

PSM submission to the Midterm Review of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025

The Private Sector Mechanism (PSM)ⁱ welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the biennial report on the implementation of the Nutrition Decade of the UN Secretary General to the General Assembly. The PSM is an open platform providing a permanent seat for private enterprises right across the agri-food value chain, from farmers, to input providers, to cooperatives, processors, SMEs and food companies.

The PSM acts as a focal point for thousands of businesses around the world that are keen to share the following achievements identified over the first half of the Nutrition Decade. While not meant as an exhaustive list, the following illustrate the types of actions implemented by the private sector community under the Nutrition Decade:

Company-wide commitments:

In 2008 CEOs of leading food and non-alcoholic beverage companies established the International Food & Beverage Alliance (IFBA)ⁱⁱ publicly committing their support for the World Health Organization's (WHO) 2004 Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, and pledging to work together to implement a set of global commitments designed to address the rising challenges of obesity, malnutrition and diet-related non-communicable diseases.

The specific commitments fall under four general categories:

- **Product Formulation and Innovation:** Improve and innovate products with the goal of making available food choices that help people eat healthy, balanced diets
- **Nutrition Information:** Provide clear, fact-based nutrition information to enable consumers to make informed choices
- **Responsible Marketing to Children:** Extend responsible advertising and marketing initiatives to children globally
- **Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles:** Promote balanced diets, healthy lifestyles and increased physical activity in the workplace and in communities around the world

IFBA's commitments to improve global health are also inextricably linked with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and especially the achievement of zero hunger through companies' actions to improve food security, develop fortified foods and beverages, promote sustainable supply chains, create sustainable food systems and reduce food waste; and the achievement of good health and well-being for all through companies' actions to improve the nutrition of foods and beverages, reduce calories, provide clear nutrition information, restrict marketing to children, promote healthy lifestyles, and offer workplace wellness programmes.

IFBA companies are transforming their food and beverage portfolios – improving the nutrition of products to meet diverse and changing consumer needs and innovating for the future; and working to alleviate undernutrition by fortifying products with essential micronutrients and reducing the risk of malnutrition and obesity by improving access to nutritious foods.

Milestones from commitments over the past five years:2016:

- IFBA adopts commitment to phase out industrially-produced trans fat (iTFA) by 2018. At the end of 2018, iTFA had been removed from 99.6% of IFBA companies' global portfolios.
- IFBA companies represented by the Argentina Food and Beverage Industry (COPAL) and the Government of Argentina sign a collaboration agreement to promote healthy and balanced diets.

2017:

- IFBA launches the National Movement for Health and Wellbeing in Brazil.
- IFBA delivers a Charter for the Health of Mexicans to Jose Narro, Secretary of Health.
- IFBA commits to take action on obesity and noncommunicable diseases in Latin America.
- GCC FBA commits support to the Government of Abu Dhabi to combat childhood obesity.
- 45.5% of IFBA members' global portfolios, on an aggregated basis, met companies' criteria for better-for-you products.
- An industry commitment in Canada – The Balance Calories Initiative – to reduce calories in non-alcoholic beverages by 20% by 2025, reports a calorie reduction of 10.2% at the end of 2017.

2018:

- IFBA publicly commits support for WHO's call to eliminate iTFA by 2023.
- IFBA achieves improved nutrition information on-pack:
 - 98% of companies' products globally display nutritional information on-pack
 - 97% of companies' products globally display GDAs on-pack
 - 91% of companies' products globally display calories front-of-pack

2019:

- IFBA publicly commits to align its global standard on iTFA phase-out with WHO's recommendation for a maximum iTFA threshold by 2023.
- The European soft drinks industry on track to meet its voluntary commitment to reduce added sugars by 10% by 2020. A mid-term evaluation found the average sugar level in European soft drinks has been reduced by 11.9% from 2015-2017.
- IFBA adopts a set of Guiding Principles for Multistakeholder Engagement

Partnerships to Improve Global Health:

IFBA's work is based on the fundamental principle that improving global health requires the participation of a wide range of public and private stakeholders and a common belief that good partnerships can deliver positive change.

2016:

- Brazil—School Beverage Guidelines: voluntary commitment to cease sales of drinks containing added sugars in elementary schools and update voluntary restrictions on advertising to children.

- Colombia—Beverage Industry Commitment on Sugar Reduction: to provide small or reduced sizes and/or low or no-calorie options, and portion guidance.
- South Africa—Healthy Food Options Forum: developed by industry with a mandate to partner with government on a programme aimed at promoting healthy habits. A 2016-2020 action plan with measurable targets developed.
- Thailand—Healthier Choices Front-of-Pack Logo: developed in collaboration with industry and the public sector, government launches new logo to help consumers identify healthier food options.

