

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### ROADMAP FOR REPLACING TRANS FATS WITH HEALTHY OILS IN INDIA

#### Summary & Background

**Resolve to Save Lives** (RTSL) aims to prevent 100 million deaths from heart disease and to make the world safer from epidemics. RTSL was launched in 2017 as an initiative of Vital Strategies and transitioned to a fully independent, U.S.-based and registered public health nonprofit organization (501c3) on April 1, 2022. Read more about our work at [resolvetosavelives.org](https://resolvetosavelives.org).

#### Objective(s)

##### Purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP)

There is a need to identify a path forward to replace industrially produced *trans*-fatty acids (iTFA) with healthier oils in India, in line with the World Health Organization's goal of global iTFA elimination by 2023.<sup>1</sup> Increased intake of TFAs is associated with increased risk of coronary heart disease and mortality and TFAs have no known health benefits. In India, ischemic heart disease has been leading cause of mortality for more than a decade and dietary risks are a key contributing factor, with iTFA accounting for a least ~140,000 deaths in 2019 alone.<sup>2</sup>

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been working to eliminate TFAs in the country and enacted regulations in early 2021 that limits iTFA to less than 2% of total fat in all food products by January 2022. However, achieving national-level compliance with this new regulation and replacing iTFA with healthier oils is complicated given the current reliance on palm oil in India—as both an oil that is processed and used in food products as well as a key locally produced crop and export. Palm oil is an unhealthy oil (high in saturated fat) and it is often processed to be partially hydrogenated in India which turns it from saturated fat to iTFA (becoming even more harmful to health). Oil processing techniques exist (e.g., fractionation, blending and interesterification) which edible fats/oils manufacturers can apply to palm oil that reduce the levels of saturated fat while maintaining the necessary functional properties. Additionally, the Government of India has supported agricultural and trade policy to increase production of palm oil, given its high-yield and ability to support many farmers' incomes.

While efforts should be made to increase production of healthier oilseeds that could replace iTFAs to improve health while maintaining farmer income, eliminating palm oil (at least in the near term) is not feasible. Attention is also needed to assess whether processing of palm oil differently can be encouraged in the meantime, and potential parallel policies that can be pursued to reduce reliance on palm oil in a phased approach over time.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/nutritionlibrary/replace-transfat/1-replace-framework-updated-june-2019-ke.pdf?sfvrsn=47e47367\\_2](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/nutritionlibrary/replace-transfat/1-replace-framework-updated-june-2019-ke.pdf?sfvrsn=47e47367_2)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.healthdata.org/india>

**The purpose of this project is to identify high potential, actionable policy solutions** – spanning approaches that promote production of healthier oilseeds, revise processing of palm oil, and decrease importation of palm oil in a sustainable way – **to support the replacement of iTFAs with healthier oils across India.** Ultimately, the information gathered from this project will inform Resolve to Save Lives' approach to continuing to support the Government of India and other partners working on iTFA elimination in India.

We anticipate this project will require three phases of work (described further below) over ~12 weeks.

## **Key Objectives**

Resolve to Save Lives is seeking competitive proposals from qualified vendors. **The overall goal of the project is to identify high potential, actionable policy solutions to support the replacement of iTFAs with healthier oils in food products in India.**

