



**REPLACE TRANS FAT: AN ACTION PACKAGE TO ELIMINATE  
INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS-FATTY ACIDS**

# **MODULE 5: CREATE**

**How-to guide for creating trans fat awareness**



**World Health  
Organization**

REPLACE trans fat: an action package to eliminate industrially produced trans-fatty acids.  
Module 5: Create. How-to guide for creating trans fat awareness

ISBN 978-92-4-001088-8 (electronic version)  
ISBN 978-92-4-001089-5 (print version)

This publication was originally published under WHO reference number WHO/NMH/NHD/19.16.

© **World Health Organization 2020**

Some rights reserved. This work is available under the Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO; <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo>).

Under the terms of this licence, you may copy, redistribute and adapt the work for non-commercial purposes, provided the work is appropriately cited, as indicated below. In any use of this work, there should be no suggestion that WHO endorses any specific organization, products or services. The use of the WHO logo is not permitted. If you adapt the work, then you must license your work under the same or equivalent Creative Commons licence. If you create a translation of this work, you should add the following disclaimer along with the suggested citation: “This translation was not created by the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO is not responsible for the content or accuracy of this translation. The original English edition shall be the binding and authentic edition”.

Any mediation relating to disputes arising under the licence shall be conducted in accordance with the mediation rules of the World Intellectual Property Organization (<http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/mediation/rules/>).

**Suggested citation.** REPLACE trans fat: an action package to eliminate industrially produced trans-fatty acids. Module 5: Create. How-to guide for creating trans fat awareness. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo).

**Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) data.** CIP data are available at <http://apps.who.int/iris>.

**Sales, rights and licensing.** To purchase WHO publications, see <http://apps.who.int/bookorders>. To submit requests for commercial use and queries on rights and licensing, see <http://www.who.int/about/licensing>.

**Third-party materials.** If you wish to reuse material from this work that is attributed to a third party, such as tables, figures or images, it is your responsibility to determine whether permission is needed for that reuse and to obtain permission from the copyright holder. The risk of claims resulting from infringement of any third-party-owned component in the work rests solely with the user.

**General disclaimers.** The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

The mention of specific companies or of certain manufacturers' products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by WHO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. Errors and omissions excepted, the names of proprietary products are distinguished by initial capital letters.

All reasonable precautions have been taken by WHO to verify the information contained in this publication. However, the published material is being distributed without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied. The responsibility for the interpretation and use of the material lies with the reader. In no event shall WHO be liable for damages arising from its use.

# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	3
REPLACE action package	4
<b>1.</b> Background	6
<b>2.</b> Compile evidence base	6
<b>3.</b> Generate broad government buy-in for policy change	7
<b>4.</b> Engage other stakeholders	8
<b>5.</b> Develop media engagement strategies	8
<b>6.</b> Develop an action plan	14
<b>7.</b> Implement the plan	15
<b>8.</b> Monitor and evaluate progress	15
References	15
<b>ANNEX 1.</b> Sample information sheet	16
<b>ANNEX 2.</b> Sample communications action plan	17

## WEB RESOURCES

- Customizable TFA public service announcement (PSA)
- Example media action plan to run and promote PSA

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The REPLACE modules benefited from the dedication, support and contributions of a number of experts from the World Health Organization (WHO); Resolve to Save Lives (an initiative of Vital Strategies); Vital Strategies; Global Health Advocacy Incubator (a programme of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids); and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. WHO thanks the contributing organizations and individuals for their technical inputs to the development of some or all of the modules of the REPLACE action package. WHO also thanks the numerous international experts who contributed their valuable time and vast knowledge to the development of these modules.



## REPLACE ACTION PACKAGE

Elimination of industrially produced *trans*-fatty acids (TFA) from the global food supply by 2023 is a priority target of the World Health Organization (WHO). The REPLACE action package provides a strategic approach to eliminating industrially produced TFA from national food supplies, with the goal of global elimination by 2023. The package comprises:

- › an overarching technical document that provides a rationale and framework for this integrated approach to TFA elimination;
- › six modules; and
- › additional web resources to facilitate implementation.

