

Safeguarding Global Nutrition Commitments in the Political Declaration on the 4th UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs

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As global momentum builds toward the fourth UN High-Level Meeting (HLM4) on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and the promotion of mental health and well-being this September, we, Resolve to Save Lives and NCD Alliance, express serious concern regarding the reported changes to the nutrition policy commitments in the draft Political Declaration.

The updated language, to be adopted at the HLM4, represents a substantial step backward compared to the [Zero Draft](#) [1], especially in the areas of food product reformulation, including for the elimination of industrially-produced trans fatty acids (iTfAs) and front-of-pack labelling—both of which are proven, evidence-based, and cost-effective policy interventions recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) as part of its [NCD “best buys”](#) [2] to promote healthy diets.

The deletion of clear public health commitments to *eliminate industrially produced trans-fatty acids, reduce levels of saturated fats, free sugars and sodium in processed food and beverages, and provide front-of-pack labelling (FOPL) for nutritional information* significantly weakens the declaration. These policies are critical population-wide tools for increasing health-promoting environments and reducing the burden of NCDs.

In place of these specific, actionable commitments, they have been reportedly replaced with vague language—committing to only reduce iTfAs to the *lowest level possible* and framing FOPL as an example of how nutritional information can be provided to consumers. This shift parts ways from WHO’s proven best practices, undermines clarity, accountability, and implementation, and opens the door to widely varied interpretations of the recommended actions.

Nutrition and food security: two sides of the same coin

We acknowledge recent concerns raised in an open letter regarding the potential impact of eliminating TFAs (as originally written in the Zero Draft) on food security in low- and middle-income countries. However, it is important to emphasize that **public health and food security are not at odds**. In fact, **nutrition and food security must go**

hand in hand to effectively address malnutrition in all its forms, including undernutrition and diet-related NCDs.

We therefore appreciate the need to specify the elimination of iTFAs rather than TFAs more broadly in the Political Declaration, but the commitment should not be weakened. Eliminating iTFAs builds on WHO best practices—banning partially hydrogenated oils (PHO) and/or establishing a limit of 2g of iTFA per 100g of total fats in the food supply, only targeting iTFA elimination—and does **not require reducing consumption of dairy or ruminant meats**.

Committing to evidence-based actions for population health

ITFAs are well-established contributors to cardiovascular disease and premature mortality, totalling [more than 278,000 deaths each year globally](#) [3]. Eliminating iTFAs is one of the most evidence-based, cost-effective public health interventions available, [already adopted in more than 60 countries](#) [4], and should be universally adopted.

We believe that scaling back ambition on food reformulation, including for the elimination of iTFAs and FOPL for nutrition information, which build on WHO's recommendations and [Codex's Guidelines on front-of-pack nutrition labelling](#) [5]—would represent a substantial missed opportunity to strengthen global commitments to tackle diet-related NCDs.

We strongly encourage Member States to uphold the original, more robust language specifying the elimination of iTFA (rather than TFA) while ensuring alignment with WHO's NCD "best buys" to promote healthy diets. This is essential to ensure accountability, clarity, and progress in building food systems that protect and promote health for all.

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[1] https://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/109/2025/05/Zero-Draft-PD-on-NCDs-and-Mental-Health-13-May_.pdf

[2] <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240091078>

[3] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/trans-fat>

[4] <https://gifna.who.int/summary/TFA>

[5] https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252FStandards%252FCXG%2B2-1985%252FCXG_002e.pdf

