

# CATEGORY

# NUTRITION

# GOVERNANCE



## CATEGORY CONTEXT

There is increasing global awareness among policymakers, investors, and civil society about the influence of food and beverage (F&B) manufacturers in shaping consumers' diets, and the resulting impact on public health. This is particularly evident in Tanzania, where diets are shifting from fresh and minimally processed foods towards more processed, packaged foods, including foods high in fat, salt, and sugar. F&B manufacturers influence consumers' diets not only through the nutritional quality of the products they sell but also through how these are marketed, priced, distributed, and labelled. It is therefore important that companies develop a clear strategy or plan to ensure these practices are aligned with public health goals, as defined by standards set by public health goals, as defined by public health and food authorities in Tanzania.

TABLE 1  
POLICY LANDSCAPE

National Policy or Regulation	Summary
National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) 2021-2026	Outlines the role of food industry in addressing growing non-communicable disease (NCD) prevalence through investing in healthy diets. <sup>1</sup>
Tanzania Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for a Healthy Population	Provides recommendations to promote healthy eating, including reducing the intake of 'highly processed' foods high in salt, sugar, and fats to reduce the risk of NCDs. <sup>2</sup>
Tanzania Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan 2021/22 - 2025/26	Coordinates efforts to address the triple burden of malnutrition, including actions to strengthen the capacity and engagement of the private sector in tackling nutrition challenges and improving diets. <sup>3</sup>

## FINDINGS

Reporting by companies on their nutrition-related policies and practices in Tanzania was generally found to be limited. Some Tanzania-headquartered companies acknowledge their role in improving nutrition and health for consumers. Among the 10 companies assessed, three—Asas, Bakhresa, and Tanga—shared information or examples with ATNi on how health and nutrition are integrated into their business operations. Key topics of consideration included fortification, affordability, and school feeding programmes. For example, Tanga informed ATNi that it has an internal, multi-faceted nutrition strategy focused on raising public awareness on nutrition and nutrition education; participating in school feeding programmes; collaborating with relevant stakeholders to ensure more affordable pricing; and supporting farmers and farmer cooperatives to increase production and availability. However, the company has not published information on these activities in the public domain.

Three global-headquartered companies with headquarters outside Tanzania—PepsiCo, Wilmar and Coca-Cola—have published global nutrition strategies. Key features of these global strategies include:

1. Improving portfolio healthiness through product reformulation and the development of new 'healthier' products;
2. Ensuring affordability, including through selling various pack sizes and using local socioeconomic indicators; and
3. Implementing responsible marketing and labelling policies.

Of these three companies, only Coca-Cola provided Tanzania-specific evidence to ATNi, including examples of ‘healthier’ products introduced to the market, information on packaging variants, and specific evidence on how the company provides nutritional labelling. However, due to the lack of systematic reporting against quantitative metrics, it remains unclear to what extent each element of the company's global nutrition strategy has been implemented in Tanzania.

## BOX 1 GLOBAL-HEADQUARTERED COMPANIES AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION CHAINS

**Two of the global-headquartered companies—PepsiCo and Coca-Cola—indicated that they partner with local bottling companies to package and distribute their products in Tanzania.**

- **PepsiCo disclosed to ATNi that its Tanzanian bottler, SBC/Varun Beverages, operates as a separate entity in terms of nutrition policies and commitments, while PepsiCo retains control over product reformulation decisions and marketing. However, the SBC website displays the PepsiCo name and logo, and states that its “quality processes [are] guided by the stringent standards of PepsiCo International.”**
- **Coca-Cola indicated to ATNi that its bottling partners are required to adhere to the company's global responsible marketing policy.**

**It is generally unclear to what extent the global businesses are accountable for the nutrition policies and practices of their bottling companies in Tanzania.**

Evidence was found that two global-headquartered companies—Coca-Cola and PepsiCo—assign accountability at the senior management level for their global strategies. However, it remains unclear whether these companies conduct progress reviews on implementing their strategies at the national or regional level, or whether a person is assigned at the national or regional level to be accountable for implementation in Tanzania. No information was found on nutrition governance mechanisms or accountability frameworks for the Tanzania-headquartered companies.

## KEY INDUSTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that companies’ commercial operations contribute to public health goals in Tanzania, F&B companies are encouraged to:

- Develop and publish a clear commercial strategy to contribute to healthier and more nutritious diets and publicly report on its implementation in Tanzania,.
- Set a specific, measurable, and timebound target to increase sales of products that meet Tanzania-specific or internationally recognized nutrition criteria, showing annual progress on meeting set targets.
- Have the Board of Directors (or regional equivalent) review progress against the nutrition strategy on at least an annual basis.
- Assign formal accountability for the implementation and success of the nutrition strategy ideally to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or another senior-level executive in Tanzania. Link executive (or regional equivalent) remuneration to at least one of the nutrition strategy's targets or metrics.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Tanzanian government has taken important steps to establish a policy framework to improve diets, particularly through the development of national-level strategic plans. The government is encouraged to use the outcomes of this research to help build a roadmap for industry and policymakers, outlining measures to mitigate the potentially negative impact of packaged processed foods and beverages on healthy diets.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gener, Elderly and Children. National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2021-2026 [Internet]. 2021 p. 1-97. Available from: <https://tzdpg.or.tz/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/NCD-ACTION-PLAN-2021-2026.pdf>
- 2 Ministry of Health of the United Republic of Tanzania. Tanzania Mainland Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for a Healthy Population: Technical Recommendations [Internet]. Dodoma, Tanzania: Ministry of Health; 2023. Available from: <https://www.moh.go.tz/storage/app/uploads/public/658/295/d4b/658295d4bbcb467264195.pdf>
- 3 United Republic of Tanzania Prime Minister's Office. National Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan 2021/22 - 2025/26 [Internet]. 2021 p. 1-164. Available from: <https://www.pmo.go.tz/uploads/documents/sw-1646121553-NMNAP.pdf>