CONCEPTUAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

March 2021

Community of Nutrition and Health Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean (Colansa)

1. Community of Nutrition and Health Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean (Colansa)

Building on Wenger's[1] original conceptualization, we defined our organization based on three key elements:

Community

Colansa is open to the participation of institutions and individuals who share the community's common interests and who wish to share their perspectives, knowledge and experiences in a collaborative environment with practical interaction.

Shared values

The common interest that unites us is healthy, sustainable, equitable and inclusive food systems in our region.

Practice

Shared practices will include proposals and activities in two well-defined areas: research and political advocacy, and their interrelationship, to formalize and implement collectively acquired knowledge as well as proposed actions and solutions to meet community objectives.

Colansa works to achieve common goals as its members learn, share knowledge and experiences and work to prioritise and solve common problems.

Figura 1: Componentes de la CdP

2. Objectives of Colansa

Our community has a regional dimension, with the main objective of contributing to the development of healthy, sustainable, equitable and inclusive food systems for the promotion of health and prevention of chronic diseases in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). This can be achieved through the generation and compilation of knowledge and experiences, active participation in political advocacy and the promotion of collaborative interaction between the actors involved in action research and political advocacy in the area of food systems.

3. Focus on research and advocacy

[1]Wenger E, McDermott R, Snyder W. Cultivating Communities of Practice. Harvard Business Review Press. 2008.

There has already been extensive epidemiological research on the relationship between diet and the risk of developing chronic diseases characterized by high morbidity and mortality. There is also evidence of effective interventions in food systems at different levels and in different sectors and contexts. However, firstly there are still gaps in the knowledge related to the effective implementation of evidence-based strategies to improve food systems and eating habits; secondly we do not have sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of viable interventions in low and middle-income countries; and thirdly there is an urgent need not only to provide the missing evidence, but also to design effective strategies to translate this evidence into concrete actions and achieve a far-reaching political impact on the population of this region.

One of Colansa's components is to promote proactive interaction between researchers in the field of both action research and implementation research, and people and organizations working in political advocacy, in order to improve skills and knowledge and thus increase the chances of achieving interventions which will be effective in the fight to improve the quality of food systems in our region.

Figura 2: Elementos clave de Colansa

Participatory Action research makes it possible to reconnect the social construction of knowledge and the generation of scientific and social evidence to promote changes in people and in social and ecological systems[2].

Implementation research is focused on evaluating strategies to ensure that interventions which have already been shown to be effective are incorporated into health care practice in different contexts and are effectively implemented. It is the study of methods to promote the adoption and integration of evidence-based practices, interventions and policies to fill the gap between knowledge and practice in health care and promotion[3].

We understand advocacy activities to be those that aim to influence the design and implementation of public policies through dialogue and negotiation with networks and consortia, opinion and decision makers, in order to contribute to effective changes in food policies.

Colansa will interact with various actors that have an interest in, and an impact on, LAC's food systems:

Private sector

Companies, small and medium food producers, food industry lobbyists, corporate social responsibility sectors.

[2]Santandreu, A. La gestióndelconocimiento para elaprendizaje y el cambio: nuevos enfoques para investigar, sistematizar y evaluarprocesos de cambio. 2015. Disponible en: <http://aprendeenlinea.udea.edu.co/lms/investigacion/pluginfile.php/18743/mod_resource/content/1/PONENCIA_Santandreu_La%20gestion%20del%20conocimiento.pdf>.

[3]Santandreu, A. La gestióndelconocimiento para elaprendizaje y el cambio: nuevos enfoques para investigar, sistematizar y evaluarprocesos de cambio. 2015. Disponible en: <http://aprendeenlinea.udea.edu.co/lms/investigacion/pluginfile.php/18743/mod_resource/content/1/PONENCIA_Santandreu_La%20gestion%20del%20conocimiento.pdf>.

