



Looking back on 2018

2018 marked the tenth anniversary of the founding of the International Food & Beverage Alliance (IFBA) when CEOs of leading food and non-alcoholic beverage companies joined together in a mission to empower consumers to eat balanced diets and live healthier lives.

Since 2008, IFBA members have made, and have been implementing, a set of global commitments in support of the objectives of the WHO *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*, the WHO *Recommendations on food and non-alcoholic beverage marketing to children*, and the WHO *Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013-2020* (the WHO *Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020*).

These commitments and our work – on product formulation and innovation, responsible marketing, the provision of nutrition information to consumers and the promotion of healthy lifestyles – recognized by the public health community as crucial to improving global health and fully aligned with the call to action on the private sector set out in paragraph 44 of the 2011 *Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases* (the 2011 *Political Declaration*).

Visit our *ten-year progress report* [here](#)

Our progress over the past ten years has been significant, but we recognize there is more to do as we seek to find solutions to the most pressing public health challenges. We will continue to lead our industry in efforts to improve global health and are fully committed to increasing our engagement with governments and other stakeholders.

As we begin our second decade, we take a moment to look back at some of our achievements in 2018.

Advancing the agenda on the prevention and control of NCDs

Noncommunicable diseases took centre stage in 2018 as the UN, WHO, governments, civil society and the private sector gathered together in September in New York for the third UN High-level Meeting on NCDs and to take stock of the progress achieved since the adoption of the 2011 *Political Declaration*.

IFBA members recognize the role they play in the prevention and control of NCDs and have long been committed to doing their part.

We welcomed the unanimous adoption by Member States of the 2011 *Political Declaration* and joined with Member States and civil society in 2014 at the second UN High-level Meeting on NCDs to urge intensified efforts towards achieving the global NCD targets.

In 2018, in preparation for the third meeting of the UN High-level Meeting on NCDs, IFBA:

- participated, together with global experts from a broad range of sectors, in a technical consultation convened by the WHO Independent High-level Commission on NCDs, in March to identify bold and innovative solutions to address the growing NCD burden;
- attended the WHO Dialogue on Sustainable Financing of NCDs, in April in Copenhagen;
- joined with select CEOs of multinationals and global experts on NCDs in June in a meeting convened by the WHO to consider the role and contribution of the private sector and to develop a set of priority actions, including among other things, the elimination of industrially-produced trans fats and reduction of salt/sodium, sugar and saturated fat intake to be achieved by 2025;
- submitted comments on the “Draft Report of the WHO Independent High-level Commission on Non-communicable Diseases,” urging increased engagement with the private sector in line with paragraph 44 of the 2011 *Political Declaration*;
- hosted an event for UN diplomats with the objective of illustrating the contribution of the food and beverage industry to the prevention and control of NCDs;
- participated in the Civil Society Interactive Hearing on NCDs, convened by the President of the UN General Assembly, in July in New York, speaking on a panel dedicated to the role of the private sector; and
- during the General Assembly on 28 September delivered remarks from the floor and participated in Multi-stakeholder panel 2: *Opportunities and challenges in engaging Governments, civil in society and the private sector at the global, regional and national levels to promote multisectoral partnerships for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.*

We welcomed the *Political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases* adopted by Member States on 29 September 2018 and were encouraged by the recognition of “the need to bring together civil society and the private sector to mobilize all available resources” to combat NCDs.

Expanding our support for UN and WHO strategies

- In May, IFBA announced its support for the call by the WHO and non-governmental organization, Resolve to Save Lives, for the elimination of industrially produced trans fat from the global food supply by 2023, and called on all food producers in all sectors to join the effort to achieve this public health priority. This builds on IFBA’s 2016 commitment to reduce industrially produced trans fat in their products worldwide to nutritionally insignificant levels by the end of 2018.¹

¹ At the end of 2017, on an aggregated basis, we estimate that industrially produced trans fat had been removed from 98.8% of IFBA companies’ global product portfolios.

