TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMEs TO REMOVE INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS FATTY ACIDS FROM FOOD PRODUCTS

Relevance To Nutrition

Industrially produced trans fatty acids (iTFA) are estimated to cause 540,000 deaths every year worldwide. In May 2018, the World Health Organization launched the REPLACE action package to support the elimination of iTFA from the global food supply by 2023. While significant progress has been achieved towards this goal, most emerging markets still have a long way to go towards iTFA elimination. To support these markets, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)/the SUN Business Network (SBN) and the International Food & Beverage Alliance (IFBA) are implementing a multi-stakeholder pilot project to support the replacement of iTFA among local companies based in Nigeria and Pakistan.

iTFA situation in Pakistan

Pakistan has the second highest per capita intake of iTFA in the world. Between 1990 and 2010, a 1.5% increase of iTFA consumption was reported. iTFA is associated with local products most notably Vanaspati Ghee and Bakery Products. The first national trans-fat limit inclusion was adopted in 2017 with a 10% limit (Standard specifications for Vanaspati). Hence, building on the current work of WHO, Heartfile and the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Reforms, and with financial support from “Resolve to Save Lives”, GAIN/SBN have commissioned a study on mapping the sources of iTFA and identifying potential and alternate solutions. Following the mapping exercise, a workshop will take place in November 2019 to support business to business (B2B) technical exchange on how to remove iTFA. The project is expected to support around 10 local companies achieve iTFA replacement in Pakistan and the tools and learnings will be shared across the country to support other companies as well.
Support SMEs to eliminate iTFA

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the primary target of this pilot project as they require capacity building and support to shift to alternate methods. While multinational corporations (MNCs) usually have the financial and technical capacity to adopt latest trends, SMEs that are transitioning from either producing partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) or using them as an ingredient in their products may need some additional support to move to TFA-free products. Most of these companies may not have the necessary machinery and equipment to adopt approaches such as interesterification or blending. SBN aims to facilitate this through connecting MNCs with SMEs to enable easier diffusion of technology and methods. Furthermore, the study will support iTFA replacement by local companies in emerging economies by publishing tools and lessons learned on the technical expertise transfer to enable easier replication.

KEY ACTIVITIES

**MAPPING TRANS FATTY ACIDS IN FOOD PRODUCTS IN PAKISTAN**
SBN/GAIN are conducting a mapping of iTFA in the food chains in Pakistan, this will support the selection of relevant local companies to engage in iTFA replacement.

**B2B TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP WITH iTFA AND FAT/OIL PRODUCERS**
The workshop will gather technical experts from IFBA as well as some public stakeholders to introduce iTFA health impact, the national context and the technical and cost aspects of replacement iTFA for local companies. The workshop will enable the identification of specific companies expected to achieve iTFA replacement by 2023.

**IFBA’s TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO SMEs ON iTFA REPLACEMENT**
"A set of around 10 companies willing to replace iTFA from their food chain will receive follow up technical assistance support to do so after the workshop. IFBA experts will provide this support."

**ADVOCACY AND B2B RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHENING**
Linking technology and ingredient sellers and technical services providers with SMEs to