Public sector
Public administration, legislators, the judicial system, autonomous public bodies, state-owned companies.
Academic
Universities, public and private research centers and institutes, independent researchers, academic networks, independent monitoring groups.
Civil society
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil associations, foundations, trade unions, professional and political organizations.
International cooperation
Multilateral organizations (global or regional), financial institutions, international governments.

4. Colansa's conceptual framework

4.1 The domain

Introduction

Despite advances made to reduce hunger and malnutrition[4], obesity and other nutrition related problems have increased in recent decades in both Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). More than 50% of the region's adult population is overweight and 23% is obese. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are among the leading causes of death in almost every country in the region. There has also been an increase in the number of families suffering from a double burden of disease, with the coexistence of both overweight and malnutrition. In the last 40 years, worldwide childhood obesity has *risen tenfold.* The epidemic of overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence will be a major determinant of the future health of large segments of the world's vulnerable populations[5].

Adequate nutrition is essential for people's health, well-being and development. Therefore, we all have the right to a varied, safe diet that provides the nutrients required to lead a healthy and active life and that satisfies our cultural preferences. Diets must meet energy needs and provide a variety of foods of high nutritional quality, and their consumption must be safe. These diets must be accessible, and culturally appropriate. According to the Rome Declaration of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) “To improve nutrition, it is necessary to offer healthy, balanced and diversified diets, including traditional diets where appropriate, that meet the nutritional needs of all age groups and all groups with special nutritional needs and, at the same time, avoid excessive consumption of saturated fats, sugars and salt or sodium and practically eliminate trans fats”[6]. To achieve a healthy diet, it is necessary to give preference to natural or minimally processed foods and avoid the consumption of ultra-processed products[78].

[4]Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Concept Note: Regional symposium on sustainable food systems for healthy eating. El Salvador; September 2017. Available from: <https://www.slideshare.net/FAOoftheUN/concept-note-regional-symposium-on-sustainablefood-systems-for-healthy-eating>.
[5]Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS), Programa Mundial de Alimentos (WFP). Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para laInfancia (UNICEF). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.
[6]Organización de las Naciones Unidas para laAlimentación y la Agricultura (FAO); Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición. Documento final de laConferencia: Declaración de Roma sobre laNutrición. 2014. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml542s.pdf>.
[7]Ministerio de Salud de Uruguay. Guía Alimentaria para laPoblaciónUruguaya. Montevideo: Ministerio de Salud. 2016. Disponible en: <http://www.msp.gub.uy/publicaci%C3%B3n/gu%C3%ADa-alimentaria-para-lapoblaci%C3%B3n-uruguay>.
[8]Ministerio de Salud de Brasil. Guía alimentaria para lapoblaciónbrasileña. Brasilia: Ministerio de Salud. 2014. Disponible en: <http://bvsms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/ guia_alimentaria_poblacion_brasilena.pdf>.

These products contain unhealthy fats, refined starches, sugars, salt and additives used to enhance their organoleptic qualities[9][10]. In the LAC region, ultra-processed products are ubiquitous and extensively advertised, resulting in a 48% increase in sales of these products between 2000 and 2013. Indeed, it is estimated that sales of ultra-processed products in LAC are close to 129.6 kg per capita per year[11]. According to a recent PAHO report, all categories of ultra-processed products currently sold in Latin America have excessive quantities of free sugars, total fat, saturated fat or sodium[12]. This situation favors an obesogenic environment, which emphasizes the consumption of ultra-processed products and makes the consumption of fresh and healthy foods more difficult[13].

According to the FAO and PAHO Report on the Panorama for Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean 2016[14]:

- Adopting healthy eating patterns does not just mean promoting changes in consumption; it requires public policies to be redirected in order to create sustainable, nutrition-sensitive food systems that can provide an adequate supply of healthy foods.
- LAC countries should strengthen and expand their public policies to promote the consumption of healthy foods. Regulating the advertising of ultra-processed products, labelling legislation and specific taxes on sugary drinks are some of the initiatives already being implemented. These must be complemented with policies to increase the supply of healthy foods, such as public procurement systems and their connections to urban and peri-urban agriculture, school catering programs and the implementation of short chains for food production and sales. A profound change in current food systems is needed to ensure their sustainability and ability to provide nutritious and affordable food for all, preserving ecosystems through more efficient and sustainable use of land and natural resources, and improving the production, storage and processing of food[15].

