

5th edition

# GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH ANNUAL WORKSHOP

10, 11 and 12 June 2025



Building healthy, fair  
and climate-smart  
communities:  
addressing commercial  
determinants of health

FREE, ONLINE AND INTERACTIVE  
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UNESCO CHAIR

## Global Health & Education



# **Addressing Commercial Determinants of Health in Small Island Developing States –**

## **Warning labels and Sugar taxes in the Caribbean**

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Consultant, Chronic Disease Prevention and Control  
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# Presentation overview:

- Peculiarities and vulnerabilities of small island developing states (SIDS),
  - Commercial determinants of food sovereignty and food security.
  - Imports, unhealthy eating, obesity, premature NCD mortality in SIDS.
- Response in the Caribbean
  - NCD policy, including the commercial determinants of health,
  - examples - front of package warning labels and
    - taxes on sugar sweetened beverages.

**Learning Objective:** To better understand factors influencing the commercial determinants of food policy in small island developing states

# Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

<https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/small-island-developing-states>



SIDS: 58 low-lying island nations – Caribbean (29), Pacific (20) and AIMS - Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and South China Sea (9). \* UN members (38); 20 colonies

### Caribbean

Anguilla	British Virgin Islands	Guyana*	Saint Kitts and Nevis*
Antigua and Barbuda*	Cayman Islands	Haiti*	Saint Lucia*
Aruba	Cuba*	Jamaica*	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*
Bahamas*	Curacao	Martinique	Suriname*
Barbados*	Dominica*	Montserrat	Trinidad and Tobago
Belize*	Dominican Republic*	Netherlands Antilles	Turks and Caicos Islands
Bermuda	Grenada*	Puerto Rico	United States Virgin Islands
	Guadeloupe		

### Pacific

American Samoa	Kiribati*	Northern Mariana Islands, Commonwealth of the (USA)	Timor-Leste*
Cook Islands	Marshall Islands*	Palau*	Tonga*
Federated States of Micronesia*	Nauru*	Papua New Guinea*	Tuvalu*
Fiji*	New Caledonia	Samoa*	Vanuatu*
French Polynesia	Niue	Solomon Islands*	
Guam			

### AIMS

Bahrain*	Guinea-Bissau*	Mauritius*	Seychelles*
Cabo Verde*	Maldives*	São Tomé and Príncipe*	Singapore*
Comoros*			

# SIDS share similar vulnerabilities:

- Small size. Dispersed, geographical remoteness of Pacific islands
- Climate change poses both economic and existential threats to SIDS
  - **Fragile environments** vulnerable to disasters - hurricane, earthquake
- Vulnerable, small, undiversified human resources and economies
  - Large recurrent costs; Lack of economies of scale
  - For some, large debt and narrow fiscal space for development (single industry)
- Higher levels of overall economic vulnerability in SIDS than in larger countries with comparable income levels
- NCD vulnerabilities
  - Highest rates of obesity and diabetes globally
  - High import of foods. World Trade Organisation “free trade”
  - Many have food security, but not food sovereignty

# Upstream determinants of burden of disease

- High and rising prevalence of diabetes and hypertension in adults
- High and rising rates of obesity in adults and children
- Increasing unhealthy diet
  - Relatively high levels of disposable income
  - Busy lifestyle, convenience, price
  - US cable TV, penetration of fast food for tourists and locals
  - Aggressive marketing from big food and big soda

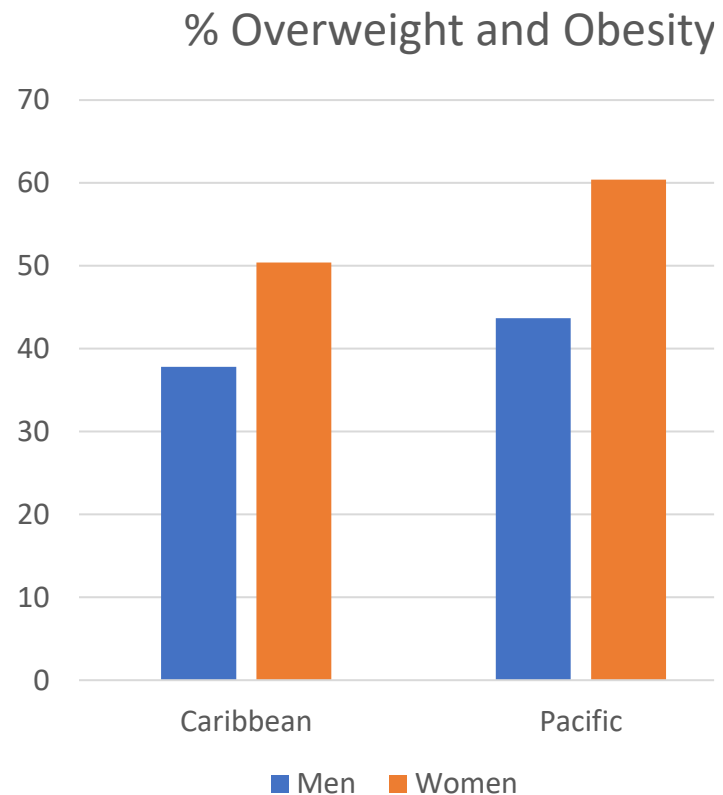
# Commercial determinants of health

- Multinational food and beverage companies promote overconsumption of **highly processed, unhealthy food and sugary drinks** for profit
- Like tobacco, **marketing is shifting** from high income countries to developing countries, including in the Caribbean

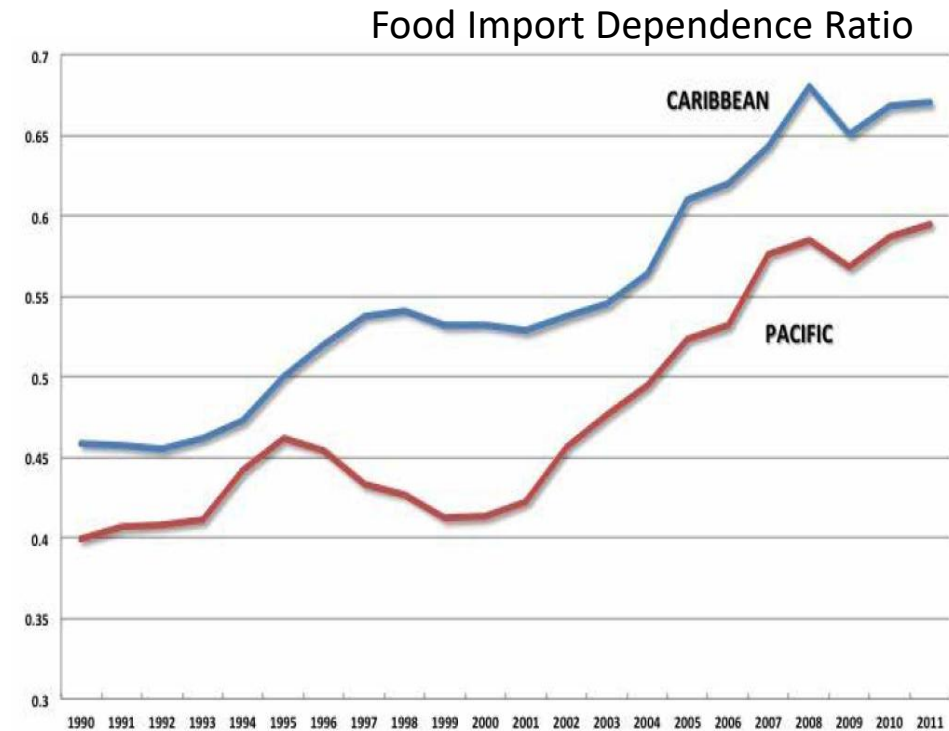
Moodie R., Stuckler, D., Monteiro, C., Sheron, N., Nea, I B., Thamarangsi, T., et al. (2013). Profits and pandemics: prevention of harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and ultra-processed food and drink industries. *Lancet*, 381(9867), 670-679.

