

ARC Linkage: Understanding engagement to regulate the commercial determinants of health

General preamble:

This project seeks to understand the ways in which non-government organisations (NGOs) influence the practices of alcohol and ultra-processed food industries, particularly to reduce the harmful health impacts from these industries. We are interested in the strategies and tactics that NGO use, and what makes these strategies successful in influencing industry practices. We are asking key people to share their views. We will also interview people from government, industry and relevant regional and intergovernmental organisations about their perceptions of NGO effectiveness. This research have been approved by the Australian National University Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2021/017). Reassure informant: this is individual view (e.g. not official NGO view).

Question 1: Introductory

We conducted a mapping of key NGOs in this space and identified your organisation as a key actor working on XX. Can you tell me a bit more about your organisation's key objectives in this space?

Question 2: Effective strategies

Explain matrix and show it to the participant as you explain it (mention it is confidential as not yet published).

We are seeking to understand why NGOs use particular strategies, and which strategies are seen as effective.

Does this matrix make sense? Why does your organisation use particular strategies?

Can you tell me more about a case of successful impact? What strategies were used? Why were they effective?

Do these differ by food / alcohol?

Checklist of prompts:

- view on interacting with industry (directly or indirectly e.g. it on same gov committee) - why / why not
 - Approach differ by industry actor? (e.g. producers/retailers/traders?)
- view on interacting with government / IGO – why / why not
 - Differ by level of government or Department / sector?
- view on working with other NGOs, community groups – why / why not

- view of NGO impact – what is success?

Question 3: Conditions for NGO success

In your opinion, what factors either internal to NGOs or in the external environment help enable effective NGO strategies?

Do these differ by food / alcohol?

Checklist of prompts:

- industry characteristics
- government structure / policy processes
- supportive actors
- elections / political party support
- ideology
- economic context / health context
- public opinion
- COVID context (e.g. “holding the line” versus getting new regulation)
- Mainstream media
- Presence of international / domestic treaties / legislation
- Exogenous events

Question 4: Managing engagement with commercial actors

Does your organisation have a strategy for managing engagement with commercial actors?

Prompt – differ by industry and different commercial actors?

Prompt – policies on accepting money? Gifts?

Written policy? What tools may be used?

What informs approach?

Question 5: Is there anything of importance that I may have missed that is important to know about why NGOs select the strategies they do and what enables success?

Checklist of prompts:

- What would you most like to do know if you had more funding/capacity?
- Can you recommend anyone else to interview from NGOs who might provide a view on this subject?