

CATALYTIC IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERSHIP

Resolve to Save Lives partners with governments to support implementation of best-practice excise taxes on tobacco, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages. Health taxes are among the most cost-effective ways to increase domestic revenue, reduce noncommunicable disease and prevent premature death.

Background and rationale

Many countries in Africa face a health financing crisis. Official development assistance for health has declined and debt service obligations strain public budgets. Underfunded health systems struggle to respond to a double burden of disease – noncommunicable diseases and recurrent infectious disease outbreaks – as external support contracts.

Excise taxes on tobacco, alcohol, sugar-sweetened beverages and other unhealthy foods offer governments a proven but underused policy tool. When well designed and implemented, health taxes increase revenue, reduce health care costs and improve population health.

Our approach

Resolve to Save Lives offers catalytic partnership with governments to translate political will into well-designed policy, and policy into effective implementation that delivers fiscal and health returns. Our support is tailored to the country context.

We work alongside ministries of finance and health, civil society, and the media to advance tax reform as part of a broader fiscal resilience agenda. Support includes:

- Evidence-based policy analysis and consultation
- Civil society strategy and coalition building
- Workshops for journalists on data-driven coverage and countering misinformation spread by industries profiting from the sales of harmful products.

Effective implementation requires technical capacity and political resilience. We partner with governments to:

- Strengthen implementation and enforcement of existing excise taxes
- Close policy and administrative loopholes
- Institutionalize effective tax administration systems.

Well-designed health taxes can generate tens of millions of dollars in additional annual revenue and prevent tens of thousands of premature deaths over a lifetime. Allocated to health priorities, these resources can expand essential services and amplify impact.

Looking ahead

Rapid, evidence-based health tax reform is feasible, especially in the context of fiscal pressure. Strong political engagement, sustained civil society advocacy, and focused technical support can translate intentions into life-saving policy. Resolve to Save Lives can partner with countries committed to implementation of health taxes.