Stuckler D, McKee M, Ebrahim S, Basu S. Manufacturing epidemics: the role of global producers in increased consumption of unhealthy commodities including processed foods, alcohol, and tobacco. *PLoS medicine*. 2012;9(6):e1001235.

# Link between food systems and high burden of NCDs in SIDS

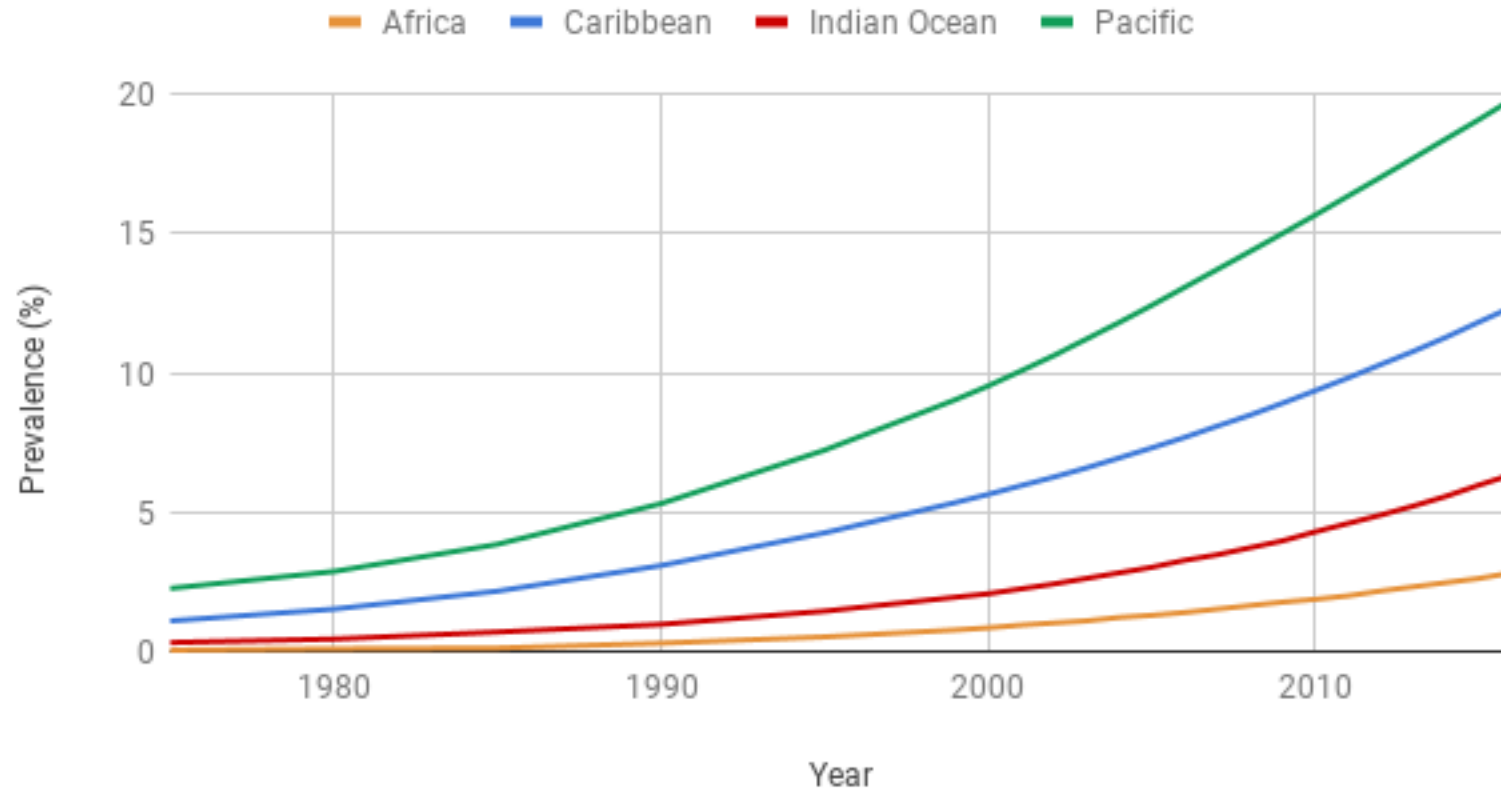


Source: Global Burden of Disease Study 2014



Source: FAO 2016

