



British Embassy
Mexico City



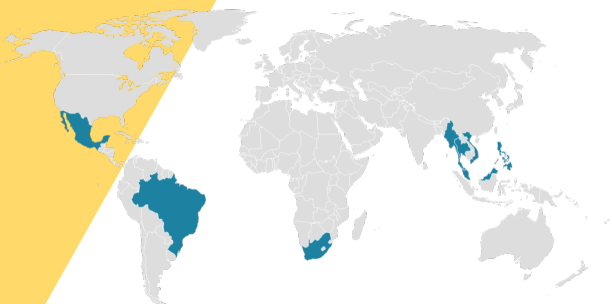
Better Health Programme Mexico

Programme Overview

Better Health Programme Mexico is part of the UK's £79.3 million Better Health Prosperity Programme* covering – Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand and Vietnam. The programme tackles non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as heart disease and diabetes, strengthens local health systems and improves the quality of patient care.

In partnership with the Mexican Secretariat of Health, the programme provided a vehicle for knowledge exchange and long-term, cross-cultural, collaboration between universities, regulators, governments and health services in Mexico and England. The Better Health Programme also developed activities, based on the project's research and knowledge sharing around obesity prevention, diabetes detection and control, and Mexico's healthcare worker skill gap.

Better Health Programme Countries



Key Stats

Value: £7,000,000

Duration: July 2019 – Dec 2021

Location: Mexico

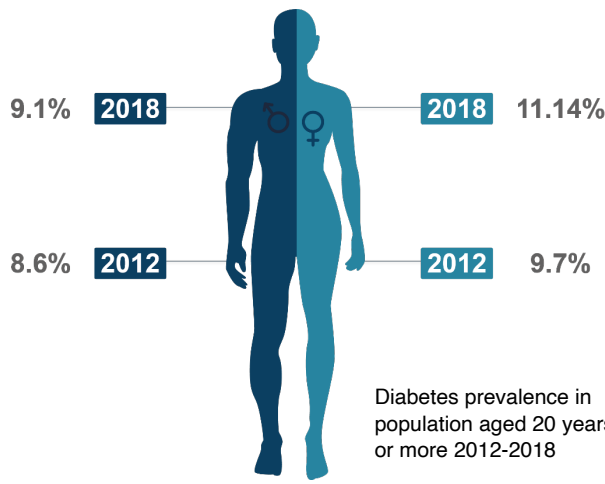
Why Better Health Programme in Mexico?

The Better Health Programme was established in 2015 by the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office to support inclusive economic growth and partnership between the UK and the target countries. The initiatives focused on tackling non-communicable diseases and strengthening health human resources. NCDs such as heart disease, cancers, and diabetes account for 71% of all deaths globally, according the World Health Organization, placing a growing burden on health and economic systems.

To develop programme priorities, the UK's National Health Service conducted a thorough scoping of health needs and issues, and during the inception phase of the programme further consultations were made with the Mexican government and various stakeholders.

* Previously the Prosperity Fund

Findings confirmed the need to address Mexico's growing obesity and diabetes challenges and to equip the health workforce to respond to primary care and NCDs.



Source: ENSANUT 2018

Diabetes prevalence in population aged 20 years or more 2012-2018

Mexico is the most obese country in the OECD¹ and over 10% of the adult population has diabetes. Heart disease and diabetes are the two biggest killers in the country², accounting for a quarter of a million deaths annually. And, in just six years, from 2012 to 2018, the prevalence of overweight and obesity grew from 71% to 75%. In that same time, the number of adults with type two diabetes grew by 10%.

These health challenges are compounded by low numbers of health workers across the country. For example, OECD countries average around 9 practising nurses per 1000 inhabitants. However, Mexico is one of the last countries in the group, with only 2.9 practising nurses per 1000 people³. There is also a culture of specialisation among physicians, meaning few doctors are qualified general practitioners with experience managing primary health care issues.