The REPLACE modules provide practical, step-by-step implementation information to support governments to eliminate industrially produced TFA from their national food supplies. To achieve successful elimination, governments should implement best-practice legal measures (outlined in modules 3 and 6). Strategic actions outlined in the other modules are designed to support this goal, but it may not be necessary to implement each module.

The modules will be most useful to national governments, including policy-makers, food control or safety authorities, and subnational government bodies that advocate for, and enforce, policies relating to nutrition or food safety. Other audiences that may find these modules and accompanying web resources useful include civil society organizations, academic and research institutions, nutrition scientists and laboratories, and food industry associations and food companies.

## MODULES OF THE REPLACE ACTION PACKAGE

SIX STRATEGIC ACTION AREAS		OBJECTIVE
<b>RE</b>	<b>REVIEW</b> dietary sources of industrially produced TFA and the landscape for required policy change	Introduce the REPLACE action package, and provide guidance on initial scoping activities and drafting of a country roadmap for TFA elimination. Initial scoping activities rely on information that is already known, or can be obtained through desk review or discussions with key stakeholders, with reference to other modules as needed
<b>P</b>	<b>PROMOTE</b> the replacement of industrially produced TFA with healthier oils and fats	Describe oil and fatty acid profiles, and available replacement oils and fats, including feasibility considerations and possible interventions to promote healthier replacements
<b>L</b>	<b>LEGISLATE</b> or enact regulatory actions to eliminate industrially produced TFA	Describe policy options and the current regulatory framework to eliminate industrially produced TFA. Provide guidance on assessment steps to guide policy design, and development of regulations suitable to the country context or updating of the existing legal framework to match the approach recommended by the World Health Organization
<b>A</b>	<b>ASSESS</b> and monitor TFA content in the food supply and changes in TFA consumption in the population	Describe the goals and methods for TFA assessment. Provide guidance on designing and carrying out a study of TFA in food and human samples
<b>C</b>	<b>CREATE</b> awareness of the negative health impact of TFA among policy-makers, producers, suppliers and the public	Describe approaches to advocacy and communications campaigns to support policy action. Provide guidance on key steps to design and implement effective advocacy and communications campaigns, and evaluate progress
<b>E</b>	<b>ENFORCE</b> compliance with policies and regulations	Describe TFA policy enforcement approaches, offences and roles. Provide guidance on mapping existing and creating new enforcement powers and mechanisms, public communications, penalties, funding and timelines

# 1. BACKGROUND

Increasing awareness of the negative health impact of TFA consumption – and levels of exposure to industrially produced TFA – can help to advance the policy changes and industry actions that are needed to realize the goal of eliminating industrially produced TFA from the global food supply by 2023.

This module aims to guide government agencies as they advocate to advance TFA policy objectives. This includes developing communications to create an enabling environment and strengthen support for policy actions that strictly limit industrially produced TFA in the food supply. Guidance on communications relating to implementation and enforcement of policies is included in modules 6 and 2.

Governments should pursue a comprehensive policy change and develop a communications strategy when taking steps to eliminate TFA from the food supply. Plans should be evidence based, and strategically engage key decision-makers, industry and opinion leaders. This module outlines ways to do that.

## 2. COMPILE EVIDENCE BASE

Without a solid understanding of the nature of TFA-related challenges and opportunities for change, designing effective policy change and communications strategies will be difficult. Critical pieces of information to build public support for policy change include accepted facts and figures about public health impacts and lives saved, the costs of inaction, and proven solutions.

The following types of information are needed.