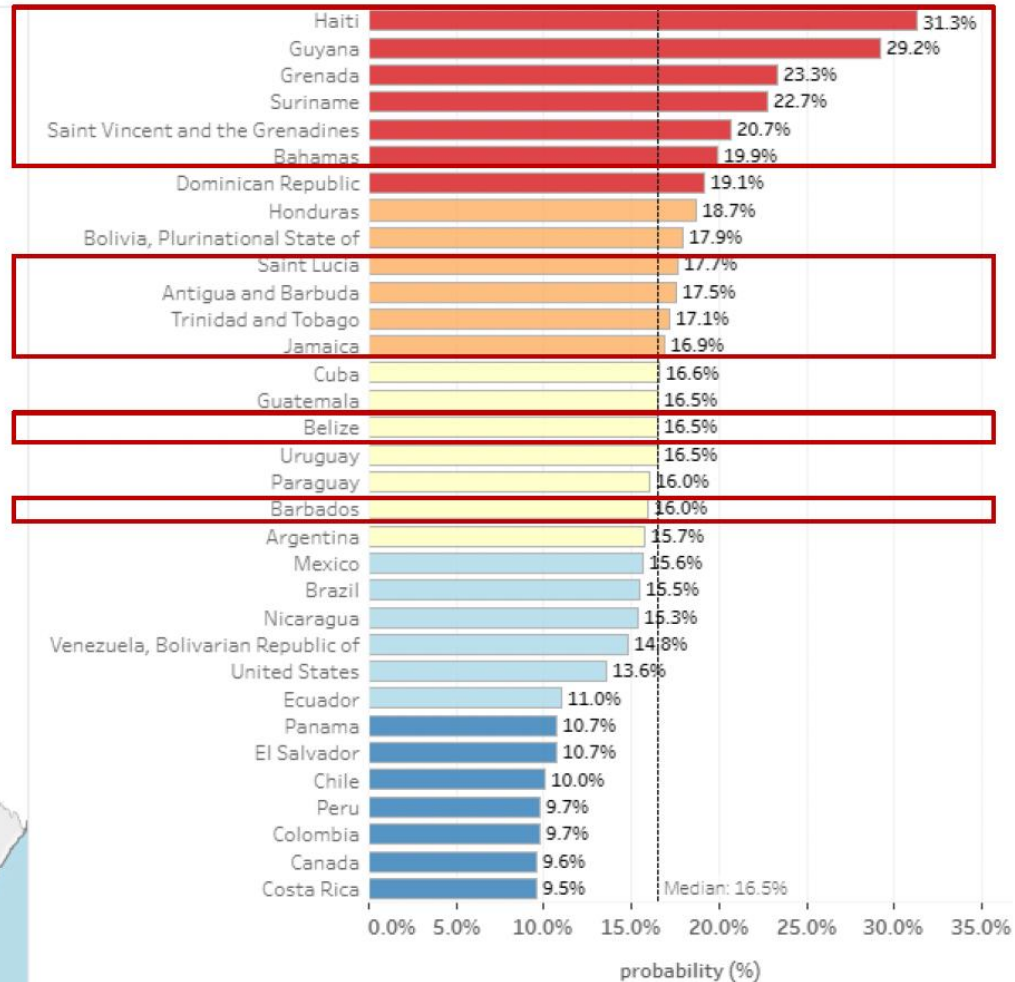
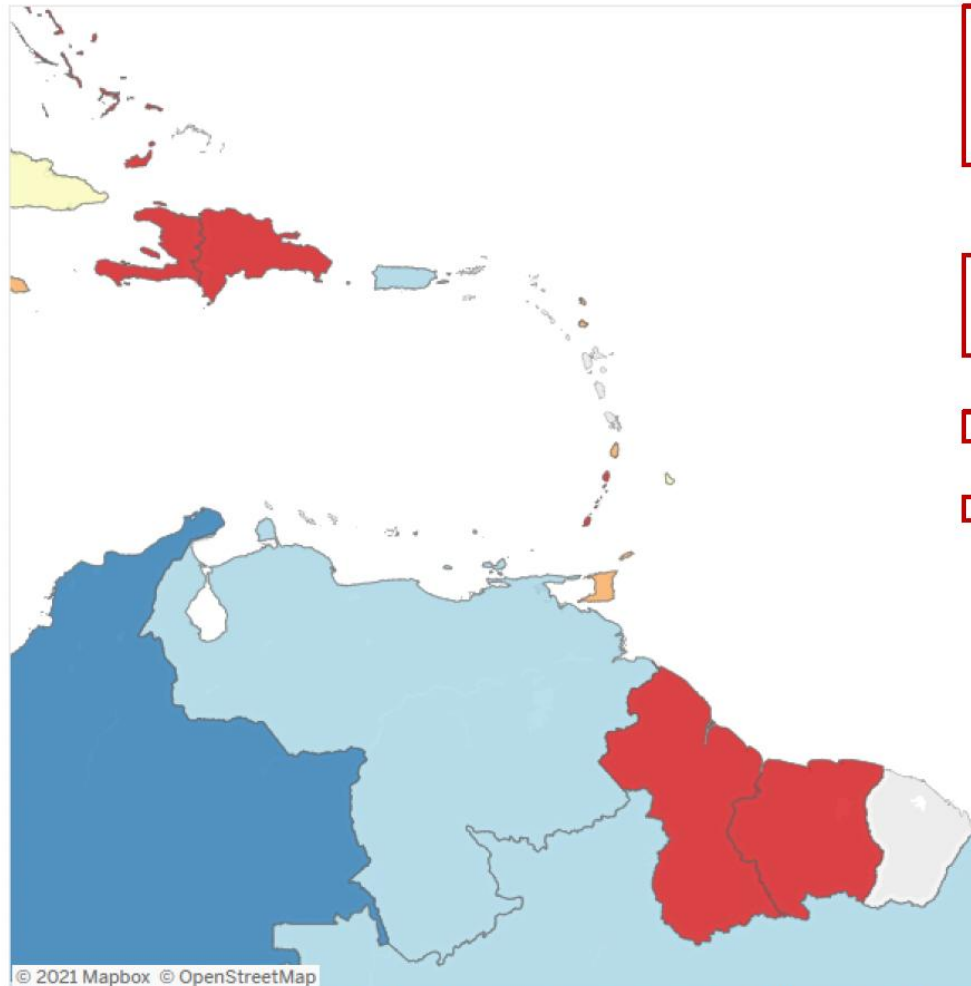
## Trends in childhood obesity in small island states



**Obesity in children has dramatically increased in the last decades in Small Island States**

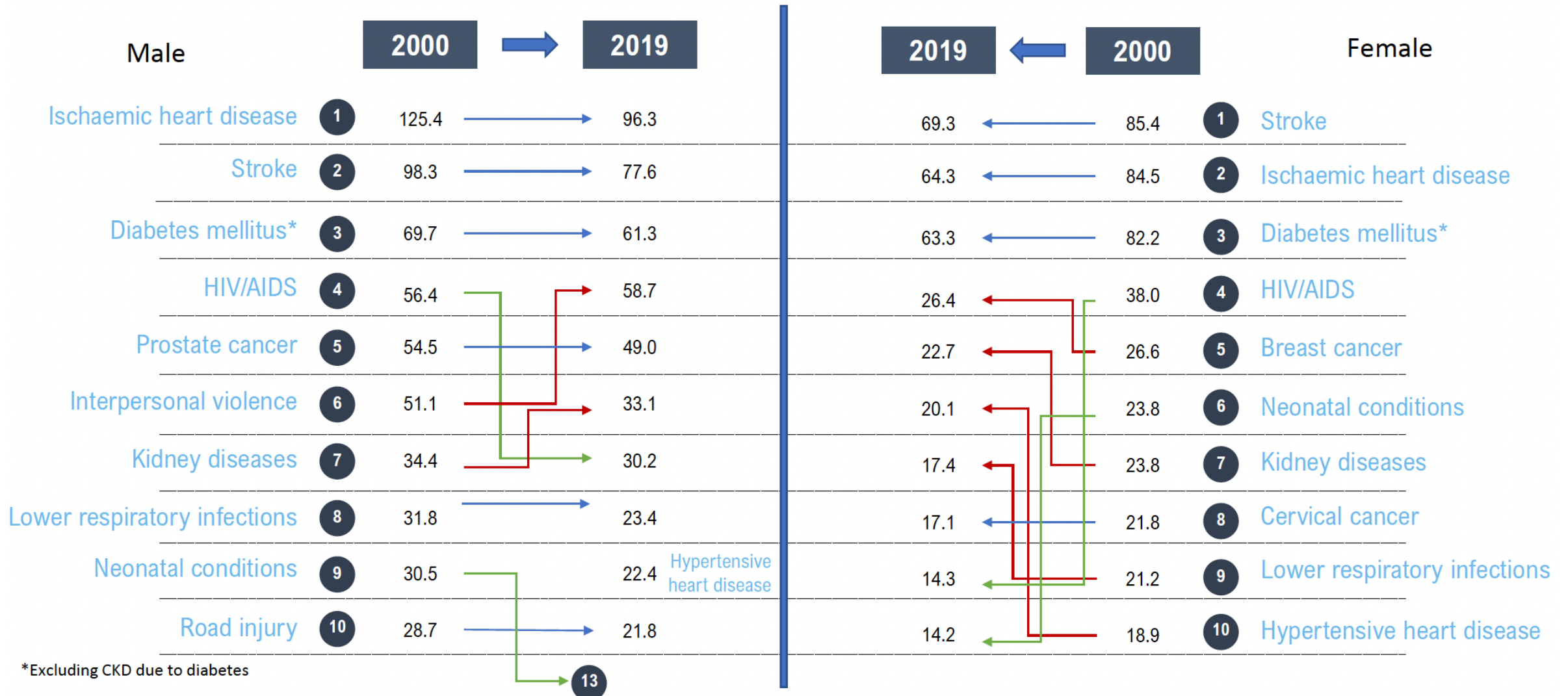
# Risk of dying prematurely due to the main four NCDs (CVDs, Cancer, Diabetes and Chronic Respiratory Diseases), 2019 – SDG 3.4.1