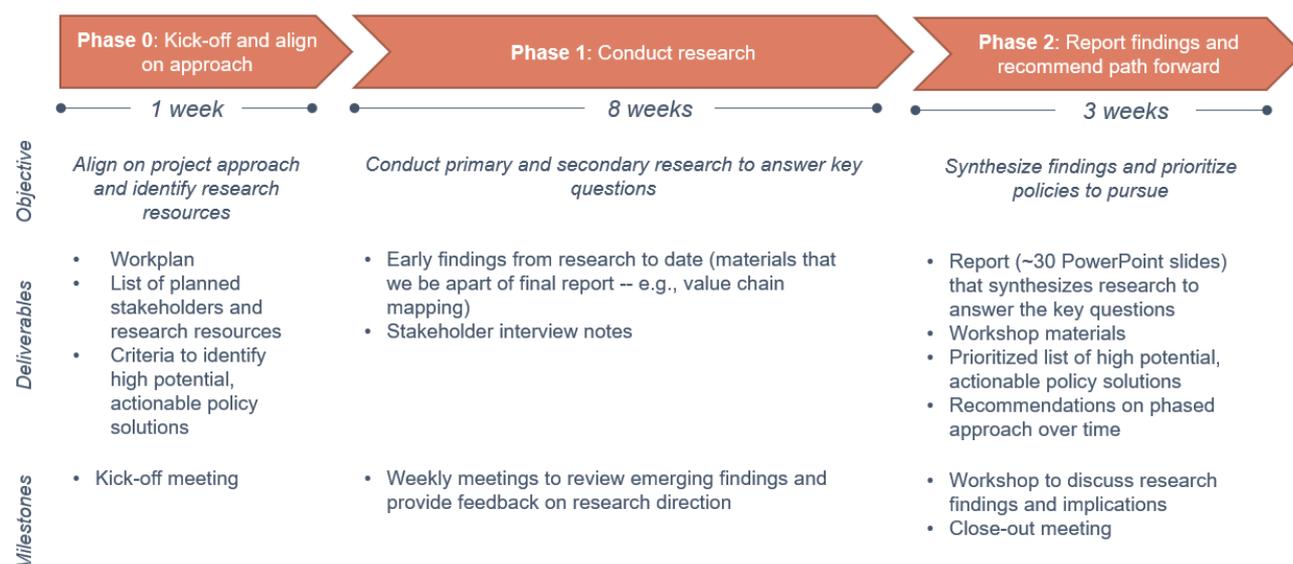
There are four key objectives of the project:

1. Identify feasible and effective policy approaches to enable increased production of healthier oilseeds in India
2. Assess whether the processing of palm oil in India can be revised to maintain needed properties while improving healthfulness (i.e., reducing saturated fat and eliminating iTFA), and identify government or other stakeholder interventions to advance this goal of improving palm oil processing
3. Identify parallel policy approaches to decrease importation (and eventually local production) of palm oil
4. Identify a feasible roadmap for India to use the increased production of healthier indigenous oils as a replacement for palm oil and support the elimination of iTFAs from food products

## **Project Overview**

It is anticipated that the project will require three phases of work over ~12 weeks. The key project deliverables and milestones are illustrated in Figure 1 and are detailed further in the description of each phase below. We are open to suggestions and recommendations on the project approach and timeline to best achieve project goals and objectives.

**Figure 1. Overview of project deliverables and milestones**



### Phase 0: Kick-off and align on approach (1 week)

The purpose of Phase 0 is to align on the project approach and research resources and address any changes in the landscape that could impact this scope of work since the release of this RFP.

A **kick-off meeting** will be held to discuss the following items. A draft version of these materials should be prepared in advance of the kick-off meeting for feedback and input. An updated version incorporating feedback from the meeting (and comments afterwards) will be the starting point for the work:

- **Proposed workplan:** The workplan should detail project activities, suggested timelines, proposed meeting times, and team members supporting the project.
- **List of planned stakeholders and research resources:** This list should include a suggested list of stakeholders to interview as well as primary resources to review and synthesize. We will review and collaboratively refine these lists.
- **Criteria to identify high potential actionable policy solutions:** These criteria will help to identify priority solutions that should be pursued further in Phase 2. We anticipate reviewing suggestions and collaboratively refining these as well.

After the kick-off meeting has occurred and the stakeholder list has been agreed upon, interviews should be scheduled as soon as possible during this phase to secure interviewee's time.

### Phase 1: Conduct research (8 weeks)

This phase will focus on primary and secondary research that answers key research questions to achieve project goals, including the following:

- Review and documentation of current policies [agriculture, trade, import/export, processing] on oils/fats and oils seeds
- Types of fats/oils consumed in India along with their usage/application.

