Methodology Developed for Piloting the WHO Draft Tool in Brazil

Ministry of Health of Brazil
Food and Nutrition National Coordination

February, 2019
WORKSHOP

- August, 2018
- Organized by PAHO, in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh
- 30 participants (relevant governmental agencies and civil society organizations)
- Aims:
  - To discuss the pilot WHO-proposal with governmental officials and civil society actors;
  - To consider how the tool might be adapted to fit existing policy making frameworks and process in Brazil; and
  - To gain experience in piloting and adapting the tool at the country level.
- Conducted under “Chatham House” rule*

* On the understanding that statements and experiences shared within the workshop would not be cited outside that setting in a way that would identify the person concerned.
WORKSHOP

• Methodology
  • Dynamic constructive and collaborative, including presentations, small working groups and plenary discussions
  • Three days: introducing WHO draft tool and COI in nutrition policy, presentation of existent mechanisms to prevent and manage COI in some organizations, case studies discussion, and next steps.

• Methodology feedback
  • Participation of different institutions brought to the table a range of experiences and expertise
  • Small working group discussions were particularly valuable
  • ‘Chatham House’ rule facilitated an open and honest discussion.
In conclusion, it is a necessary and very useful tool to guide decision-making in nutrition policies, but it needs some adaptations to the realities of different countries.

WORKSHOP

• Piloting Tool Feedback

• It is overly complex and a little restrictive (many detailed steps) - difficult to implement in real-life (many requests for partnerships and meetings, few staff to respond in time)

• Suggestions to deal with real-life situations:
  • To build a simpler and shorter tool, based on the complete WHO tool
  • This tool must include key questions, could be built for general use by public agents and should be able to provide justifications to the decisions
  • Could be used as a first screening, before implementing the complete tool – excluding simple, obvious and serious cases

It is a necessary and very useful tool to guide and justifying decision-making in nutrition policies, specially for complex cases, but it needs some adaptations to the countries realities.
TRIAL OF ADAPTED TOOL

In response to the feedback from the workshop, PAHO finalized the draft ‘short tool’ which included simple, but critical questions related to:

- Actor alignment to nutrition, health and sustainable development recommendations and goals and their policies and practices;
- Engagement profile; and
- Risks and benefits

Brazilian Ministry of Health piloted the short tool with five teams from Food and Nutrition Coordination:

- We asked each team to indicate a staff member to participate and to choose one real-life case example that has happened recently to apply the short tool. They could use the complete tool to support their analysis, if necessary.
- Then, we shared results and short tool evaluation with each other, including the evaluation about the use of the tool and its questions.
In conclusion, it is a necessary and very useful tool to guide decision-making in nutrition policies, but it needs some adaptations to the realities of different countries.

TRIAL OF ADAPTED TOOL

The short tool was easier and more applicable to real-life than the complete tool. It is able to exclude simpler and obvious cases. However, we identified some problems and the need for adaptations

• Main problem:
  • Some questions might not filter recommendations or scientific evidence from researchers, NGOs and international organizations with COI – it could supports partnerships with COI

• Suggestions (for short and complete tool):
  • Use of a score system to indicate if engagement is recommended or not and if there is higher risk of COI. The score might have different weights for each question.
    • If PAHO/WHO agreed with using the score, the detection of risks will not mean that the countries have to avoid the interaction with COI, but it can give them a direction on how to interact and manage the COI
  • Exclusion criteria should include actors that produce or are related to ultra-processed food and beverages
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on our country experience:

• The model used in Brazil was very useful for us and can be adapted to other countries
• The tool and its application can be very useful in assisting decision-making; understanding the actors and the potential interactions; defining possible engagements; and avoiding COI or providing alternatives to manage COI
• The tool does not impede the existence of public-private partnerships, but it provides ways to deal with COI, if the country concludes that the engagement is necessary
• A simpler tool, adapted to countries, could be used as a first step of assessment, before the complete tool. The short tool can be a filter for simpler cases.

Finally, we congratulate WHO and PAHO for the development of this tool and for supporting the trial at the country level.

It is important to continue this process in other countries, as agreed in WHO Assembly, in order to contribute to real public interests and public health nutrition goals.
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