Quintiles ■ Quintile 1: 0 to 20% ■ Quintile 2: 20 to 40% ■ Quintile 3: 40 to 60% ■ Quintile 4: 60 to 80% ■ Quintile 5: 80 to 100%



# Leading causes of death – Caribbean countries, 2000-2019

(Age-standardized rates per 100 000 population)



Caribbean countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

Source: WHO, Global Health Estimates – 2019 . Available at NMH data portal: <https://www.paho.org/en/noncommunicable-diseases-and-mental-health/noncommunicable-diseases-and-mental-health-data-16>

# RESPONSE IN THE CARIBBEAN

In response to the NCD epidemic:

September 2007 CARICOM Heads of Government issued the groundbreaking Port of Spain Declaration: ***Uniting to Stop the Epidemic of Chronic Non-communicable Diseases***

With its global resonance, the Declaration paved the way for:

- ❑ 2011 UN High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on NCDs
- ❑ World Health Organization's international monitoring framework, with nine global targets and 25 indicators

# CARICOM Heads of Government NCD Summit Declaration 15<sup>th</sup> Sept 2007



# NCD Policy priorities in the Caribbean

- *Policy strategies at the organizational, community, or population level can be powerful, sustainable, scalable, and achieve broad impact.*

*In the Caribbean, population policy priorities include*

- Elimination of industrially produced trans fatty acids (IP-TFAs) from the food supply
- Taxes on sugar sweetened beverages
- Front of package warning labels
- Tobacco – smoke free public spaces, graphic warning labels, taxes
- Alcohol – taxes

# Evaluating the POS declaration

POS Evaluation Grid annually 2008 – 2019, 2 yearly since COVID to present

NCD Progress Indicator		A	A	B	B	B	B	C	D	G	G	H	J	M	S	S	S	T	T	T
		N	N	A	A	B	B	V	O	R	U	A	A	O	K	T	V	S	R	I
<b>COMMITMENT</b>																				
1,14	NCD Plan	±	±	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	±	√	√	√	√	√	±
4	NCD budget	X	±	√	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	X	√	X	±	√	√	X	√	√
2	NCD Summit convened	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X
2	Multi-sectoral NCD Commission appointed and functional	±	±	√	√	±	√	√	X	±	√	√	X	√	X	±	√	±	±	√
<b>TOBACCO</b>																				
3	FCTC ratified	*	√	√	√	√	*	*	√	√	√	√	X	√	*	√	√	√	√	*
3	Tobacco taxes >50% sale price	√	X	±	√	X		X	√	√	√	X	X	X	±	±	X	√	X	±
3	Smoke Free indoor public places	X	√	±	√	±	√	√	√	±	√	√	X	√	X	±	±	X	√	±
3	Advertising, promotion & sponsorship bans	X	X	±	X	X	√	√	√	X	X	±	X	±	X	X	±	X	√	±
<b>NUTRITION</b>																				
7	Multi-sector Food & Nutrition plan implemented	±	√	√	√	±		√	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	±	±	√	X	±
7	Trans fat free food supply	X	X	X	X	X	±	X	X	X	X	X	X	±	X	X	X	X	X	±
7	Policy & standards promoting healthy eating in schools implemented	±	√	√	√	±	√	X	√	±	±	X	√	±	±	±	±	X	±	±
8	Trade agreements utilized to meet national food security & health goals	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	±	X	±	X	±	X	X	X	√
9	Mandatory labeling of packaged foods for nutrition content	X	X	X	±	X	±	X	±	±	X	±	X	±	X	X	X	X	±	X
<b>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</b>																				
6	Mandatory PA in all grades in schools	√	√	√	√	√	±	±	√	√	√	±	X	±	X		±	X	X	√
10	Mandatory provision for PA in new housing developments	X		√	√	√			X	X	X	±	X	±	±		X	X	X	X
10	Ongoing, mass Physical Activity or New public PA spaces	X	√	√	√	√	±	√	√	√	√	X	√	±	√	√	√	√	√	X
<b>EDUCATION / PROMOTION</b>																				
12	NCD Communications plan	X	X	±	√	X	√	√	±	±	√	X	±	X	±	X	±	±	√	√
15	CWD multi-sectoral, multi-focal celebrations	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	±	√	√	√	√	√	√
10	≥50% of public and private institutions with physical activity and healthy eating programmes	±	±	X	X	X	±	X	±	X		±	X	±	X	±	±	X	±	±
12	≥30 days media broadcasts on NCD control/yr (risk factors and treatment)	X	√	X	√	X	√	X	√	±		√	X	√	X	±	√	±	√	±
<b>SURVEILLANCE</b>																				
11,	Surveillance: - STEPS or equivalent survey	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	±	X	√	±	√	√	±	√	√	±
13,	- Minimum Data Set reporting	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	±	X	√	±	X	±	√	√	√	X
14	- Global Youth Tobacco Survey	X	√	√	√	√	±	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	±	√	√	√	√	X
	- Global School Health Survey	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	±	√	√	√	√	X
<b>TREATMENT</b>																				
5	Chronic Care Model / NCD treatment protocols in ≥ 50% PHC facilities	X	√	√	±	±	±	±	±	±	±	√	±	X	√	±	±	√	±	±
5	QOC CVD or diabetes demonstration project	±	√	√	√	±	±	±	√	X	√	√	±	√	X	X	√	±	√	±

Legend: √ In place information ± In process/partial information X Not in place \* Not applicable □ No information ± Changed since last year