The key research questions this work should answer are detailed in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Key questions that need to be answered to achieve project goals**

Context	
1	What food applications are TFAs commonly used for in India? What properties are needed?
2	What is the current policy landscape related to production and trade of palm and healthier oilseeds?
Potential of healthy oilseed substitutes	
3	Which healthy oils are good candidates to be substitutes for TFAs in India? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Which potential substitutes fulfill needed properties after processing?</li> <li>b. Which potential substitutes are most commonly consumed in India? Why?</li> <li>c. Which potential substitutes have favorable agricultural, economic, and environmental properties?</li> </ul>
4	Which of the potential substitutes are currently (or previously) grown and produced in India?
5	What are the key barriers across the value chains of potential substitutes that limit production today?
6	What are the highest potential policy solutions to address those key barriers?
Path forward for palm oil	
7	How can the processing of palm oil be revised to fulfill needed properties (question 1) while resulting in a healthier product?
8	What partnerships / policies can be pursued to support production of healthier palm oil?
9	What parallel policies can be pursued to decrease importation (and eventually local production) of palm oil?
10	How can the approach be phased to not disrupt agricultural and trade income?

We anticipate answering these questions will be a combination of:

- **Desk research:** Reviewing existing data and policies through databases (e.g., Ministry of Agriculture datasets; National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) data; FAO databases) and relevant reports.
- **Stakeholder interviews:** Gathering perspectives (directly or indirectly) of consumers, farmers, producers, government (e.g., Ministry of Agriculture - ICAR), and ag experts on specific oilseeds and policy (e.g., India Agricultural Research Institute, IFPRI, FAO). Interviews conducted should be **documented in notes** and shared.

We anticipate **meeting weekly** to discuss **early findings** to the key questions and provide feedback on the direction of the research. We do not expect the creation of additional output or deliverables, but rather early drafts of the materials that will be included in the final report in Phase 2 (e.g., reviewing the emerging value chain mapping).

### Phase 2: Report findings and recommend path forward (3 weeks)

The goal of Phase 2 is to synthesize and report findings and prioritize high potential policies to pursue further.

Early in Phase 2, a collaborative **workshop** would be helpful to review draft findings comprehensively and discuss emerging potential policy solutions that should be prioritized. This will involve developing **workshop materials** as well as facilitating a session with a variety of stakeholder perspectives. Following the workshop, the preliminary findings should be finalized and synthesized into a **final report**.

### Final Deliverables:

1. Final report, answering the key questions in Figure 2 (above) using ~30 PowerPoint slides. The report should include a **prioritized list of high potential, actionable policy solutions**. It should also include **recommendations** on whether and how these **policies solutions should be phased over time**. This report will inform Resolve to Save Lives' approach to continuing to support the Government of India and other partners working on TFA elimination in India. It will be used as a launching point for in-depth policy and advocacy mapping of high potential solutions to determine next steps for specific solutions.
2. Workshop materials
3. Draft manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, along with a list of

recommended target journals for submission.

1. **Selection Criteria. The Service Provider's responses shall be evaluated by a committee of RTSL staff members. Selection criteria shall include:**
  - The background and experience of the Service Provider in working with international non-profit organizations and the quality of services performed.
  - Reasonableness/competitiveness of proposed compensation for services, fees and/or benefits to Resolve to Save Lives, although Resolve to Save Lives is not bound to select the Service Provider who proposes the lowest fees or most benefits for services.
  - The Service Provider's responsiveness and compliance with the RFP requirements and questions.
  - The Service Provider's ability, capacity and skill to fully and satisfactorily provide the services required in this RFP.
2. **Rejection of Proposals.** Resolve to Save Lives reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to accept the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of Resolve to Save Lives and is not bound to accept the lowest price bid submitted. Incomplete proposals are subject to rejection.
3. **Final Contract.** This RFP, together with any documents required, shall be included in the final contract.
4. **Selection.** Resolve to Save Lives reserves the right to select as many Service Providers as it deems appropriate and is under no obligation to purchase any services of a particular Service Provider until a contract has been signed.
5. **Costs.** All costs related to the preparation and submission of this RFP shall be borne by the Service Provider. Under no circumstances shall Resolve to Save Lives be liable for any costs.
6. **Confidentiality.** The contents of this Request for Proposal (RFP) as well as any subsequent communication between Resolve to Save Lives and the Service Provider(s) are to be treated as confidential and are not to be distributed or shared without prior written authorization from RTSL' authorized representative.
7. **Resolve to Save Lives intends to adhere to the timeline in the table below, any change in the timeline shall be informed in advance.**
8. **Payment terms:** Expected budget for the work outlined in this RFP is INR 14,00,000.00. Payment will be made in 2 payments in Indian Rupees: 1<sup>st</sup> payment (50% of total) upon receipt of Phase 2 deliverables, and 2<sup>nd</sup> payment (remaining 50% of total) upon receipt of final deliverables. All payments are contingent on deliverables.
9. **Insurance Terms:** The Service Provider shall maintain appropriate and adequate insurance to cover the activities to be performed under this agreement with responsible and reputable insurance companies, in such amounts and covering such risks, as is usually carried by companies and individuals engaged in similar activities contracted to under this agreement. If the total value of this agreement is INR 7 million or higher, the Service Provider shall be required to maintain professional

