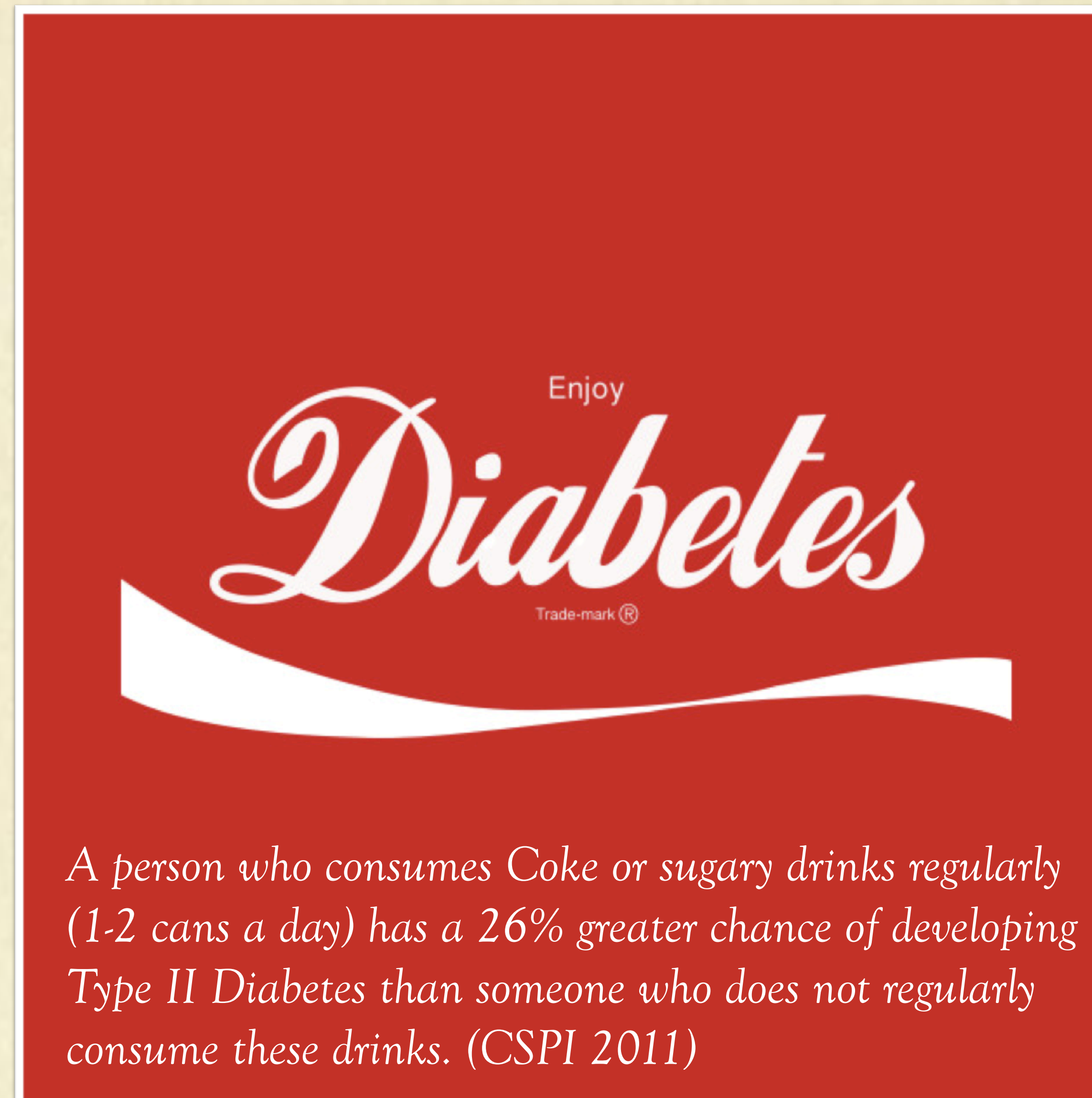


# Prevention of Type II Diabetes in Honduras: El Cacao as a Case Study

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## Background

Honduras is one of the poorest and most densely populated countries in the Western Hemisphere. Poverty affects access to quality healthcare and education, especially in rural areas. This makes it hard to manage chronic illness, like diabetes. **Type II diabetes is on the rise in Honduras; it is estimated that currently up to 10% of adults living in urban areas are affected.** Eighty percent of deaths from diabetes happen in low-income countries. Diabetes Mellitus deaths in Honduras accounted for 2.29% of total deaths in 2014, according to WHO. **This project focuses on the prevention of Type II diabetes in Honduras, highlighting 3 feasible strategies: lifestyle changes using social marketing, diabetes screens, and health education.**



## Type II Diabetes in Honduras

- Close to 20% of the population of Honduras is considered obese, even more in urban areas (WHO, 2011).
- Obese adults have a 3-7 times greater risk of developing Type II diabetes than adults with a normal weight (Magalhães, 2011).
- Honduras has the highest percentage of undiagnosed cases of diabetes, at 53 percent (Barceló et al., 2012)

## Prevention Strategies

### Lifestyle Changes

To encourage healthy lifestyle changes, social marketing could be used to spread diabetes awareness and general information about the benefits of nutrition and physical activity. Group intervention has been shown to alter behavior on many occasions, and currently most urban areas don't take advantage of the potential for public health advertisements.

## Prevention Strategies

### Screening for Diabetes

A streamlined screening method for rural Honduran clinics would develop a general knowledge of diabetes prevalence using indicators such as BMI, patient history, and blood glucose readings. All these factors are easily measurable, and could be completed in 10-15 minutes. Recent studies have shown that screening using these factors that were implemented in rural Honduras were found to be a valid measure of overall diabetes risk in the area.



### Health Education

Many of the current education systems in Honduras teach little about health; even a simple health class would greatly increase the ability of young people to make informed decisions about their own health, specifically in the prevention of obesity and diabetes. As I spent time as a medical volunteer in 2015 in El Cacao, the need for health education was apparent. As part of this project, I developed a sample introductory health presentation on diabetes, in Spanish, to raise awareness of the disease in El Cacao.