# *Heads of Government July 2016*

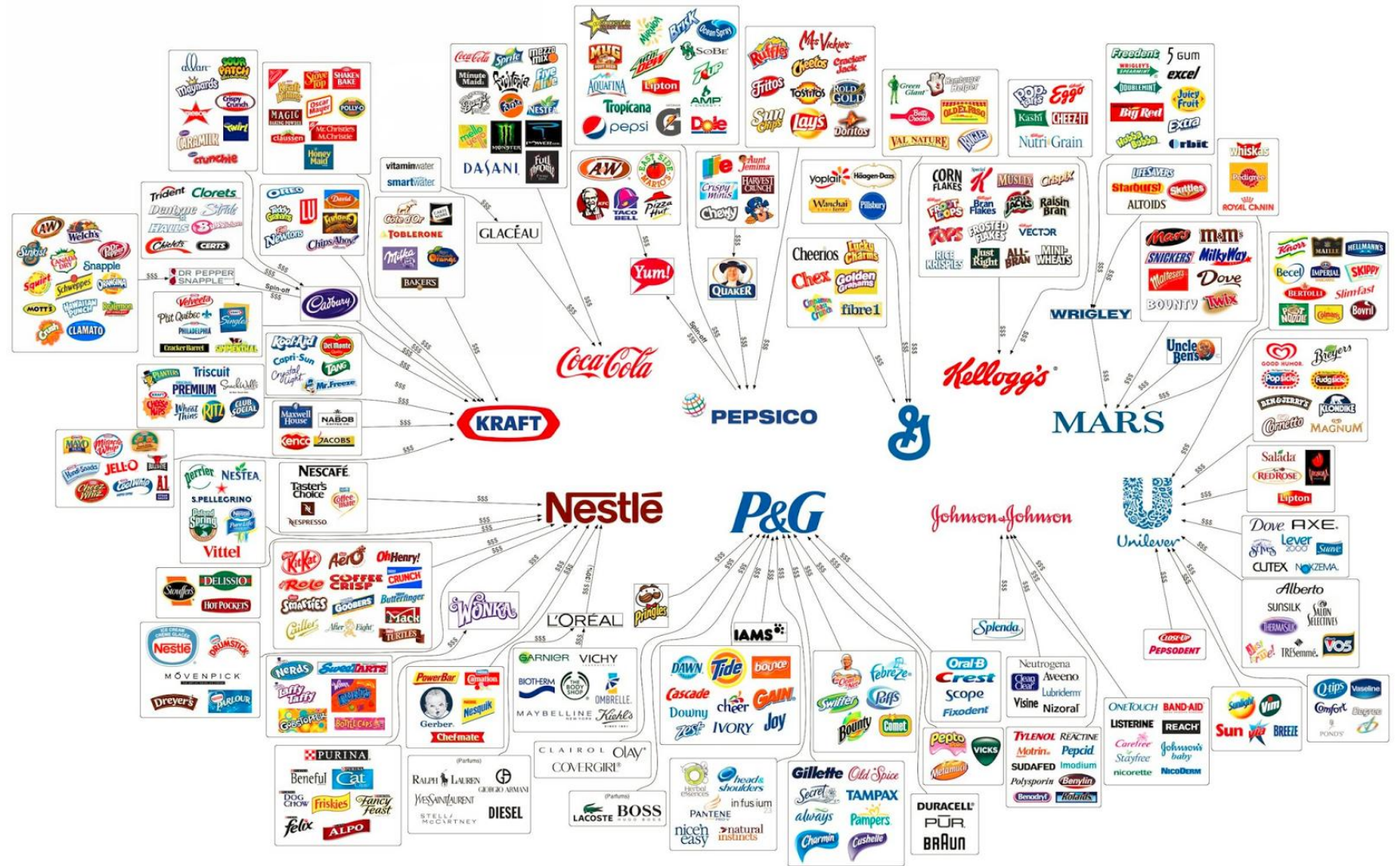


*CARICOM communiqué from the 37<sup>th</sup> CARICOM Heads of Government Conference July 4-6, 2016 highlights renewed commitment to NCDs following presentation of results of UWI evaluation of POS Declaration*

“As the Tenth Anniversary of the historic Port of Spain Declaration ‘Uniting to fight the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)’ draws near, the Heads of Government recognised the progress made in addressing the issue. They acknowledged, however, that progress was variable and agreed to adopt a more holistic approach. In this regard, they pledged to address issues such as the

- *banning of smoking in public places;*
- *trade related measures;*
- *banning advertisement of potentially harmful foods which specifically target children;*
- *elevating taxes on foods high in sugar, salt and trans-fats.”*

# CDoH policy initiatives in the Caribbean

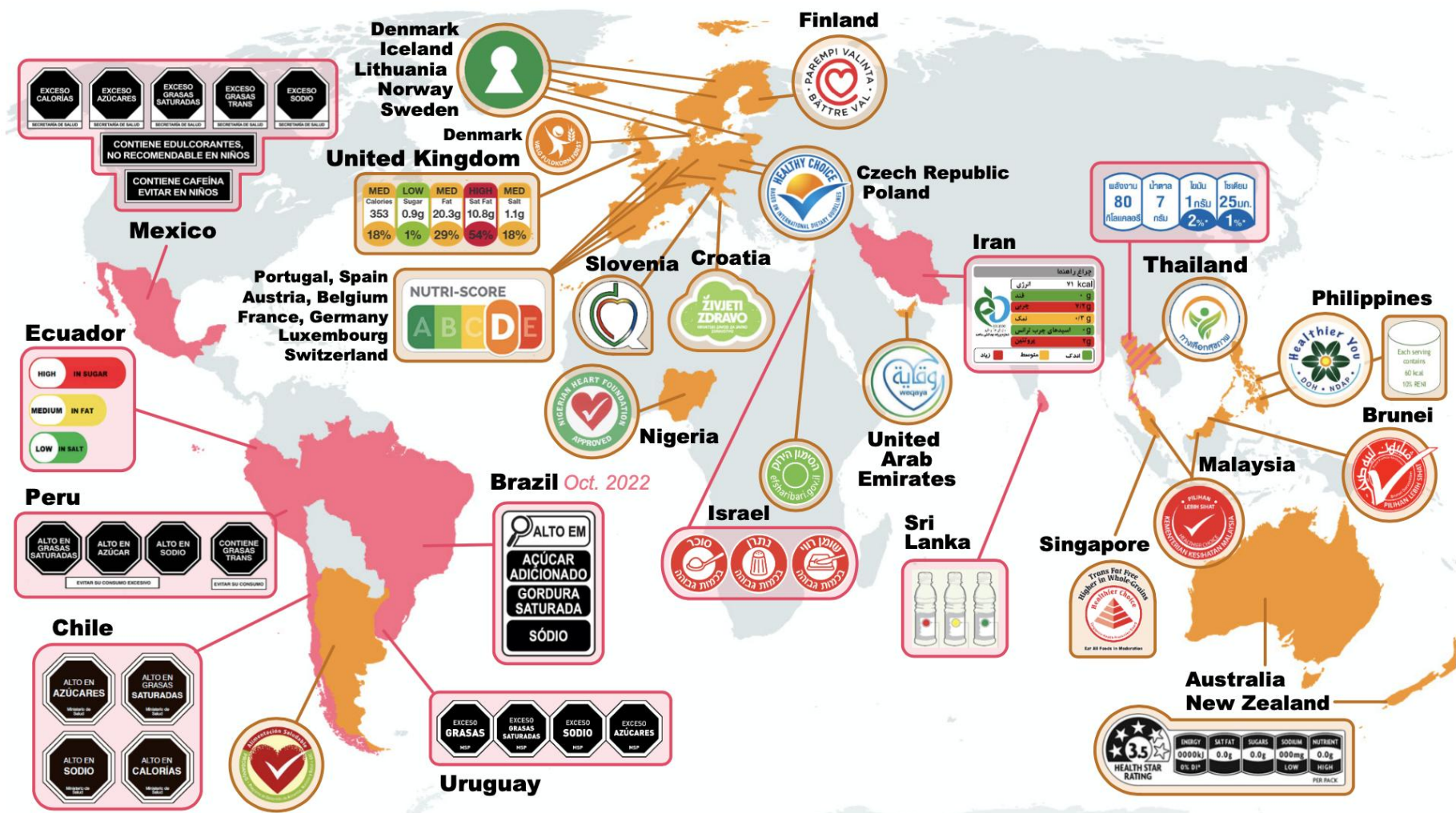


POLICY  
PROPOSALS:  
Front of  
package  
labelling

**MANDATORY**

**VOLUNTARY**

# Countries with mandatory or voluntary interpretive labels on packaged foods and drinks



# PROPOSALS:

## CROSQ\* – Front of Package Labelling

- Regional standard proposed same as Chile
- Went to countries for comments and then vote
- Vigorous opposition from industry
- Challenge of cost of adding label to imports (SKN 95% of foods sold are imported)



\*Caribbean Regional Office for Standards and Quality, an agency of the Caricom Secretariat

