



## **A heritage of quality**

**Press Release: Every Kenyan is suffering on the country's explosion in lifestyle diseases.**

Every Kenyan has lost a family member or close friend to lifestyle diseases, according to a survey released today by Broadway Bakery Limited as part of its drive to move Kenyans towards adopting a healthier lifestyle and cutting sugar consumption.

The survey conducted in August this year questioned 241 Kenyans aged between 23 to 70 years on the degree to which lifestyle diseases had affected their family and close friends. The respondents reported the death of more than 250 people in their close circles, being an average of more than one death per respondent.

In the last 10 years, lifestyle diseases have moved to be the top killer in Kenya, killing more than 100,000 Kenyans aged between 30 and 70 years each year, and are responsible for 50 per cent of all hospital admissions and 55 per cent of hospital deaths.

The World Health Organisation reports that 30 per cent of Kenyans are now suffering from premature deaths due to poor eating and exercise habits.

The impact of this surge is now being felt in every home with the Broadway Bakery survey finding that respondents knew an average of 5 people suffering from lifestyle diseases in their inner circles, ranging from diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, heart and kidney disease.

The most common disease afflicting Kenyan families is heart disease, which, at 47 per cent, is responsible for close to half of the deaths reported in the survey with the respondents knowing an average of up to 2 people each who suffer from, or have died of, heart disease.

The next most common condition within families and close friends was diabetes followed by cancer, both of which have been shown to be caused or exacerbated by high sugar consumption.

Perhaps more shockingly, respondents gave the ages of those in their inner circles currently suffering from these conditions, or having died from them, showing surging levels of lifestyle conditions among Kenyan youth.

Nearly 15 per cent of the male deaths reported from cancer were under 40 years, while more than a fifth, or 20 per cent, of the female deaths were for women between the ages of 30 and 40 years.

Of the reported diabetes sufferers, 41 per cent were under 40 years and 18 per cent were under 30 years for men, while young women were even more afflicted with 46 per cent of sufferers under 40 years and 20 per cent under 30 years.

Only high blood pressure and heart disease appear to remain confined to older age groups, usually over 40 years.

“These findings support our real alarm at the impact of excessive sugar consumption on our younger generation,” said Mr. Bimal Shah, MD of Broadway Bakery. “The surge in lifestyle diseases has now become a crisis in Kenya and more worrying is the number of new cases being reported amongst younger people, often before they even reach their 30<sup>th</sup> birthdays, making for a lifetime of health care and often frequent hospitalization.”

The conditions covered by the survey are all caused by unhealthy eating habits and lack of physical exercise. “Our #BeSugarSmart drive is aimed at creating awareness across all generations on the prevalence of these diseases and that excessive sugar consumption and physical inactivity are ways of achieving an early death sentence. In addition, we aim to encourage food manufactures to produce healthy foods. Leading by example, we have been, and continue to, manufacture healthy bread that is low in sugar and rich in nutrients” said Mr. Bimal.

Diabetes, which is the most strongly related to high sugar consumption, was responsible for 13 per cent of the deaths of family and friends reported by the survey’s respondents.

The findings tie in with a newly published Kenya STEPwise survey that reported that more than 90 per cent of Kenyans consume less than five servings of fruits and vegetables on most days, and 28 per cent always add sugar to beverages.

More than half of the adult Kenyan population have never had their blood pressure tested, yet one in four people has high blood pressure.

Diabetes testing is even more neglected, despite the capacity of the disease to cause kidney failure, heart disease, amputations and comas. Only one in ten adults has ever been tested for diabetes.

“The lack of testing is, of itself, a killer,” said Mr Bimal Shah, with Broadway Bakery now organizing a round of activities for World Diabetes Day on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 that it hopes will save further lives, in its drive to address Kenya’s extreme sugar-related health issues.

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