It is essential for the region to move towards policies, legislative and regulatory frameworks, programs and interventions that promote the consumption of safe, diverse and nutritious foods in adequate amounts to meet nutritional needs and encourage healthy and active lives[16].

Food system

We understand a food system to be one which encompasses a wide variety of elements (environment, scenario, people, inputs, processes, infrastructure, institutions, other actors) and activities related to the production, processing, distribution, marketing (sale, purchase, advertising and promotion), preparation, consumption of food and beverages, food waste and disposal, as well as its socio-economic and environmental consequences[17].

The common interest and relevance of our community of practice includes healthy, sustainable, equitable and inclusive food systems in our region.

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[9] Martinez Steele E, Baraldi LG, Louzada ML, Moubarac J-C, Mozaffarian D, Monteiro CA .Ultra-processed foods and added sugars in the US diet: evidence from a nationally representative cross-sectional study. 2016. BMJ Open, 6(3), e009892. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2015-009892.

[10]Moubarac J-C, Batal M, Louzada ML, Martinez SE, Monteiro CA et al. Consumption of ultra-processed foods predicts diet quality in Canada. 2016. AppetiteNov 4;108:512-520. doi: 10.1016/j.appet.2016.11.006.

[11]Organización de las Naciones Unidas para laAlimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

[12]Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS). Alimentos y bebidas ultraprocesados en América Latina: ventas, fuentes, perfiles de nutrientes e implicaciones. Washington, D.C. 2019.

[13]Organización de las Naciones Unidas para laAlimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

[14]Organización de las Naciones Unidas para laAlimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

[15] La definición original de la FAO (2017) fue adaptada por representantes de laComunidad de Práctica en lareunión de Panamá realizada en diciembre 2019.

[16]La definición original de la FAO (2017) fue adaptada por representantes de laComunidad de Práctica en lareunión de Panamá realizada en diciembre 2019.

[17]La definición original de la FAO (2017) fue adaptada por representantes de laComunidad de Práctica en lareunión de Panamá realizada en diciembre 2019.

Healthy food systems: those that allow a diversified, balanced and healthy diet[18]. This requires the participation of different sectors, both public and private, including governments. With different levels of complexity, all food systems have the capacity to produce the foods necessary for the good nutrition and health of the population, and that do not cause disease.

The increase in sales of ultra-processed products in low- and middle-income countries is strongly associated with the increase in overweight, obesity and malnutrition[19]. For the most part there have been studies that have associated the increase in the consumption of ultra-processed products with overweight and obesity, in addition to being linked to NCDs related to nutrition. Ultra-processed products were mainly introduced to the market by multinational companies. The growth and dominance of these companies in the economy is a source of great concern due to their impact on the market and the influence they exert on consumer choices[20]. To overcome these challenges, it is important to evaluate interventions in public policies; in food labels, warning labels, marketing bans and restricted availability in schools, among others[21].

Sustainable food systems: those which guarantee people food and nutrition security so that the economic, social and environmental foundations of food security for future generations will not be jeopardized[22].

Equitable food systems: we understand equity to be a sense of impartiality and justice that recognizes and takes into account differences which may be avoidable, a consequence of social and economic processes. We consider equitable food systems to be those that include accessible and transparent agreements and mechanisms at all stages of the process, from production to food access and consumption [2324]. Equitable systems reflect gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and cultural diversity.

Inclusive food systems: those in which all members of society have the opportunity to participate, both as consumers and as producers, leading to an equitable distribution of benefits[25]. The main factors and measures that affect these systems are summarized in the following framework, adapted from FAO[26].

In line with Colansa's interests, the elements and factors summarized in Figure 3 are included, both in terms of research and the use of evidence for political advocacy, as listed below:

[18]Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Alimentación sana. 31 de agosto de 2018. Disponible en: <https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>.