- › Up-to-date and credible data about the negative health impact of TFA
  - Potential sources: WHO's REPLACE web portal and peer-reviewed scientific publications.
- › If available, country-specific estimates of TFA content in foods and/or intake
  - Potential sources: Government food and nutrition-related databases and reports, Global Burden of Disease studies, peer-reviewed scientific publications, industry data on oils and fats. If information is not available, it may be worth investing in data collection early, because data are key to raising awareness (see also modules 1 and 4).
- › Information on evidence-based solutions and best practices for eliminating industrially produced TFA in food
  - Potential sources: REPLACE action package, and peer-reviewed scientific publications focused on health, nutrition and other related topics.
- › Analysis of existing laws and regulations relating to TFA
  - Potential sources: Online data sources such as the WHO Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action (GINA); parliamentary or legal libraries; and connections with decision-makers, technical leaders and legal experts (more information is in module 3).

Use the sample TFA Information Sheet (Annex 1) as a starting point for developing country-specific resources.

### 3. GENERATE BROAD GOVERNMENT BUY-IN FOR POLICY CHANGE

Before advocating for policy change, it is important to review the agency's role in the policy environment. What role can be played in advancing TFA policy? Why should the agency play a role in advancing the policy? There may be several reasons why the agency should advocate for policy change, including the anticipated impact of the policy on population health or specific programmes – for example, on noncommunicable diseases or nutrition. Advocating for TFA policy change could also help to secure and maintain the budget to address this critical public health issue.

Use the information gathered in modules 1 and 3 to outline the policy pathway and key milestones to achieve the policy goal.

#### ADVOCATE FOR POLICY CHANGE

To move TFA onto the policy agenda and through the policy-making process, it will be necessary to secure buy-in from relevant policy-makers and government leaders. Concerned government stakeholders can be informed and sensitized directly, as well as through external partners such as civil society advocates and health experts. Sharing information about the negative health impact of TFA and the benefits of policy action to eliminate TFA through the media is a complementary approach to ensure broad support (see section 4).

Information about the negative health impact of TFA should be shared with political decision-makers on an ongoing basis and in a variety of formats – this can be critical to convincing them of the need to support TFA elimination measures. Ensuring that an effective communications strategy is in place for the release and advancement of TFA policies can also help.

The most senior official in the lead agency should facilitate the initial engagement with political decision-makers, supported by senior staff and subject matter experts.

When meeting with legislators or officials from other government agencies, be prepared and well informed. Serve as a resource and make it easy for them to support TFA elimination measures. Offer to:

- arrange in-person meetings, phone calls, briefings or workshops on TFA elimination;
- provide background research, fact sheets or policy briefs on TFA;
- secure TFA expertise to inform policy development;
- draft or provide feedback on policy language;
- testify at hearings or present at conferences on the health harms of TFA;
- mobilize audiences for legislative hearings and to provide public testimony;
- use personal stories to humanize the need for TFA elimination measures;
- generate positive media coverage for efforts to address TFA consumption – compile media stories and provide them to policy-makers to show public support; and
- engage in joint strategizing with government partners to advance policy throughout each step of the process.

## 4. ENGAGE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Engaging not just with policy-makers but also with influential civil society and industry representatives can be critical to the elimination of industrially produced TFA. In-person contact can help to convince these key players of the need to advance TFA elimination measures.

### CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society organizations can help to expand the scale and diversity of support for TFA elimination measures. In many countries, civil society may formally support and assist the government with:

- › drafting policies;
- › reviewing or providing comments on policies;
- › monitoring policies.

Civil society organizations and researchers with an interest in noncommunicable diseases, reducing incidence of cardiovascular disease, improving access to healthy foods or consumer protection may include nutrition societies, medical associations, public health and consumer rights groups, and academic institutions. Meeting directly with leaders of these institutions may help to mobilize their support.

