks tax

“If we allow some of the rhetoric that’s going around to become commonplace, if we allow the Government to make decisions that are uninformed, we are going to end up on the back foot and we are going to end up, as an industry, being hurt. That is not what we want,”

Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters’ Association (JMEA) President Metry Seaga
June 2019
Jamaica observer
Editorial
The Tobacco-sugar link

Link made between Marcus Steele’s (Carreras/BAT) warnings about an additional tax on cigarettes and proposed tax on sugary drinks.

HFJ will respond but waiting on illicit trade data.
National Health Insurance Plan (NHIP)

May 2019

- During his Sectoral debate the Minister of Health & Wellness tabled a Green Paper proposing a National Health Insurance Plan
- Public consultations to commence in 2020
- Project preparing a position paper with local and regional expertise to propose that a SSB tax could fund the NHIP
Strengthening national processes

✓ Advocacy for SSB tax and other policies
  • Meetings with key Ministers/MDAs, NGO partners

✓ Public education & sensitization
  • Media and social media communication activities
  • Communication/education materials
  • Fact sheets
  • Outreach

✓ Political mapping
✓ Food Industry mapping
✓ Research, precedence in other countries, national, regional and international action plans & best practice
✓ Countering industry opposition
  • Use evidence base; research, national and international precedence & best practices

✓ Maintain partnerships with key groups and stakeholders
THANK YOU