# MORE THAN EVER

BETTER LABELS  
BETTER CHOICES  
BETTER HEALTH

WARNING  
LABELS  
NOW

HIGH IN  
SUGAR  
Ministry of  
Health

HIGH IN  
SODIUM  
Ministry of  
Health

HIGH IN  
FATS  
Ministry of  
Health

**PAHO**



**HEALTHY  
CARIBBEAN  
COALITION**



**ECS**

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

**unicef**



# PAHO



JAMAICA

## Superior Efficacy of Front-of-Package Warning Labels in Jamaica



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION • MARCH 2021

### OCTAGONAL WARNING LABELS PERFORM BEST IN IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF CONSUMERS TO MAKE HEALTHIER FOOD DECISIONS IN JAMAICA

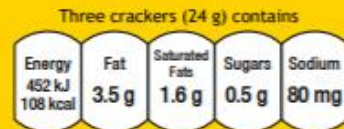
The Ministry of Health and Wellness of Jamaica, the University of Technology, Jamaica, and the Pan American Health Organization conducted a randomized controlled trial to examine the best performing front-of-package labelling (FOPL) in Jamaica. The study is the first to take place in the Caribbean and contributes to the evidence that has been accumulated in the region of the Americas.



### JMEA concerned about implementation of front of package labelling

Monday, March 01, 2021

The study compared the octagonal warning labels (WRN) included in the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) proposal for adoption by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the "high in" single icon FOPL system known as the magnifying-glass (MGG), and the traffic-light labelling (TFL), using nutrition facts up front as a control (CTR).

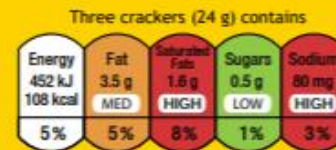


Typical values (as sold) per 100 g:  
Energy 1883 kJ / 450 kcal

(CTR)



(MGG)



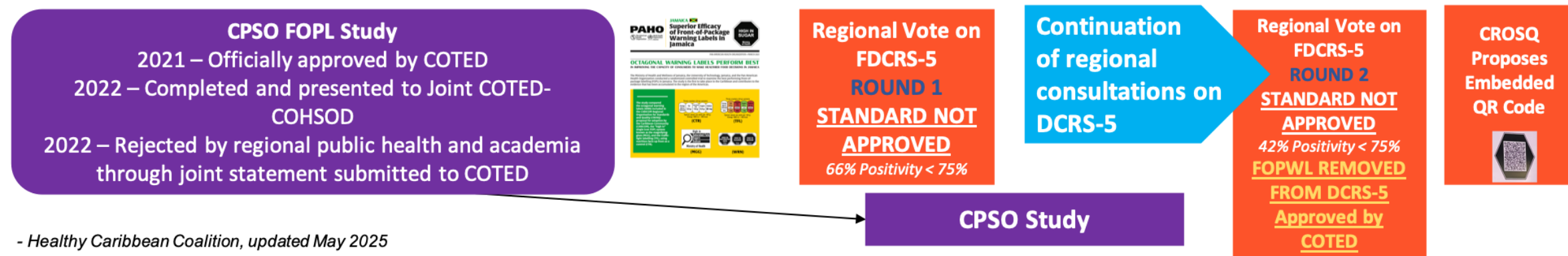
Typical values (as sold) per 100 g:  
Energy 1883 kJ / 450 kcal

(TFL)



(WRN)

# THE CARICOM FOPL PROCESS



# FOPL status in Caribbean

- Failed to secure enough votes at regional level
- Jamaica – Minister of Health supports, Cabinet voted down
- The issue is not dead.
- However, SIDS constraints –
  - 60-80% packaged foods are imported and would need a stick on label – difficult logistics, and who would validate the labels

**WEBINAR**  
**Global Updates on Front of Package Warning Labelling**  
Friday 16 May 2025 | 10:00AM - 12:00PM AST/EDT

**Dr. Kenneth Connell**  
President, HCC  
Deputy Dean, FMS, Cave Hill Campus, UWI

**Dr. Fabio Gomes**  
Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisor  
PAHO

**Dr. Nadia Flexner**  
Associate Director of Research  
Global Health Advocacy Incubator

**Dr. Simón Barquera**  
Director, Nutrition and Health Research Center at the National Institute of Public Health, Mexico  
President, World Obesity Federation

**Dr. Arthur Phillips**  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health & Wellness Barbados

**Dr. Celine Awuor**  
Chief Executive Officer  
International Institute for Legislative Affairs, Kenya

**Dr. Chris van Tulleken**  
Associate Professor  
University College London

**Ms. Maisha Hutton**  
Executive Director, HCC

**REGISTER**

[bit.ly/HCCFOPWL](https://bit.ly/HCCFOPWL)

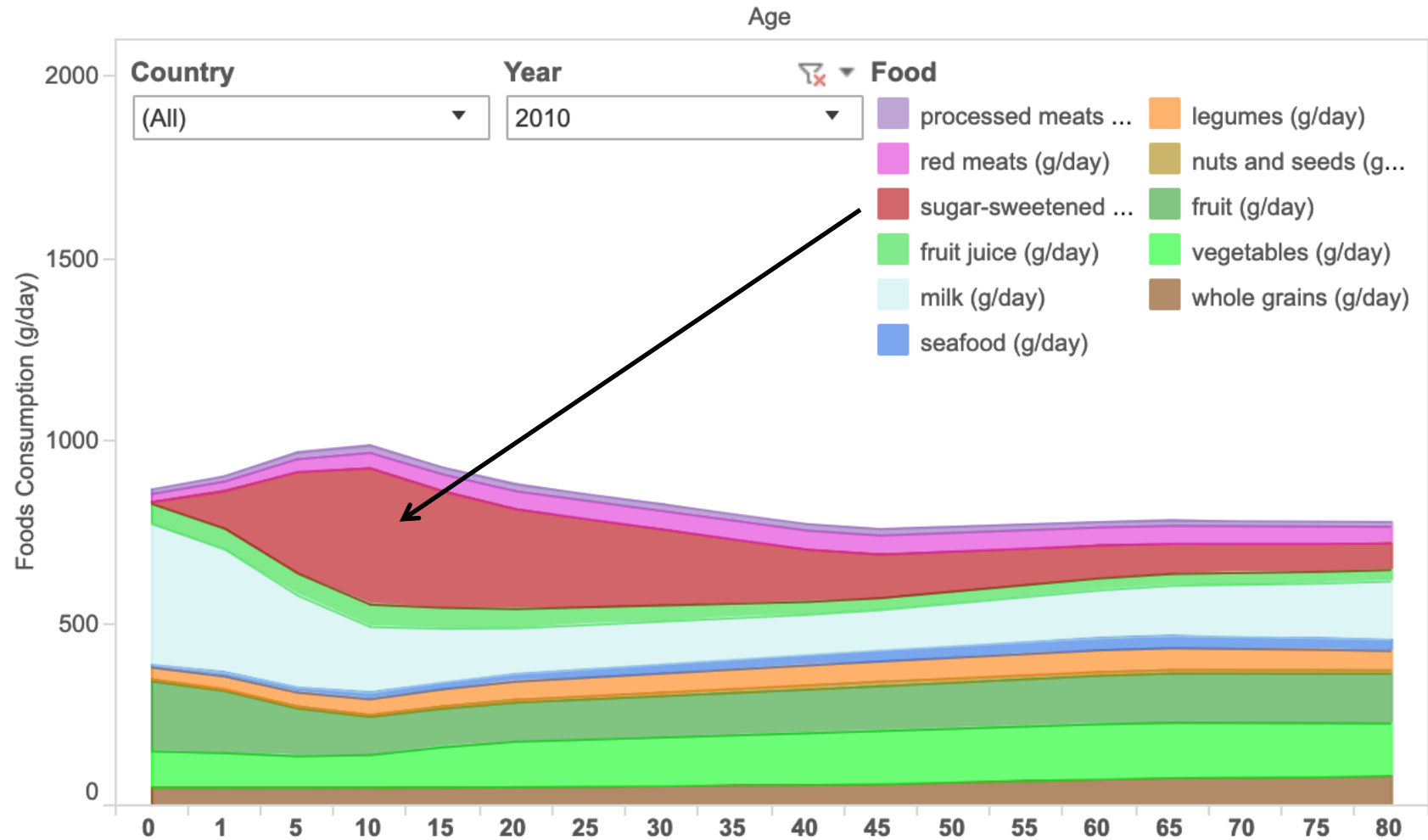
**HCC** HEALTHY CARIBBEAN COALITION  
**PAHO** Pan American Health Organization  
**CARPHA** Caribbean Public Health Agency

