

BIA-Obesity Tool

Business Impact Assessment – Obesity and Population-level Nutrition

Overview of scoring methods: Food and beverage manufacturers

2017

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Development of the BIA-Obesity tool

The BIA-Obesity (Business Impact Assessment-Obesity and Population-level Nutrition) tool has been developed by [INFORMAS](#) to provide a framework to benchmark food company policies and commitments related to obesity and population nutrition.

The BIA-Obesity methods are based on those developed for the [Access to Nutrition Index \(ATNI\)](#). ATNI is a tool designed to measure and benchmark the nutrition-related commitments, performance and disclosure practices of global food and beverage manufacturers to enable comparison of company performance with reference to international norms and standards. The ATNI methodology was developed over several years, with extensive input from a wide range of stakeholders including academics, policy makers and representatives from non-government organisations, the food industry and investment firms.

The ATNI methods have been adapted in several ways for the BIA-Obesity tool. Whereas ATNI includes assessment of companies in regards to multiple aspects of nutrition (including both obesity and under-nutrition), INFORMAS is only focused on obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – not under-nutrition. Secondly, ATNI assesses only food and beverage manufacturers, whereas the BIA-Obesity tool also assesses other sectors of the food industry, such as quick service restaurants and supermarkets. Tailored versions of the tool have been prepared for each sector. Thirdly, the BIA-Obesity tool has a greatly reduced number of questions compared to the ATNI assessment, with a more simple scoring methodology. This reduces the resources required to complete and assess the survey, and focuses on areas of most importance, based on the public health literature. Fourthly, the indicators have been modified so as to be applicable to the country context.

The BIA Obesity tool includes domains related to 6 key policy areas, including overall nutrition strategy and governance of the organisation, product formulation, nutrition labelling, promotion to children and adolescents, product accessibility and relationships with external groups. For each domain, INFORMAS has developed graded assessment criteria to enable benchmarking at a sector, country and global level. These criteria take into account the nature of policies as well as the extent of public disclosure of these policies. Company scores in each domain will be summed to determine a final score out of 100 (including different weightings for each domain, as determined by an expert panel within INFORMAS). Refer to Table 1 below for details of each domain.



Table 1: Domains of the BIA-Obesity tool including index assessment details – Food and beverage manufacturers

Domain	Description	Overview of scoring criteria
A	<p>Corporate population nutrition strategy</p> <p>Overview Company’s overarching commitment to improving population nutrition for reducing obesity and NCDs</p> <p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies related to population nutrition, obesity and non-communicable diseases • Corporate social responsibility documents relating to population nutrition • Corporate mission statements or vision statements • Policy documents in the public domain; annual reports. <p>Excludes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undernutrition or malnutrition • Strategies specifically targeting a company’s own employees and contractors • Strategies focused on breast milk substitutes and infant formulas, nutrient fortification, palm oil and packaging initiatives (related to sustainability) 	<p>Number of questions: 3 Total number of points available: 30 Weighting: 10/100</p> <p>Maximum points: Company has a national level commitment to population nutrition, articulated in publicly available strategic documents with SMART objectives</p> <p>Mid-level points: Company has a commitment to population nutrition, with some reporting at the global/national level</p> <p>Minimum points: Company has no commitments in this area</p>

B Product formulation**Overview**

Policies regarding product development and reformulation targets related to nutrients of concern (i.e. sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar)

Includes

- Reformulation / product development to reduce nutrients of concern: sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugars, kilojoules/portion size of single serve products
- Introduction of new products to increase the number of 'healthy' products

Excludes

- Reformulation / product development relating to other macronutrients or micronutrients
- Nutrient fortification
- Allergens, palm oil initiatives (related to sustainability)

Number of questions: 12**Total number of points available: 95****Weighting: 30/100**

Maximum points: Company has a comprehensive set of publicly available reformulation commitments, with SMART targets for sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar

Mid-level points: Company has reformulation commitments in some areas for nutrients of concern

Minimum points: Company has no commitments in this area

C Nutrition labelling**Overview**

Policies regarding disclosure and presentation of nutrient information, commitment to government endorsed front-of-pack labelling system, and use of health and nutrition claims

Includes

- Front of pack labelling
- Non-mandatory nutrient labelling
- Online nutrition information
- Health and nutrition content claims

Number of questions: 11**Total number of points available: 90****Weighting: 20/100**

Maximum points: Company has a publicly available commitment to implement the government endorsed front-of-pack labelling system across the company's product portfolio, comprehensive nutrition information available on-pack and online

		<p>Excludes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government mandated nutrition information or product labelling information • Allergen information • Health claims that are mandated by government • Sustainable sourcing/packaging initiatives 	<p>Mid-level points: Company has a commitment to government endorsed or another front-of-pack labelling system across some products, nutrition information available in some categories both on pack and online</p> <p>Minimum points: Company has no commitments in this area</p>
D	Promotion to children and adolescents	<p>Overview Policies regarding reducing the exposure of children and adolescents to ‘less healthy’ food promotion</p> <p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing communications in broadcast media (TV, radio) • Marketing communications in non-broadcast media (including websites, DVDs/games, social media, print media, product placement, outdoor marketing, in store marketing, point of sales marketing, food packaging) • Marketing techniques that appeal to children/adolescents <p>Excludes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion to adults over 18 years of age • Other aspects of marketing such as price or place • Advertising of break milk substitutes 	<p>Number of questions: 15 Total number of points available: 105 Weighting: 30/100</p> <p>Maximum points: Company has a publicly available commitment to reduce the exposure of children to ‘less healthy’ food marketing, with policies applying across all media channels and inclusive of all marketing techniques designed to appeal to children</p> <p>Mid-level points: Company has some commitment to reduce the exposure of children to ‘less healthy’ food marketing, with policies that apply to some forms of media and some marketing techniques</p> <p>Minimum points: Company has no commitments in this area</p>

E Product accessibility

Overview

Policies related to the availability and affordability of healthy compared to 'less healthy' items

Includes

- Increasing the availability of healthy products (across product portfolio or in certain areas)
- Decreasing the availability of 'less healthy' products in certain areas (e.g., rural, low-income, indigenous, city/town/suburb/state), and/or in certain settings (schools, childcare facilities, workplaces, hospitals, universities, supermarkets)
- Increasing the affordability of healthy compared to 'less healthy' products

Number of questions: 6

Total number of points available: 60

Weighting: 5/100

Maximum points: Company has a publicly available commitment to increase the availability and affordability of healthy compared to 'less healthy' items as part of their overall portfolio and/or in certain settings e.g. schools, vending machines, remote stores

Mid-level points: Company has a broad commitment to increase the availability and affordability of healthy compared to 'less healthy' products

Minimum points: Company has no commitments in this area

F Relationships with external organisations

Overview

Details of policies related to funding and/or support provided to professional organisations, external research, community groups, nutrition education and active lifestyle programs, as well as relationships with government

Includes

- External groups/professional organisations relevant to health/nutrition, external research groups, individual researchers or universities
- Philanthropic funding
- Support for nutrition education / active lifestyle programs in the community
- Public-private partnerships with government groups or agencies
- Political donations and affiliations with industry associations or other organisations that lobby in relation to population nutrition

Excludes

- Suppliers/Distributors
- Retailers
- Employees and contractors
- Service providers

Number of questions: 11

Total number of points available: 90

Weighting: 5/100

Maximum points: Company has national level disclosure of support for external groups (includes: professional organisations, research, community groups, nutrition education/active lifestyle programs) and relationships with government

Mid-level points: Company has some disclosure of funding/support for external groups and relationships with government

Minimum points: Company has no disclosure of funding/support for external groups and relationships with government