



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

# **MODULE 5: CREATE**

How-to guide for creating trans fat awareness



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.

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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.

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

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

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 communucations 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
- > 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 decisionmakers 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.

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