### INDUSTRY

It is important to engage with relevant industries when implementing policy change that will affect them. Even if they ultimately do not support policy change, understanding their objectives is important. Further, finding industry allies can be useful to counter opposition. When meeting with representatives from industry, gathering the following information in advance of the meeting would be helpful:

- › available and feasible replacement oils and fats, and technologies (see module 2);
- › the impact of potential future policies on the cost and availability of certain oils, if possible;
- › examples from other countries or cities in the region, or trading partners, that have already successfully transitioned away from partially hydrogenated oils, and how industry responded;
- › how government and civil society will support the transition to replacement oils through education, training and/or targeted technical assistance.

There may be resistance to making any change to the status quo – for example, companies might recommend an extension of the time frame for compliance or a change in the requirements. An independent technical expert can provide an impartial assessment of technical concerns raised by industry.

## 5. DEVELOP MEDIA ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The effective use of media is an integral element of a policy advocacy campaign. Working strategically with the media can help to create a favourable environment for policy change.

Developing clear communications objectives will help to achieve policy objectives. For instance, one of the communications objectives may be to double coverage of the negative health impact of TFA in the 10 most popular news programmes viewed by relevant political decision-makers.

Engaging stakeholders through the media can raise awareness of the negative health impact of TFA and mobilize support for TFA elimination measures within the public and among political decision-makers. Key stakeholders, such as policy-makers and key opinion leaders, can be drawn



to the cause through the media. At the same time, innovative communications activities can build public awareness and inspire people to take direct action.

## 5.1 SET TARGET AUDIENCES

Identifying target audiences to engage is the starting point for developing a media plan.

Primary audiences are those that are critical to the achievement of TFA policy objectives. They may include food regulators, the minister of health, and high-level government officials focused on issues relating to nutrition and noncommunicable diseases.

Secondary audiences are individuals and groups that have the potential to influence the primary audience. They may be key opinion leaders, celebrities or people with a strong passion about the issue who can capture the attention of the primary audiences and inspire them to address industrially produced TFA in food.

## 5.2 MAP THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Media mapping during the early planning stages of the campaign can help to channel resources to the most promising activities by providing clarity on how best to reach target audiences, such as policy-makers, key opinion leaders and the general public.

Comprehensive media mapping involves developing a landscape of the channels available in the country, city or region. It can also include research into audience behaviour, specifically focusing on what channels target audiences consume.

Research into available communications channels should generate information on:

- › profiles of the main radio stations, TV channels, newspapers and news websites
- › the most popular and trusted sources of news and information
- › media outlets that command significant national, regional, ethnic and religious audiences
- › media outlets that have strong influence on the opinions of political decision-makers
- › contact details for each media outlet
- › languages to use in both local and national broadcasts
- › popular social media channels.

Mapping should be used in decision-making about each tactic or activity that will be conducted in the campaign. For instance, if the activity is engaging the public in a particular city to attend an event or submit feedback on a policy proposal, media mapping should be used to understand which channels are consumed in that area. This can potentially save resources; for example, spending a large amount of money on a TV campaign can be avoided if mapping indicates that most people prefer social media.

## 5.3 BUILD A CONTACTS REGISTRY

Maintaining an up-to-date list of media contacts ensures that, when the agency is ready to engage with the media, media contacts and their stances on the issue will already be known. A lot of work goes into activities aimed at attracting media coverage, so it is important to know who to contact to pitch a story when the agency is ready to “go live”.

If the agency is working in partnership with other governmental or nongovernmental entities, a media contact registry will help to define which organization has primary contact with journalists or

editors. This will result in less overlap and ensure consistency in approach.

## 5.4 DEVELOP MESSAGES

Identifying target audiences, formulating key messages, and choosing the most effective spokesperson and channel to communicate these messages are all important pieces of the campaign. Once target audiences are set, develop convincing messages specific to each. To formulate key messages, answer the following questions:

- › What is the problem?
- › Why is the problem important to the target audience?
- › What is the action that needs to be taken?
- › When does this action need to be taken by?

Box 1 lists some sample key messages.

## 5.5 USE SPOKESPEOPLE

### BOX 1. SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES

The following sample messages feature global rather than location-specific data. They should be adapted to country contexts and audiences such as lawmakers, food regulators, and other key decision-makers and influencers.