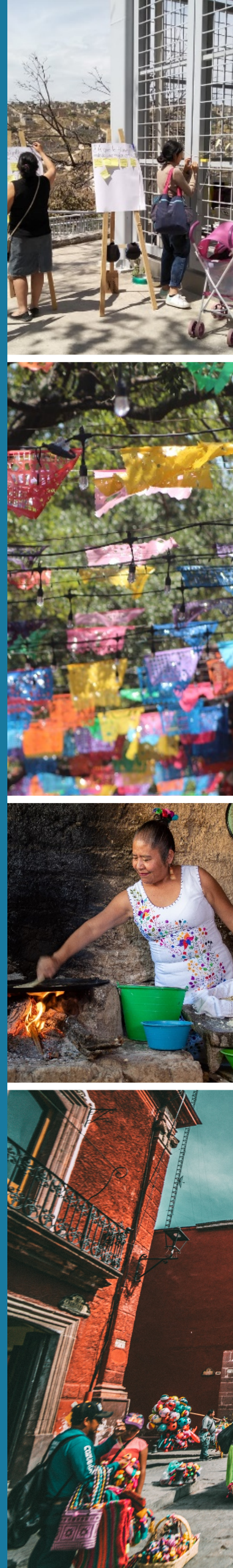
Thus, the Better Health Programme was centred around tackling diabetes, obesity and supporting the healthcare workforce. The programme was also aligned to the Mexican government's health agenda, which is focused on reducing obesity. In addition to partnering with the Secretariat of Health, the project worked with Mexico's National Institute of Public Health (INSP), the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), among other partners.

DAI Global was the implementing partner for this project. DAI is a global development company with a mission to make a lasting difference in the world by improving people's lives. DAI has offices in the US, UK, Belgium, Austria, Nigeria and Pakistan.



1 Health at a Glance, OECD, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae3016b9-en>
 2 Mexico, Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2019. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30925-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30925-9)
 3 Health at a Glance, OECD, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae3016b9-en>

Supporting Partners



Obesity Prevention

Mexico is the most obese country in the OECD, which affects the country's health and economic systems. The programme addressed this problem at the national, sub-national and community levels, in partnership with Public Health England and Mexico's Secretariat of Health. At the national level, the Better Health Programme conducted a series of policy exchanges discussing fiscal policy, food product formulation and food labelling. At the sub-national level, Public Health England, the High Impact Social Innovation Center at ITESO, and Mexico's Zapopan Council, adapted a whole-systems approach to tackle obesity for local authorities. The UK's Bradford Council supported the work by sharing their experience of using this approach. Finally, at the community level, the programme conducted behaviour science research and subsequent behaviour change communication campaign design around sugar consumption.

Policy Exchange

Both UK and Mexican stakeholders shared positive feedback from the various policy exchange workshops.

"It was a really interesting event and I hope the start of a more substantial bilateral exchange and collaboration."

Martin White

Professor of Population Health Research
CEDAR and MRC Epidemiology Unit
University of Cambridge, UK
Speaking after a taxation of unhealthy foods/beverages workshop

Whole-Systems Approach

The Whole-Systems Approach to tackling obesity was developed by Public Health England for use around Local Authorities in England. The programme supported the adaptation of the guide for a Mexican context and [translated it into Spanish](#). Zapopan municipality is the first local authority to receive the guide, which can be used by all municipalities.



29 Civil Society Organisations

identified shared priorities for the *Mexican Overweight and Obesity Policy Group*



Other Outputs

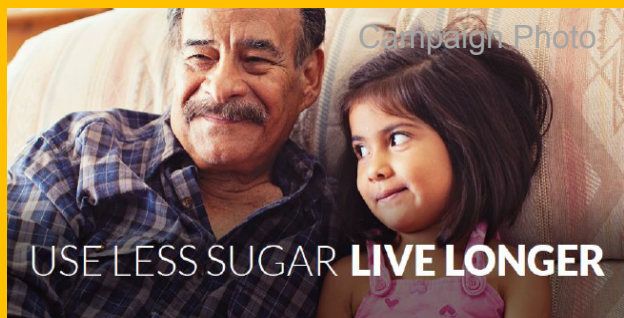
1 Behavioural Science Course

developed by University College London for the Mexican Institute of Social Security



+100 participants

interviewed in over 100 hours of field research on attitudes toward food in Zapopan



Campaign Photo

Communication Campaign

The bespoke communication campaign designed for three deprived areas in Zapopan and Acatlán de Juárez in Jalisco state, aimed at curbing sugar consumption in fizzy drinks. The campaign design approached healthy eating positively – celebrating its benefits through images like the one on the left and traditional Mexican *papel picado*.