- As an active member of the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on Noncommunicable Diseases (WHO GCM/NCD) established in 2014 to facilitate and enhance coordination of multi-stakeholder engagement for the implementation of the WHO *Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020*, IFBA participated in meetings and webinars throughout the year and delivered remarks during the panel on “*Health as a political choice: Aligning public and private interests for a greater good – Best practices and lessons learned*” in the General Meeting in November.
- We continued our work with the Private Sector Mechanism to the UN Committee for World Food Security (CFS) contributing to the discussions on a new policy product on nutrition guidelines and in March, attended the CFS Open-Ended Working Group on Nutrition at FAO, and a side event, “*Healthy by Design: How Products and Guidelines Meet*,” hosting a tasting event on reformulation supported by Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever.

Partnering with government to improve public health

- In September, in the presence of H.E. Dr. Tawfiq Bin Fawzan Al Rabiah, Minister of Health and H.E. Dr. Hisham Bin Saad Aljadhey, CEO of the Saudi Drug and Food Authority (SFDA), IFBA launched a “Saudi Pledge,” in support of the SFDA’s Healthy Food Strategy and as part of the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 to combat NCDs. We committed to take joint voluntary actions in the areas of product formulation and innovation (reducing sugar, salt and fat content), the provision of nutrition information to consumers, responsible marketing to children and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Following the launch, IFBA participated in a workshop led by the SFDA, with local companies to provide an overview of the work of IFBA in the region.

Extending and strengthening our commitment to responsible marketing globally

- In Argentina, IFBA together with leading food companies in the country, representing 80% of the food marketing spend, presented a pledge restricting marketing to children under 12 to the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Luis Miguel Etchebehere. This brings the total of regional and national marketing pledges to 53.
- In the U.S.A., the Children’s Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative, in a further step to help improve child-directed advertising and encourage healthier food choices adopted revised, stronger uniform nutrition criteria, including stricter sodium and added sugars standards for foods advertised to children. These changes reflect the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the FDA’s new Nutrition Facts Panel and will be implemented by January 1, 2020.

Increasing transparency and accountability

- In 2009, IFBA adopted a *Global Policy on Marketing Communications to Children* and committed to engage a third party to measure compliance in TV, print and online and report publicly on the findings.² With the increase in marketing on digital platforms, in 2018, IFBA increased its commitment to transparency with the launch of a pilot programme extending the independent compliance assessment to three online platforms: company-owned websites, company-owned YouTube channels and third-party websites.³
- The EU Pledge on marketing to children was first launched in 2007 as a commitment to the European Union *Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*. Each year since that time, the EU Pledge has commissioned third-party organizations and an independent reviewer to carry out compliance monitoring.⁴ In 2018, pledge signatories went one step further and launched an accountability mechanism allowing the public to file a complaint if they believe a marketing communication is not in compliance with the pledge. Complaints are reviewed by a panel of experts, and all decisions and corrective actions are publicly communicated.
- In November, IFBA joined with GAIN, ATNI, the World Benchmarking Alliance and the Consumer Goods Forum in a workshop to consider possible alignment among different accountability mechanisms.

Looking forward to 2019

We are committed to continuing, and expanding, our collaborations with the UN and WHO, governments and the public health community and look forward to exploring every opportunity to work together towards the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of zero hunger and good health and well-being for all.

For more information, please visit www.ifballiance.org or contact us at secretariat@ifballiance.org

² Compliance assessments have been carried out by Accenture Media Management. Compliance has been consistently high for the period 2009 – 2015 + 2017: averaging 96.6% on TV, 100% in print and 99.5% online. Compliance reports can be found at <https://ifballiance.org/commitments/responsible-marketing-to-children>

³ Five self-regulatory organizations in Colombia, India, New Zealand, the Philippines and South Africa were chosen to review compliance and reported 96% compliance for company-owned websites; 95% for company-owned YouTube channels; and 100% for third-party websites:

https://ifballiance.org/uploads/ifbaResource/report/5bb63c2cb2013_IFBA_2017_M2K_Audit_Overall_Final.pdf

⁴ EU Pledge compliance monitoring reports can be found at http://www.eu-pledge.eu/sites/eu-pledge.eu/files/reports/EU_Pledge_2017_Monitoring_Report.pdf