# Sugar tax

Sugar is a major contributor to obesity and resulting premature morbidity and mortality

# Diet is a major driver. Too many kids are drinking sugary drinks.

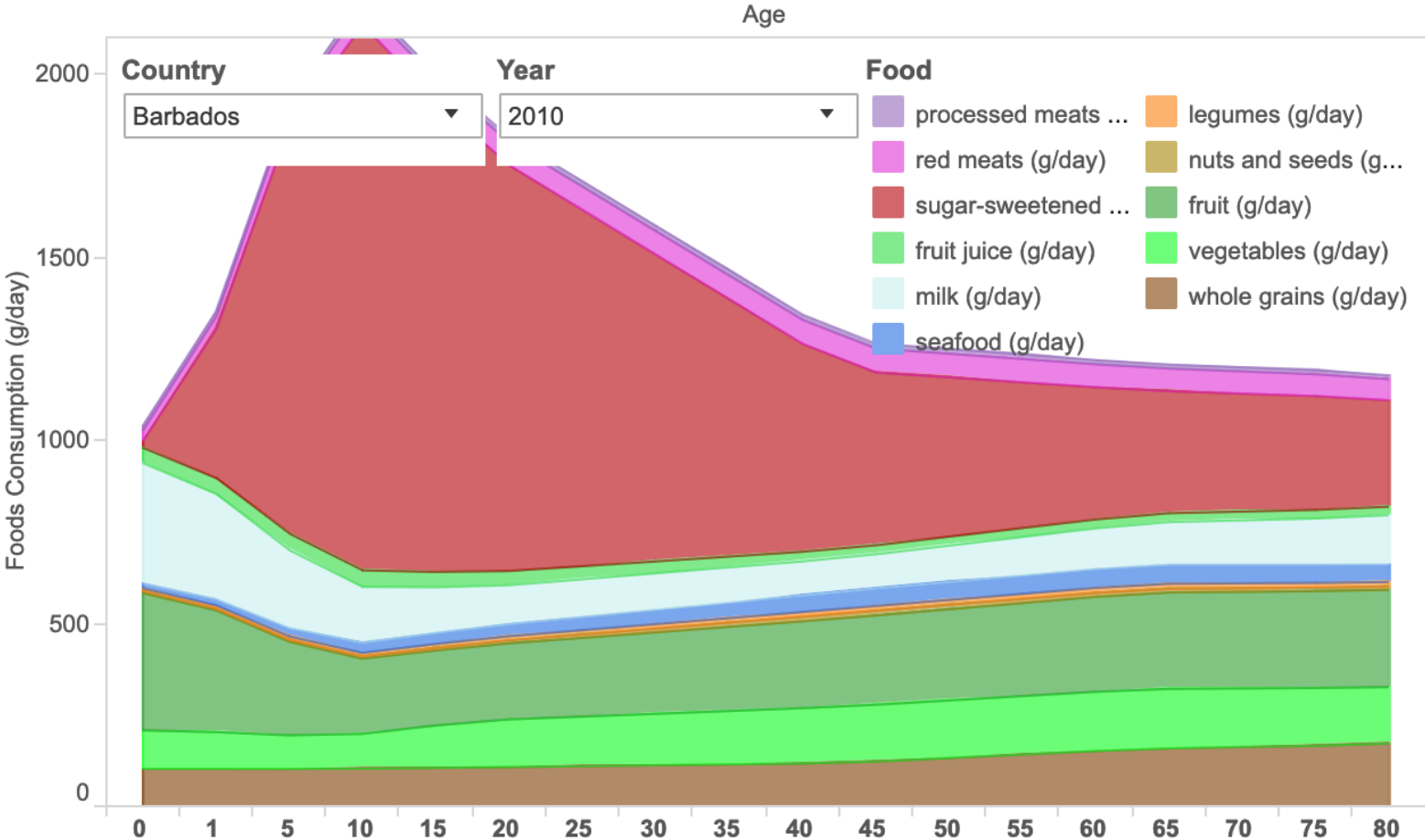
Intake of Major Foods by Age  
All, 2010



Source: Global dietary database

# In the Caribbean

Intake of Major Foods by Age  
Barbados, 2010



Source: Global dietary database

# Barbados Tax on sugar sweetened beverages (SSB)

2015 10%; 2022 20%

•10% SSB tax (6% passed to consumers) associated with

- **4% decrease** in the sales of SSBs
- **8% increase** in the sales of water

Ref: Alvarado M, Unwin N, Sharp SJ, Hambleton I, Murphy MM, Samuels TA, Suhrcke M, Adams J. Assessing the impact of the Barbados sugar-sweetened beverage tax on beverage sales: an observational study. Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act. 2019 Jan 30;16(1):13.

## IMPACT VERY SIMILAR TO MEXICO

10% SSB tax (10% passed to consumers)

- **6% decrease** in the sales of SSBs

2022 tax currently being evaluated.

- COVID changed many assumptions



**A Major Win For A Healthier Barbados**

Civil Society supports Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley and her Government in the decision to increase the excise tax on sweetened beverages from 10 % to 20% **as we fight to reduce the high levels of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Barbados.**

**This increase to 20% aligns fully with the recommendation of the World Health Organisation in the global battle against childhood obesity which is inextricably linked to the onslaught of NCDs.**



**Heart & Stroke** Foundation of Barbados Ltd. **BARBADOS CHILDHOOD OBESITY** PREVENTION FOUNDATION **HCC** Health Care Centre