Improved Care for Chronic Diseases

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), like heart disease and diabetes are some of the biggest killers in Mexico. Specifically, rates of diabetes have grown over the past few years as obesity has increased. The Better Health Programme aimed to support physicians respond to NCDs by delivering an app called MicroGuide, with updated treatment guidance for diabetes, written by the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS). Due to Mexico's high levels of inequalities, the project also worked with the Secretariat of Health in promoting knowledge exchanges on equity issues to ensure that socioeconomic factors were considered throughout the programme design.

Digital App for Clinical Guidelines

In partnership with the Mexican Social Security Institute and Horizon Strategic Partners, the Better Health Programme customised an app called *MicroGuide Mexico*, which provides clinicians updated treatment guidelines for type-two diabetes, hypertension and dyslipidaemia. *MicroGuide Mexico* can be downloaded onto any device, located in Mexico, from Google Play or the App Store and will incorporate IMSS's new clinical protocols and drug recommendations.

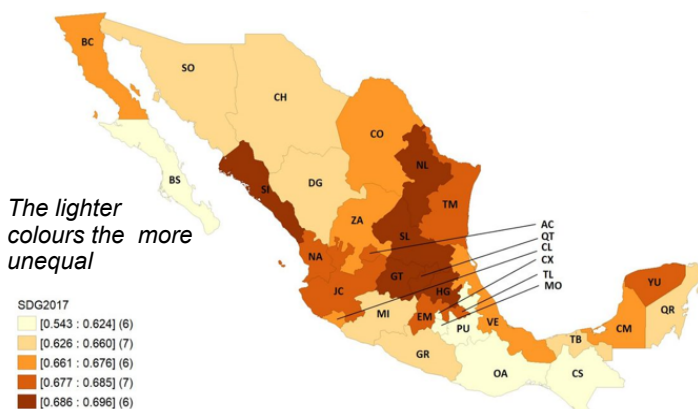


"We are looking forward to the introduction of MicroGuide as it will provide valuable clinical support for physicians throughout Mexico."

Dr Norma Palacios

*Coordination of Health Innovation of the Directorate of Medical Benefits
Mexican Institute of Social Security*

Inequality in Mexican States



Fuente: *Advances and challenges on the path toward the SDGs, subnational inequalities in Mexico, 1900-2017. BMJ. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2020-002382>*

Knowledge Exchange

The Better Health Programme supported health inequality workshops between Mexican and UK health officials. Socioeconomic factors play a large role in an individual's health and well-being and are key to developing effective treatment, care and prevention strategies.

Collaboration between the Mexican Secretariat of Health, England's National Health Service and UK universities resulted in discussions around health inequalities research within the Mexican National Observatory of Health Inequities, to improve healthcare and health policy decisions.



Sharing work on Health Inequalities Indicator (HII) Development with Mexico

Analytical Services (Health Inequalities and Evaluation Analytics Team)

June 2020



NHS England and NHS Improvement

Data and Analytics Directorate Analysis Group (Analytical Services)

Support for the Health Workforce

Primary care is not well developed in Mexico. Most doctors aim to be highly specialised rather than having broader expertise for the first level of care. Additionally, the ratio of nurses to patients is low. Nurses also have limited autonomy and are rarely able to provide care outside of a doctor's direct supervision. The Better Health Programme boosted primary care and the health workforce capacity by supporting training and course work for general and family medicine, advanced nursing, and healthcare management.



Rosa Zárate
Director of National School of Nursing and Obstetrics (ENEO)
National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)

"We are very proud to be involved in this international project. It is an excellent learning opportunity for Mexico and the United Kingdom that will contribute to the expansion of the Advanced Nursing Practitioner role in our country and the training of a new generation of researchers."

Courses Developed



Developed 2 e-learning courses on "Clinical management of overweight, obesity and diabetes" and "Digital skills for primary healthcare" to be transferred to the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS)



Developed an accredited Diploma for Local Health Managers, in partnership with Mexico's Secretariat of Health



Developed a training of trainers' Advanced Nursing Course in partnership with Mexico's National School of Nursing & Obstetrics (ENEO)

Key Results

36 State Quality Directors



Registered for courses on "Discrimination, diversity and inclusion" and "Effective leadership"

14 Health Managers



across three states completed the Local Health Managers Diploma

60 Nursing Leaders



Registered for the Advanced Nursing Trainings of Trainers Course

+ 5000 Health workers



attended seminars on improving health education and practice