Opportunities and Challenges of Working with Private Sector

Experience and Perspectives from Namibia:
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Outline of Presentation:

• Challenges and Opportunities of working with Private Sector

• Risk Assessment Tool

• Are the WHO tools responding to Namibia’s needs?

• Namibia’s contribution to the Next Steps
Private Sector Engagement

- Opportunities:
  - Private sector a key stakeholder in Nutrition
  - Member of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platform for scaling up nutrition (Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition (NAFIN))
    - Support of private sector through NAFIN:
      - Pupkewitz Foundation: financial support with the Nutrition Landscape Analysis & the nutrition advocacy and awareness raising through Nutrition Roadshows
      - Namib Mills: Financial support with World Food Day & technical support with food fortification initiatives: smallholder fortification
      - Namibia Dairies: technical support with food fortification initiatives
Private Sector Engagement

- Challenges:
  - Extensive violations of the Code by retail outlets that undermine women’s confidence to breastfeed
  - Collaborative agreements between Ministry of Education and the Coca Cola Beverage Company:
    - In the context of protection and promotion of public health, including prevention of NCDs and childhood overweight and obesity, the MoE helps Coca Cola to promote its products in a child-related setting.
    - Moreover, it promotes the company’s image through association with the government. This jeopardizes the Ministry of Health efforts to fight childhood overweight and obesity.
Private Sector Engagement

Challenges:

Idealising and selling BMS at reduced price

Marketing strategy to stack BMS at the entrance of shop
Actions to Address Potential Conflict of Interest

- Need to develop a policy and implementation guidelines to address conflict of interest in Nutrition
- Need to regulate the Code of Marketing of BMS as set out in the Public and Environmental Health Act 2015
- Need to develop a behaviour change and communication strategy to educate about potential conflict of interest in Nutrition
Relevance of Risk Assessment Tool

- Private Sector remains a key stakeholder in Nutrition and Health
  - Hence engagement is inevitable
- In engagement with private sector, it is important to weigh the risks and benefits to ensure maximum good
- There is a need for a tool to guide countries in managing conflicts of interest
- Considering the continued role of the Private Sector in Nutrition, countries have to consider that there will be some engagement which further emphasises the importance of these tools.
Relevance of Risk Assessment Tool

• The WHO Tool provides extensive guidance to countries to prevent and manage potential conflicts of interest by public officials as well as in engagement with non-state actors and individuals.

• The detailed algorithm proposed in the form of the decision tree, provides step by step guidance and is relevant for Namibia as we contemplate engaging with Private Sector.

• The high risk and low risk indicators are also helpful for Namibia in determining the external actor’s risk profile.
Namibia’s contribution to the Next Steps

• Incorporate country experiences from piloting the tools
• Incorporate additional ideas on approaches on risk assessment and management
• Finalisation of Tools
• Capacity development of country focal persons to understand and implement the tools
• Technical and financial support to develop country-specific tools and with implementation.