**Trans fat is a harmful food compound that causes heart attacks and death, and is added to our foods without our knowledge or consent.**

- › Trans fat is a human-made compound used in food that clogs your arteries and causes heart attacks and death.
- › Trans fat is used mostly in packaged food to extend shelf life, and for deep frying because trans fat doesn't have to be changed as often as natural oils.
- › Trans fat kills more than 500,000 people around the world each year (one death every second).
- › More than 6 billion people – 90% of the world's population – live in countries that don't protect their citizens from industrially produced trans fat in their food supply.

**Industrially produced trans fat can be eliminated without changing the taste or cost of food; only your heart will know the difference.**

- › Trans fat can easily be replaced in most foods with healthier oils.

- › A growing number of countries are following the World Health Organization's call to eliminate industrially produced trans fat from their food supply by 2023.
- › The most effective and consistent way to eliminate industrially produced trans fat in food is through legislative or regulatory action. Denmark was the first country to limit industrially produced trans fat to 2% of total fat content in all foods, including imported and restaurant foods. A different approach was adopted by Canada, the United States and Thailand, which banned partially-hydrogenated oils, the main source of industrially produced trans fat.
- › Food companies around the world have successfully replaced trans fat with healthier alternatives without harming business.

**Eliminating industrially produced trans fat will save lives and money.**

- › Eliminating industrially produced trans fat in food will make our food healthier. This will reduce disability and premature death from noncommunicable diseases, one of the health targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 3.4).
- › When the world meets the World Health Organization's goal to eliminate trans fat from the global food supply by 2023, it will mark the first elimination of a dietary risk factor for heart disease.

Spokespeople are individuals who deliver messages in support of campaign goals and objectives. When delivering a message, it is important to determine who will be the most credible source in the eyes of the target audience. If people do not trust the person who delivers a message, the actual message does not get through effectively. First-hand knowledge of the problem, technical expertise, celebrity, relationship with the target audience or seniority within an organization matter more.

It is also important to have diversity in who delivers the messages. Combining different voices can show widespread support for the elimination of industrially produced TFA. For instance, combining two spokespersons who complement one another – one who is knowledgeable about the subject matter and the other knowledgeable about the target audience – can have a great impact on target audiences.

Start by looking at the list of target audiences. For each audience, select who the most relevant spokesperson would be. Who will that person or group trust and find credible? Can the spokesperson demonstrate knowledge and insight into the health harms of TFA and the need to eliminate industrially produced TFA from the food supply? Will the spokesperson refrain from political comments unrelated to the issue?

Consider these issues for potential spokespersons both within the agency and externally, such as a key opinion leader or someone personally affected by excessive TFA consumption.

For those external to the agency, consider potential risk and reward. For example, it might be extremely beneficial to the campaign's public profile to engage a celebrity chef or medical professional as a spokesperson, but there is also a risk that this person may stray "off message" or that coverage of the media event will centre on the person and not the issue.

Provide spokespersons with necessary briefing materials, and monitor media coverage to adjust the strategy for using spokespersons. Prepare testimonials in support of TFA elimination measures that can be released to advance communications and policy change objectives, as needed.

## 5.6 PRIORITIZE COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

The media can raise awareness of the negative health impact of TFA, generate support for the elimination of industrially produced TFA and motivate people to act in support of the policy. The type of engagement should be based on the target audience and media landscape assessment.

Communications activities may involve:

- › earned media coverage, which usually requires convincing a media outlet to report on industrially produced TFA elimination;
- › paid media coverage, which entails paying for a media platform to present content on industrially produced TFA elimination; or
- › owned media coverage, which involves creating and disseminating content through media channels that organizations control directly, such as a publication, website or blog.

Box 2 provides more detail on these three platforms.