[19] Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Popkin, Ultra-processed foods' impacts on health. 2030 – Food, Agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean, No. 34. Santiago de Chile. 2019.

[20]Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS). Alimentos y bebidas ultraprocesados en América Latina: tendencias, efecto sobre laobesidad e implicaciones para las políticas públicas. Washington, D.C. 2015.

[21]Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Popkin, Ultra-processed foods' impacts on health. 2030 – Food, Agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean, No. 34. Santiago de Chile. 2019.

[22]High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). Las pérdidas y eldesperdicio de alimentos en el contexto de sistemas alimentariossostenibles. Un informe del Grupo de alto nivel de expertos en seguridad alimentaria y nutricióndel Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Roma. 2014.

[23]Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Documento de referencia 3: Conceptos clave. Disponible en: <https://www.who.int/social_determinants/final_report/key_concepts/es/>.

[24]Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS). Equidadensalud. Disponible en: <https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5586:health-equityegc&Itemid=0&lang=es>.

[25]Organización de las Naciones Unidas para laAlimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). Reflexiones sobre el sistema alimentario y perspectivas para alcanzarsusostenibilidad en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago de Chile. 2017.

[26]High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). La nutrición y los sistemas alimentarios. Un informe del Grupo de alto nivel de expertos en seguridad alimentaria y nutricióndel Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, Roma. 2017.

Figura 3: Marco conceptual de los sistemas alimentarios para las dietas y la nutrición (FAO,2017).

Biophysical and environmental factors

Food production largely depends on natural resources and the characteristics of the ecosystem. Climate change and climate variability, as well as the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters, impact the health, productivity and resilience of ecosystems, communities and families, particularly among the most vulnerable sections of the population.

Food systems must adapt to climate change and can make a significant contribution to its mitigation.

As an example, we have included some of the factors relevant to the approach in our community, such as agricultural production systems, dependence on chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and antibiotics, as well as short, medium and long-term environmental damage.

In LAC, natural capital contributes enormously to economic development, a result of the region's great wealth of natural resources, including 40% of the world's biological diversity as well as abundant water resources[27].

However, the extractive model that characterizes LAC economies has had a profound socio-environmental impact that has created tensions between environmental preservation and development, which in turn has led to new standards of sustainable management of extractive activities[28].

The emission of greenhouse gases in the region has been increasing, contributing to the effects of climate change, including rising sea levels, diseases and extinction of species, among others. Given this situation, the region needs to strengthen financial and technological resources in order to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change[29].

Innovation, technology and infrastructure factors

The factors included in this section are those that have been transforming food systems, including those that influence the preparation, conservation and processing of food and edible products, new technologies to develop alternative foods, and genetic modification.

Infrastructure is a critical link in food systems; it is important to take into account the potential benefits, limitations and risks of innovation and technology for food and nutrition security, human health, culture, livelihoods and the environment.

In LAC, investment in research and development has increased in recent years, although it is still only a small proportion of what is actually needed.

Progress in the use of technology and communication varies in different countries according to relative ease of access, so that in LAC there is a development gap both between different countries and within them[30].

Political and economic factors

These include a) leadership and governance at different levels to design, implement and enforce laws, regulations, policies and programs aimed at improving the nutritional status of the population; b) globalization and trade that impact food and nutrition, both favoring nutritional transition and lifestyle changes; c) the development and updating of food guides or food-based guides; d) accessibility and variety of foods and the volatility of their prices; e) access to land and other natural resources; f) conflicts and humanitarian crises, which can influence food security and nutritional status.

In LAC poverty rose from 28.5% in 2014 to 30.7% in 2017, which represents an increase of 19 million people, and is largely explained by the increase in extreme poverty. This cutoffis determined based on the cost of the 'basic food basket', which means that people who are under this line do not have sufficient income to cover the costs of basic food. Approximately 62 million people in LAC are in this category[31].