# Price Change Results

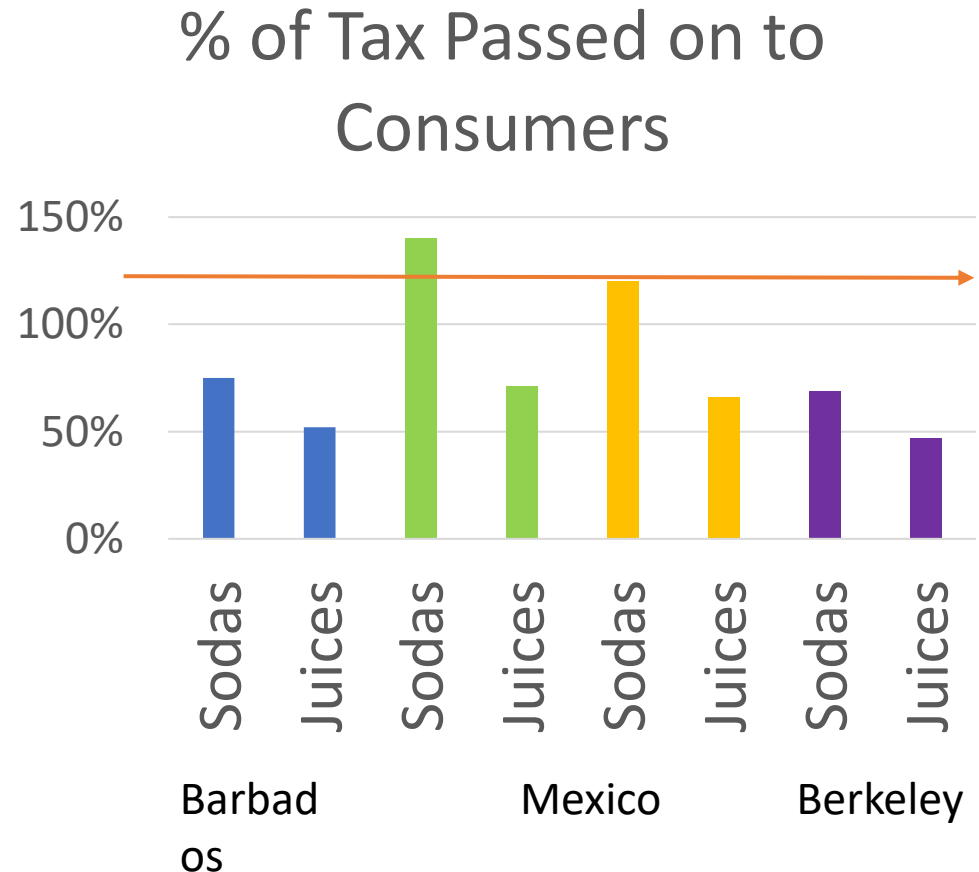
Category	Estimate	P-Value
Non-SSBs	1.6	0.161
<b>SSBs</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Diet Soda	-0.9	0.313
<b>Energy &amp; Sports Drinks</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Non-sweetened Juices	3.5	0.063
Other Sweetened Drinks	3.4	0.181
<b>Soda</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Sweetened Juices</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Water	-0.8	0.552



# Discussion

Results compare to other countries?

- In Mexico, price of sodas increased by more than the tax,
- In Berkeley, Falbe also found like in Barbados, some of the increase was absorbed and not passed on to consumers



# Country policy response SSBs

- Barbados and Dominica: Taxes on SSBs
- Bermuda, St. Vincent & Grenadines: Tax on sugar
- Trinidad and Tobago: Ban sale of SSBs in all government school
- Jamaica: Ad campaign, School nutrition policy,

# Public education display



# Jamaica ad campaign funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-WNCdIIWNY>



# Bermuda taxes sugar by 75%

## The Royal Gazette



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[Lifestyle](#) ▾

[Opinion](#) ▾

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## More sweet treats to be hit by 75% sugar tax

Fiona McWhirter

Created: Feb 23, 2019 08:00 AM

# Impact of Bermuda taxes

- Consumption one or more sugary drinks a day among adults declined from 50% in 2014 to 42% in 2019. Greatest decline among men - 59% to 36%
- More sugar-free options on the market
- The public discussion of the sugar tax has raised awareness on the harms of sugar consumption and has helped to educate the general public to redirect their choices to non-sugary items.
- The sugar tax, imposed on October 1, 2018, collected \$5,402,000 by December 1, 2019. (\$85 per person)

## In summary

Small Island Developing States have unique vulnerabilities, including high dependence on imported, unhealthy foods  
This results in the highest rates of obesity and diabetes globally

In the English speaking Caribbean (Caribbean Community/CARICOM) NCD Policy initiatives are framed by the 2007 Heads of Government Port of Spain Declaration “Uniting to Stop the Epidemic of NCDs”

Front of Package label black hexagon design failed to secure votes needed  
Efforts continue

Taxes on sugar sweetened beverages, on sugar, bans on sales and advertising campaigns have been used to reduce sugar consumption  
COVID-19 changed the playing field.

# Other Resources

THEMATIC ISSUE

TEN YEARS OF THE PORT-OF-SPAIN DECLARATION  
ON NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Editorials

- Ten years of the Port of Spain Declaration: lessons learned
- Preventing NCDs in the Caribbean
- Translating research findings into useful policy for NCDs
- Healthier food environments to combat NCDs

Articles

- 2007 Port-of-Spain Declaration, a multidisciplinary evaluation
- Monitoring the Declaration of Port-of-Spain on NCDs
- Social determinants of diabetes in the Caribbean
- Premature mortality and health expenditure in the Caribbean
- Challenges to addressing unhealthy diet and inactivity in the Caribbean
- Community food production in Small Island Developing States
- Regulations to fight obesity in the Caribbean
- Impacts of the 2007 Port-of-Spain Declaration on NCDs
- Alcohol and tobacco taxes and NCDs in the Caribbean
- Caribbean Wellness Day
- Disseminating results of the Port-of-Spain Declaration

Free download of all manuscripts from  
<https://bit.ly/2CHrRPS>

Vol. 42, December 2018

# 2 PAHO Special Issues: POS 2018; Household nutrition 2022

PAHO



PAN AMERICAN JOURNAL  
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Home / Special issues / Improving household nutrition security and public health in the CARICOM

## Improving household nutrition security and public health in the CARICOM

Jul 13



## IMPROVING HOUSEHOLD NUTRITION AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN CARICOM – PAHO SPECIAL ISSUE 2022

We wish to thank the International Development Research Center, Ottawa, Canada for funding this meaningful work.

[Healthy lives, education and wealth: ecological relationships in social resilience](#) Editorial | English | *Slater et al.* |

[Improving dietary diversity in the Caribbean Community](#) Editorial | English | *St. John* |

[Integrated food systems approaches for healthy diets in the Caribbean](#) Editorial | English | *Wesley and Hallen* |

[Addressing malnutrition in all its forms in Caribbean countries using a food systems approach](#) Editorial | English | *Hennis* |

[Improving household nutrition security and public health in the CARICOM, 2018–2022](#) Special report | English | *Jones et al.* |

[Revising primary and secondary school curricula in the Caribbean to enhance education on the risks for noncommunicable diseases](#) Special report | English | *Jones et al.* |

[Industrially produced trans fat and saturated fat content of food products in Jamaica](#) Original research | English | *Perry et al.* |

[Assessing the determinants of unhealthy dietary habits among a sample of survey participants in Jamaica](#) Original research | *La Foucade et al.* |

[COVID-19 and the social distribution of hunger in three Caribbean Small Island Developing States](#) Original research | English | *Howitt et al.* |

[Interventions and policies aimed at improving nutrition in Small Island Developing States: a rapid review](#) Review | English | *Brown et al.* |

[Sociodemographic and dietary influences on perceptions of eating habits in Jamaica](#) Original research | English | *La Foucade et al.* |

[Comparative cost of diets for low-income families in the Caribbean](#) Original research | English | *Henry et al.* |

# University of the West Indies NCD Interventions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UohrYHtRkAI>



THANK YOU