### EARNED MEDIA

Earned media relating to TFA elimination can be generated in a number of ways. Events such as a press conference or a policy consultation may generate media coverage. Research data, particularly on the levels of TFA in popular foods, may also generate media attention. In general, to generate earned media coverage, think like a journalist and pitch compelling stories.

Creative story elements might include:

## BOX 2. THREE PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

EARNED MEDIA	PAID MEDIA	OWNED MEDIA
<p>Coverage received through word of mouth or as a result of reaching out to the media, such as:</p> <p>newspaper, TV or radio coverage as a result of a consultation meeting on TFA or the release of monitoring data</p> <p>social media (Twitter, Facebook) posts from traditional media and key opinion leaders</p> <p>editorials and opinion articles</p>	<p>Media opportunities purchased through known media channels, such as:</p> <p>paid editorial in a newspaper or magazine</p> <p>advertisements or public service announcements on the health harms of TFA consumption</p> <p>social media (Twitter, Facebook) advertising “boost” options to increase distribution</p> <p>out-of-home advertising such as billboards</p>	<p>Content that is fully under campaign collaborators’ control, such as:</p> <p>organization’s social media channels</p> <p>organization’s newsletter</p> <p>organization’s website or blog</p> <p>organization’s YouTube channel</p> <p>SMS platform</p>
<p><b>PROS</b></p> <p>Appears legitimate because it is the voice of the media, not directly from campaign collaborators</p> <p>Potential for wide reach</p> <p>Potential for further engagement with journalists interested in TFA issues</p> <p>Can be leveraged in future owned or paid media, as well as in advocacy activities</p> <p>Opportunity to engage influential journalists in the debate</p>	<p>Ability to control the message</p> <p>Ability to control when and how output is presented</p> <p>Ability to leverage attention on other policy change and communications activities</p> <p>Can reach a very targeted group (by age, income, location etc.)</p> <p>Can have a large reach</p>	<p>Full control of messaging, timing and editorial process</p> <p>Can include organizational branding</p> <p>Ability to easily track success</p>
<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>No control over the message</p> <p>Unpredictable</p> <p>Can be difficult to gain attention from media to obtain earned media opportunities</p>	<p>Not considered to be genuine coverage; perceived to be advertisement</p> <p>Does not engender buy-in from media organization; may not lead to further (earned) media coverage</p> <p>Requires repetition to have significant impact, which can result in high costs</p>	<p>Not considered to be genuine media coverage</p> <p>Can suffer from limited exposure, if organization’s media channels do not have wide reach</p> <p>Does not attract prestige of “media brand”</p> <p>May not be accessed by key stakeholders</p>

- › an event, data or report that provides new information to a reporter and the outlet's audience
- › compelling visuals
- › sharp sound bites (or succinct quotes that convey key messages)
- › easy-to-understand statistics
- › authentic voices of real people who have been affected by heart disease.

Box 3 describes the approach used in Denmark.

### BOX 3. HOW DENMARK WENT FROM TFA ASSESSMENT TO POLICY CHANGE

After a study was published in the early 1990s showing that TFA consumption increases the risk of coronary heart disease (Willett et al., 1993), the Danish Nutrition Council began to monitor TFA levels in food and TFA intake (Stender et al., 1995). In 2001, it published a report indicating that more than 50,000 Danes were at high risk for coronary heart disease based on their TFA intake (Stender & Dyerberg, 2001). The Danish Nutrition Council announced that major sources of industrially produced TFA in Denmark included margarine, packaged snack products, bakery products and confectionery items. These findings attracted significant media attention around the dangers of industrially produced TFA in Denmark, leading to popular support to limit these fats. In 2003, Denmark became the first country in the world to take legal action to restrict industrially produced TFA, passing a law limiting industrially produced TFA to no more than 2% of fats and oils in food products.

### PAID MEDIA

Paid media can help to raise public awareness and build support for the elimination of industrially produced TFA. A sample public service announcement (PSA) is available in the REPLACE web resources; it can be adapted to help raise awareness and build support for TFA policy action.

