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Score: Evaluations Are Incomplete

Topic: The impact of food systems on nutrition, diet and health

Title: A new approach to monitor systematically the corporate political activity of the food industry with respect to public health

Introduction: There is growing concern that some strategies of the food industry (known as the 'corporate political activity'), particularly of large transnational companies, could undermine efforts to prevent and control non-communicable diseases. In this paper, we propose a framework for categorising the different CPA strategies of the food industry. We then provide an innovative approach for monitoring these practices, using publicly available information. This research was based on the work conducted in the tobacco control area and on an extensive review of the literature.

Methods and results: The proposed framework includes six strategies used by the food industry to influence public health policies and programs: information and messaging; financial incentive; constituency building; legal strategies; policy substitution; opposition fragmentation and destabilisation. To monitor such strategies, we identified different sources: industry websites and social media, government materials, the media and other sources, such as professional organisations websites. Steps for country-level monitoring include identification of key food industry actors and related sources of information, followed by a systematic data collection and analysis of relevant documents, using the proposed framework as a basis for categorisation of the strategies identified.

Conclusion: This paper provides an innovative approach that may help systematically and independently monitor the practices of the food industry. This could provide information to policy makers, public health advocates and the public and help them develop protective or counter measures.

Presentation Type: Oral

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