



GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NIUE LAUNCHES 2025 STEPS SURVEY FACTSHEET

Alofi, Niue – 08 October 2025 - The Department of Health today officially launched the Niue STEPS Survey 2025 Factsheet, marking an important step forward in Niue's continued efforts to address and reduce the burden of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs).

The STEPwise approach to NCD risk factor surveillance (STEPS) Survey is part of a global World Health Organisation (WHO) initiative, implemented in partnership with the WHO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Niue successfully conducted its second STEPS Survey starting in March and ending in May 2025, covering all villages across the island. The first survey was completed in 2011. The Factsheet presents key findings providing valuable evidence to guide health planning, policy development, and community action to improve the health and wellbeing of Niuean's.

Dr. Wendy Snowdon, WHO Representative for Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Cook Islands, and American Samoa, presented the STEPS Survey 2025 results to key stakeholders who were in attendance, including Heads of Government Departments, Village Council members from Makefu, Liku, Hakupu, Vaiea and Tamakautoga, and officials from the Department of Health.

The STEPS Survey collected data on both behavioral and physiological risk factors for NCDs. This includes tobacco use, harmful alcohol consumption, unhealthy diets (such as high salt and sodium intake), physical inactivity, overweight and obesity, raised blood pressure, raised blood glucose, and abnormal blood lipids.

A total of 726 adults aged 15 to 69 years participated out of the targeted 1,029. The assessment included questionnaires, physical measurements, and blood samples. The overall response rate was 71% for Steps 1 and 2, and 70% for Step 3.

The survey revealed several concerning trends. Current tobacco use and smoking combined stood at 38%, while 19% of respondents reported using electronic cigarettes, with 1 out of 4 people exposed to second hand smoking at home and 1 out of 3 exposed to second hand smoking in the work place. A striking 98% identified as current alcohol drinkers. Dietary habits also showed that 92% of participants do not consume enough fruits and vegetables. In terms of physiological health, nine out of ten people are either overweight or obese, while four out of ten have hypertension. The mean blood pressure for both men and women is slightly above normal, with mean blood cholesterol at 4.6 mmol/L for men (within a healthy range) and 5.0 mmol/L for women (at the upper limit). Additionally, one in three people were found to have raised fasting blood glucose or are currently on medication for diabetes.

Key lessons from the implementation of the survey, included training local health workers to lead data collection, simplifying survey language to increase understanding, and introducing new modules such as oral health and cervical screening. Providing preliminary findings to communities, which was made possible by the quick turnaround time of the WHO Team's analysis and summary of the data, serves to foster collaborative partnerships and trust.

The Minister for Health, Hon. Sonya Talagi expressed appreciation to the Department of Health and the Public Health Division for their dedication and commitment to ensuring the success of the STEPS programme. “Although we did not reach our target numbers, I applaud the hard work and early mornings spent travelling to the villages. The success of this programme is a result of the strong collaboration between the Department of Health, village councils, and our communities,” said Minister Talagi.

The findings from the 2025 STEPS Survey will support evidence-based health initiatives, enabling stronger policies and community programmes to address Niue’s growing NCD burden.

END

For further information, please contact:

Minerva Ikimau, Director of Health, Department of Health, Email: Minerva.Ikimau@gov.nu

Anzee Mougavalu, GON Communications Officer, Email: NiueGovernment.Media@gov.nu