Box 4 describes India's experience.

### OWNED MEDIA

#### BOX 4. INDIA'S CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE TFA IN THE FOOD SUPPLY

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched a mass media campaign in November 2018 calling for the elimination of industrially produced TFA in the food supply. The 30-second PSA ([https://youtu.be/A\\_Ku9npMfoE](https://youtu.be/A_Ku9npMfoE)) supports the FSSAI's target of eliminating industrially produced TFA in fats and oils by 2022, a year ahead of WHO's global target for eliminating industrially produced TFA. The FSSAI launched the PSA at a press release, garnering substantial media coverage spanning broadcast, print and online outlets. The PSA was broadcasted in 17 languages for four weeks on major digital platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Hotstar and Voot. In December 2018, following the campaign launch, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare approved the release of a draft regulation that lowers the existing TFA limit (5% of total fats) to 2% in fats and oils.



Owned media, such as a website or social media channel, can be leveraged to speak directly to supporters, and mobilize them to take action. A detailed, well-designed website can be helpful to journalists covering health and nutrition issues, as well as to other stakeholders who may be interested to learn more.

## 6. DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

Combine all the planning elements into one comprehensive action plan, which will serve as a roadmap for collaborators. Use the Communications Action Plan (Annex 2) to develop key activities.

Action plans can differ in format and level of detail, but at a minimum include:

- › goals and objectives;
- › target audiences, including their values, interests, information needs and concerns, and the best communication channels to reach them;
- › concerned stakeholders and their planned involvement;
- › timeline for relevant policy processes and accompanying communications strategies; and
- › core collaborators and agreed process for communicating and making decisions.

An action plan may also include a detailed roadmap that is based on selected communications strategies and anticipated communications. It should highlight:

- › planned activities with timelines, including plans to engage target audiences directly and through paid, earned and owned media;
- › roles and responsibilities for carrying out the activities;
- › third-party validators and spokespeople who can credibly amplify key messages and mobilize support;
- › required resources for the activities and who is providing them;
- › indicators for monitoring activities and tracking progress.

It is crucial to integrate communications activities into the roadmap, as communications can help to build awareness of the negative health impact of TFA, empower consumers to make healthy food choices and, ultimately, create an environment for policy changes that eliminate industrially produced TFA from the food supply. Different target audiences – whether they are political decision-makers, journalists or community members – have different communication styles and needs; the materials and messages that work for one group will not necessarily work for another. Design targeted, persuasive messages and identify the most compelling spokespeople. Make sure to base communications activities on the most up-to-date and accurate information, and consider commissioning additional research if credible information on TFA is lacking. Message research such as focus groups or polling can help to ensure that the most compelling messages are chosen to engage target audiences.

Monitor traditional and social media engagement on TFA issues to ensure that collaborators know what is being said about them and can respond quickly if needed. This should highlight any major dangers to TFA elimination measures and inspire actions to mitigate them. The roadmap should also outline how collaborators will respond – including specific roles and responsibilities – if a crisis arises.

## 7. IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

Once a strategic communications action plan is in place, it is time to implement it. Naturally, unanticipated opportunities and setbacks may arise that collaborators will need to respond to rapidly. These might involve:

- › timing – windows of opportunity to realize policy or communications objectives may open suddenly; it is crucial to be ready and able to use such opportunities to maximum effect; and
- › disagreement – respond immediately and proactively to tactics that may jeopardize campaign efforts, and maintain regular contact with policy champions and influencers who are familiar with such situations.

## 8. MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS

Monitoring and evaluating the progress of policy change and communications efforts is essential and ensures that planned actions are taking place at the correct time. It also helps collaborators understand whether they are gaining support over the course of a campaign. A good monitoring plan can show which strategies are working best and which may need to be adjusted.