2017:

- Canada—SmartLabel: a digital tool providing consumers an easy way to access detailed product information via the web, or scanning QR codes on packages while shopping is launched following successful launch of the programme in the U.S.A. in 2015.
- Europe—School Beverage Guidelines: European soft drinks industry commits to voluntarily cease sales of drinks containing added sugars in secondary schools, impacting more than 40 million young people in 28 countries, by the end of 2018, expanding on its 2006 pledge not to sell beverages in primary schools.
- New Zealand—Healthy Kids Industry Pledge: public-private partnership to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity. In June 2018, at the request of the Minister of Health, this work moved to the Food Industry Taskforce on Addressing Factors Contributing to Obesity.
- Singapore—Beverage Industry Sugar Reduction Pledge: voluntary commitment by 70% of the pre-packaged sugar-sweetened beverages market to reduce the amount of sugar to 12% or lower by 2020.
- U.K.: Sugar Reduction and Reformulation Programme: Building on the success of the PHRD, Public Health England established a wider reformulation programme in collaboration with industry - the 2014 salt targets were re-published and reduction targets for added sugar and calories in food and beverage categories that contribute most to the intakes of children under 18 were established.

2018:

- Asean—ARoFINN (rebranded as evolve): a public-private partnership to tackle obesity, malnutrition and NCDs established by the Singapore government and Food Industry Asia in 2015 undertakes work on two pilot programmes in select schools in Indonesia and Thailand to improve nutrition education
- Australia – The Healthy Food Partnership: a collaboration among government, the public health sector and the food industry providing a mechanism for collective, voluntary action consisting of five working groups, including a Reformulation Working Group that in 2018 developed food category definitions and draft targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugars to be incorporated into a scheme to be implemented in 2019.
- India – Eat Right India: a public-private partnership to encourage citizens to improve their health and well-being, with both demand and supply-side interventions including product reformulation, the provision and promotion of healthier food options, introduction of nutrition information on menus; and phase-out iTFA by 2022.
- Brazil – Technical Cooperation Agreement on the Development of Local Actions for Promoting Healthy Lifestyles: the third phase on sugar reduction is agreed with a target

to remove 144,000 tonnes of sugar in more than 1,147 products by 2022. Phase 1 focused on the elimination of iTFA from the food supply (completed in 2016 with 100% removal) and phase 2 set a target to remove 28,000 tonnes of sodium by 2020 – at the end of 2017, 18,047 tonnes of sodium had been removed from food products.

- Spain—Collaboration Plan for the Improvement of Food and Beverages: government/industry collaboration to reduce 10% of the median content of added sugars, salt and saturated fats in more than 3,500 products by 2020.

2019:

- Nigeria and Pakistan: pilot projects launched in partnership with the SUN Business Network, Resolve to Save Lives and WHO to encourage and support LMICs to phase out iTFA by 2023.

Product Research:

The National Dairy Council (NDC) has conducted product research focused on ensuring healthy lives across all ages. The following are a few key reformulation achievements during the past five years:

- Sugar reduction: NDC research has focused on sweet taste perception in milk, yogurt, and ice cream to ensure consumers will like reduced sugar options and continue to benefit from dairy's nine essential nutrients.
- Protein reformulations: filtration research conducted by NDC has enabled the production of highly concentrated milk and whey products and ingredients that can be used to create customized food and beverage products to meet the nutritional needs of under and over nourished individuals.
- Sodium reduction: while sodium reduction can be challenging due to its multiple roles related to texture, flavor, water activity and safety, NDC product research has identified a substitute. The substitute that comes from the liquid remaining after whey or milk undergoes ultrafiltration, can be used to reduce overall sodium content of food product between 20-80%.
- Clean Label Reformulation: through NDC product research, milk can now be gently filtered to customize the nutritional components and how they function in the finished product. The result is dairy ingredients versatile enough to deliver clean label, while ensuring acceptable taste, function and nutrition to consumers.

United Nations Initiatives:

As members of the Steering Committee of the International Year of Pulses, the private sector took an active role in preparation for the 2016 International Year of Pulsesⁱⁱⁱ, which in turn was the catalyst for many successful outcomes.

Projects:

The following are a few examples of projects undertaken by our members:

Cargill and World Food Programme -- Healthy School Meals –
Support to Indonesian National School Meals Program

The partnership with WFP focused on school meal programs in Indonesia, where one third of children are chronically undernourished. The program strengthened the capacity of provincial and local governments and local NGOs to improve and expand school meals and purchases from local farmers, fishermen, shop owners, and communities, and to use it as a vehicle to promote improved health, hygiene and balanced diets.

Fuel Up to Play 60 program^{iv}: The program was founded by the National Dairy Council and the National Football League, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is in over 73,000 schools, reaching more than 38 million students. Fuel Up to Play 60 enables students to make small everyday changes around health and wellness.

Future 50 Foods^v: Unilever, through its Knorr brand partnered with WWF to launch foods that are nutritious, have a lower impact on the environment, can grow in challenging environments and naturally replenish the soil and work as cover crops. Knorr is using its global brand power to make these foods accessible to consumers across the world and reached 500 million people in 6 months since its launch in February 2019.

ⁱ Formed in 1996 as an informal coalition of international trade associations involved in the agri-food sector, the IAFN is the elected focal point of the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) at the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Rome.

ⁱⁱ IFBA brings together the world's leading food and non-alcoholic beverage companies around a common goal of helping consumers achieve balanced diets and healthy lifestyles-see www.ifballiance.org.

ⁱⁱⁱ Further information available at <https://iyp2016.org/>

^{iv} Further information is available at www.FuelUpToPlay60.com.

^v Further information is available at <https://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/wwf-and-knorr-launch-future-50-foods>.