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[27] Durango, S., Sierra, L., Quintero, M., Sachet, E., Paz, P., Da Silva, M. Valencia, J. y Le Coq, J.F. Estado y perspectivas de los recursos naturales y losecosistemas en América Latina y el Caribe (ALC). 2030 - Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 9. Santiago de Chile. 2019. Documento de FAO. 44 p

[28]Durango, S., Sierra, L., Quintero, M., Sachet, E., Paz, P., Da Silva, M. Valencia, J. y Le Coq, J.F. Estado y perspectivas de los recursos naturales y losecosistemas en América Latina y el Caribe (ALC). 2030 - Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 9. Santiago de Chile. 2019. Documento de FAO. 44 p

[29]Programa de las Naciones Unidas para elMedio Ambiente (PNUMA). Perspectivas delMedio Ambiente: América Latina y el Caribe (GEO ALC 3), Ciudad de Panamá, Oficina Regional del PNUMA para América Latina y el Caribe (ORPALC). 2010. Disponible en: <https://www.paho.org/mex/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&category_slug=promocionde-la-salud-yreduccion-de-riesgos&alias=377-perspectiva-del-medio-ambiente-america-latina-y-elcaribe&Itemid=493>.

[30] High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). Las pérdidas y eldesperdicio de alimentos en el contexto de sistemas alimentariossostenibles. Un informe del Grupo de alto nivel de expertos en seguridad alimentaria y nutricióndel Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Roma. 2014.

[31]Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL), Panorama Social de América Latina, 2017 (LC/PUB.2018/1-P), Santiago, 2018.

The LAC region is working on some policies to combat malnutrition, especially among these most vulnerable groups, including policies which: 1. Intervene in food supply chains. 2. Change food environments, and 3. Influence consumer behavior[32].

Sociocultural factors

Sociocultural factors include customs, culture, beliefs and social norms, which are closely related to food choices and food systems.

Since the dawn of humanity, various forms of cultural expression have been evident in the preparation and consumption of meals, with food often placed at the center of cultural and religious rites or ceremonies. Each society has different connections to food, which also change with migration and with time.

In addition, gender relations and norms can greatly influence food environments and food consumption. In many countries, it is the women who usually care for children and the family, and thus take a leading role in the choice and preparation of food, although they often lack power and their opinions or knowledge are seldom taken into account. Gender is present in every component of the food system and the empowerment of women is essential as part of policies aimed at improving food systems from a gender perspective.

In the last three decades LAC's dietary patterns have undergone a significant transformation, largely associated with increasing urbanization, the development of international trade and the widespread consumption of ultra-processed foods with low density of essential nutrients, and an excess of sugars, sodium and unhealthy fats[33]. These changes have caused simultaneous nutritional phenomena in the region: malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity[34].

Demographic factors

Among the demographic factors we must take into account the constant population growth and associated urbanization, the changes in its distribution according to age, as well as migrations and displacements, all factors which make greater demands on food systems.

The population increase in the region has been truly remarkable, 51% in the past 40 years, with the greatest increase in urban areas[35].

Interventions in food systems, their adaptation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation are all topics of interest to Colansa.

- Supply-side interventions: Interventions in food supply chains can improve the availability, accessibility and consumption of nutritious foods. To this end, it is for example possible to increase the production of healthy foods through the diversification of crops, promoting the use of underutilized local species, as well as reducing the use of nutrients associated with NCDs.

- Impact on public policies: Policy actions related to food environments must be adapted to each type of food system, and given the large number of interrelated factors that affect the food environment, multi-component interventions are needed to achieve lasting change. In this respect, it is essential to include policies aimed at improving the availability and physical and economic access to healthy foods, the quality and safety of food, as well as policies that address the problem of the widespread promotion and advertising unhealthy products.

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[32]Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS), Programa Mundial de Alimentos (WFP). Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para laInfancia (UNICEF). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

[33] Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Ultra-processed food and drink products in Latin America: Trends, impact on obesity, policy implications. Washington, DC. 2015.