Ways to monitor and evaluate progress include:

- › regular collection of information to measure progress according to indicators outlined in the action plan, including media monitoring;
- › after-action debriefs following big events, such as the launch of a report or event with parliamentarians, to discuss what went well, what should be improved and any important outcomes; and
- › periodic, routine check-ins to make sure activities are progressing according to plan and resulting in the desired outcomes.

If these actions reveal that the government is not making steady progress, take the time to ask why and be prepared to make changes. This may include shifting strategies, updating messages and spokespeople, or planning new actions to counter emerging opposition. It may also involve adjusting timelines or responsibilities. If a collaborator is not able to carry out their assigned roles or planned actions, consider shifting responsibility to keep moving forward.

## REFERENCES:

Stender S, Dyerberg J. (2001). The importance of trans-fatty acids for health. Update 2001. *Ugeskr Laeger.*, 163(17):2349–53.

Stender S, Dyerberg J, Hølmer G, Ovesen L, Sandström B. (1995). The influence of trans fatty acids on health: a report from the Danish Nutrition Council. *Clin Sci (Lond).*, 88(4):375–92.

Willett WC, Stampfer MJ, Manson JE, Colditz GA, Speizer FE, Rosner BA, et al. (1993). Intake of trans fatty acids and risk of coronary heart disease among women. *Lancet*, 341(8845):581–5.

## ANNEX 1.

# SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

[Enter logo here]

## ELIMINATION OF INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS FAT: THE TIME IS NOW

- › Industrially produced trans fat is a harmful compound.
- › Trans fat clogs arteries and increases the risk of coronary heart disease.
- › Trans fat is responsible for more than a half million deaths around the world every year from heart disease.
- › In places where industrially produced trans fat has been eliminated, deaths and hospital admissions from heart disease have decreased.

## INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS FAT IS HUMAN-MADE AND FULLY REPLACEABLE

- › Eliminating trans fat from the food supply and replacing it with healthier alternatives is feasible and is happening in many countries around the world and in the [region].
- › Denmark eliminated industrially produced trans fat in 2003; since then, more than 25 countries have passed laws or regulations that aim to eliminate or reduce trans fat.
- › Elimination of industrially produced trans fat has not led to a rise in prices, or a change in taste or consumer satisfaction.

## [COUNTRY NAME] CAN ELIMINATE INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS FAT THROUGH [POLICY CHOICE]

- › The World Health Organization has called for global elimination of trans fat by 2023.
- › High levels of trans fat have been found in common foods such as [enter any available data].
- › In [country name], trans fat is responsible for [number] of deaths from heart disease.



## ANNEX 2.

### SAMPLE COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN

This document provides a sample template for governments to plan activities to generate earned media coverage that promotes the elimination of industrially produced *trans*-fatty acids (TFA) from their country's food supply. The timing and nature of planned activities should be based on national context and align with relevant policy objectives.

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Campaign goal:** Industrially produced TFA is eliminated from [country's] food supply by 2023.

**Policy objective:** [Government agency] passes policies banning partially hydrogenated oils OR limiting TFA to 2% of total fat content in all foods by [date].

**Communications objective:** Earned media coverage of TFA's negative health effects doubles in the 10 most popular news publications and broadcast news programs consumed by the campaign's primary target audience.

#### TARGET AUDIENCE

**Primary:** federal food regulatory agency; minister of health; ministry of health's leaders on noncommunicable diseases, cardiovascular diseases and nutrition issues; head of state

**Secondary:** parliamentary leaders and health committee chairpersons; leaders of [country's] medical association, nutrition society, consumer and patient rights groups, and academic, research and religious institutions; prominent athletes, artists, chefs and businesspeople

[illegible]





**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Department of Nutrition and Food Safety**

World Health Organization

Avenue Appia 20, CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

Fax: +41 22 791 4156

Email: [nutrition@who.int](mailto:nutrition@who.int)

[www.who.int/teams/nutrition-and-food-safety](http://www.who.int/teams/nutrition-and-food-safety)