liability insurance for the duration of the agreement and provide Resolve to Save Lives with documentation of such insurance.

## Requirements

**Proposal Submission.** Proposals shall include answers to all RFP questions (Box 1), and be emailed in PDF format, together with all relevant and any supporting documentation, to: Dr Swati Bhardwaj -- [BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org](mailto:BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org) with "Roadmap for replacing trans fats with healthy oils in India" in the subject line, **by 5.00 PM IST on [28th September 2022 ]**  
**BOX 1**

Please clearly reference the question section and number (A1, A2, etc.) in your response.

### A. Company Profile

1. Does your company have experience working with international organization?
2. Please provide a background and history of your company. Include the number of staff and information on all locations.
3. Please indicate who your main point of contact is for this RFP.
4. Provide the name and a brief bio of the technical/project manager that will be assigned for this project.
5. Please provide a minimum of 3 references.

### B. Proposed Services and Delivery

1. Detailed plan for the work as outlined with the timeline and project activities, supporting the project
2. What quality control measures will be implemented?
3. If any, list additional components you may want to add which may benefit this project.

### C. Quotation

1. Provide a quote for the total budget with the break-up
2. Are there any other miscellaneous costs?
3. How much taxes will be incurred?
4. Insurance should be carried by the Service Provider; provide insurances and amounts in place, along with a copy of applicable insurance documents required for the services to be provided

## Additional Considerations

It is desirable for the Service Provider to have the following:

- Background in policy research [agricultural/import/ export/ oil processing]
- Experience in working with aligned ministries, national and international non-profit organizations
- Successful previous assignment aligned with the current scope of work

## Timeline

Activity	Target for Completion
RFP is issued date	31st August 2022
Letter of Intent to Bid to be submitted by prospective respondents/ vendor by	14th September

Respondents to send clarification questions by	20th September
<b>Deadline for Submission of Proposals, 5.00 PM IST on:</b>	28th September
Evaluation of Proposals and Selection of Respondents to be interviewed by the review group	6th October
Interviews for Respondents/ discussion with successful Respondent to take place by	14th October

### Contact Information

Please contact us with any questions or to submit a proposal (and any supporting documentation) @ [BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org](mailto:BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org).

Contract Manager: Dr Bhawna Sharma

Email: [bsharma@resolvetosavelives.org](mailto:bsharma@resolvetosavelives.org)

Operation Team: Mansi Kapoor

Operation Team Email Address: [mkapoor@resolvetosavelives.org](mailto:mkapoor@resolvetosavelives.org)

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format to Dr Swati Bhardwaj, Technical Advisor, Nutrition, Resolve to Save Lives @ [BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org](mailto:BSwati@resolvetosavelives.org) by **[28th September 2022]**, 5.00 IST.

Thank you.

### Confidentiality Disclosure

The contents of this Request for Proposal (RFP) as well as any subsequent communication between RTSL and the Service Provider(s) are to be treated as confidential and are not to be distributed or shared without prior written authorization from RTSL's authorized representative.