[34] Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS), Programa Mundial de Alimentos (WFP). Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para laInfancia (UNICEF). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: >http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

[35] Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS), Programa Mundial de Alimentos (WFP). Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para laInfancia (UNICEF). Panorama de laseguridad alimentaria en América Latina y el Caribe. Santiago, Chile. 2017. Disponible en: >http://www.fao.org/3/ai6747s.pdf>.

- Demand-side interventions: On the other hand, consumer behavior and demand for specific foods can influence food supply. Demand-side interventions include raising awareness, changing behavior, increasing the willingness to pay, the transfer of knowledge and capacity building (empowerment) to increase the demand for nutritious food.
- Similarly, it is necessary to take into inconsideration the interrelationships between supply chains and food environments, as well as the possible determinants that guide consumers to improve their diet. On the other hand, economic difficulties, lack of knowledge and information and the consequent lack of demand for nutritious food are factors that limit access to foods of this type. It will also be necessary to identify policies and programs that could negatively affect the promotion of healthy food production or food environments, such as subsidies for the production of energy-rich, nutrient-poor foods, or unclear or misleading labelling.

In any event, it is necessary to adapt interventions and actions to the local context and evaluate their benefits and possible drawbacks, as well as their unintended consequences.

4.2 The community

Members of the community of practice commit to participating in activities and discussions, helping each other and sharing information and experiences. They build relationships that allow them to learn from each other, collaborate in pursuit of common goals and support actions that are aligned with Colansa's goals.

Obstacles: The topics to be addressed in Colansa also include some obstacles that may hinder action and the adoption of concrete measures that allow food systems to provide healthier diets and improve food and nutrition security. These include, for example, the lack of recognition of the right to adequate food, power imbalances in food systems and conflicts of interest[36].

The relationship between the food and beverage industry and academia has been amply documented[37]. The results show that research sponsored by the food and beverage industry is likely to be biased in its favor[38]. The food and beverage industry has developed several strategies to retain researchers, among which can be mentioned: sponsorship of research related to the products it sells, donations for infrastructure, payments for consulting services, sponsorship of academic events, participation in congresses[39]. For this reason, Colansa members undertake not to maintain any relationship with the food and beverage industry that could be considered a conflict of interest, so that Colansa and its actions are free, transparent and solely for the good of public health.

4.3 The practice

Colansa members not only share a common interest, but are also committed to developing a shared range of resources: experiences, stories, methodologies, tools, strategies and ways of dealing with problems. These shared practices will include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in regular meetings for reflection, debate and dissemination of information.
- Identifying and prioritizing the main local problems in the area of health and nutrition.
- Collecting evidence, knowledge and available resources to achieve community goals.
- Conducting on-site and distance training actions.
- Carrying out collaborative research among community members or with other related entities.
- Participating in the active dissemination of materials related to the community domain.

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[36] High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). La nutrición y los sistemas alimentarios. Un informe del Grupo de alto nivel de expertos en seguridad alimentaria y nutrición del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, Roma. 2017.

[37] Mozaffarian, Dariush. Conflict of Interest and the Role of the Food Industry in Nutrition Research JAMA. May 2;317(17):1755-1756. 2017. doi: 10.1001/jama.2017.3456.

[38] Mozaffarian, Dariush. Conflict of Interest and the Role of the Food Industry in Nutrition Research JAMA. May 2;317(17):1755-1756. 2017. doi: 10.1001/jama.2017.3456.

[39] Canella DS, Martins APB, Silva HFR, Passanha A, Lourenço BH. Food and beverage industries' participation in health scientific events: considerations on conflicts of interest. Rev PanamSalud Publica. 2015. 38(4):339– 43.

- Supporting and participating in the transfer of experience and knowledge, as well as the implementation of strategies to improve the food system by both institutions and countries, in order to build on previous achievements in the region.
- Providing strategic support in terms of information and advocacy actions in programs and policies that have an impact on the food systems of countries in the region.
- Forming reference centers (hubs) to focus on priority topics for the region.