

## **Briefing 5: Elaboration of guidelines for implementation of Article 12 (Education, communication, training and public awareness)**

**Third session of the Conference of the Parties to the  
WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control  
17-22 November 2008, Durban, South Africa**

### **Recommendation**

**The third session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control should decide to continue the work of the working group on Article 12 (Education, communication, training and public awareness), and mandate it to elaborate draft guidelines for presentation to the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, building on the progress report presented to the third session of the Conference of the Parties.**

### **Background**

Effective implementation of Article 12 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which deals with education, communication, training and public awareness, is critical to the effective implementation of the Convention as a whole. Article 12 recognizes one of the FCTC's key guiding principles, namely that '[e]very person should be informed of the health consequences, addictive nature and mortal threat posed by tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke' (Article 4.1), as well as the importance of awareness of tobacco control issues among the public and decision-makers to the development and implementation of effective tobacco control measures.

Under Article 12, Parties to the FCTC agree to 'promote and strengthen public awareness of tobacco control issues'. Towards this end, each Party agrees to adopt and implement effective measures to promote:

- public awareness about the health risks of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke, the benefits of cessation of tobacco use and tobacco-free lifestyles, and the adverse health, economic, and environmental consequences of tobacco production and consumption;
- broad access to effective and comprehensive educational and public awareness programmes on the health risks including the addictive characteristics of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke, and to a wide range of information on the tobacco industry and

- the adverse health, economic, and environmental consequences of tobacco production and consumption;
- awareness and participation of public and private agencies and nongovernmental organizations not affiliated with the tobacco industry in developing and implementing inter-sectoral programmes and strategies for tobacco control; and
  - effective and appropriate training or sensitization and awareness programmes on tobacco control addressed to persons such as health workers, community workers, social workers, media professionals, educators, decision-makers, administrators and other concerned persons.

Article 7 of the FCTC requires the Conference of the Parties (COP) to propose appropriate guidelines for the implementation of Article 12. At its second session (COP-2), the COP decided to commence work on the elaboration of guidelines on Article 12.<sup>1</sup> COP-2 established a working group and mandated it to present a progress report to the third session of the COP (COP-3). The working group has presented its report (Document FCTC/COP/3/8).

### **The progress report**

The Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) considers that the working group has made good progress towards the elaboration of guidelines on Article 12. In the 'Outline of draft guidelines for implementation of Article 12 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control' ('Outline of draft guidelines') annexed to the progress report, the working group has identified a number of 'underlying considerations' that should inform the guidelines (paras 4-9) including: respect for and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the right to life and the right to the highest attainable standard of health; the need for comprehensive multisectoral approaches; the need to ensure independence from the tobacco industry; the value of reliance on research-based evidence and best practices; and the value of international collaboration.

The working group has also identified ten principles that 'should guide implementation of Article 12' (para 10). These principles relate both to the content of education, communication, and training – identified by the working group as the 'three pillars' of Article 12 – and to processes for ensuring effective development and implementation of Parties' measures in this area. The principles recognize:

1. The need to ensure that tobacco production, sale, marketing and consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke are denormalized, helping tobacco users to quit and dissuading young people from starting to use tobacco.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Elaboration of guidelines for implementation of Articles 5.3, 9 and 10, 11, 12 and 14' (World Health Organization, Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, second session, decision FCTC/COP2(14)).

2. The need for comprehensive, sustainable national tobacco control programmes for all people, including effective legislative, executive, administrative, fiscal and other measures, in order to effectively provide education, communication and training and promote public awareness.
3. The need to communicate to all people: the adverse health, socioeconomic and environmental consequences of tobacco production and consumption; the adverse health, socioeconomic and environmental consequences of exposure to tobacco smoke; the deceptive strategies of the tobacco industry; and the benefits of cessation of tobacco use and of a tobacco-free life.
4. The need to tailor interventions to ensure that they build awareness and educate all people effectively, taking into consideration key differences among population groups with regard to gender, culture, religion, age, educational background, socio-economic status, literacy and disability.<sup>2</sup>
5. The need to provide effective education and training on tobacco control to all health workers, community workers, social workers, media professionals, educators, traditional communicators and healers (traditional medical or spiritual practitioners), decision-makers, religious and spiritual counsellors, administrators and other concerned persons.
6. The importance of national coordinating mechanisms or focal points for tobacco control in good planning, management and synchronization with other national programmes and of adequate funding for such mechanisms.
7. The importance of being guided by research, monitoring and evaluation, sharing of best practices among Parties and other forms of international cooperation.
8. The central role of civil society in elaboration, implementation and evaluation of programmes.<sup>3</sup>
9. The need to protect all programmes from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry.
10. The need to include in all education, communication, training and public awareness programmes a wide range of information on the tobacco industry as relevant to the objectives of the Convention.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that FCA considers that formative research will be required to ensure that that the interventions focus on the real rather than on the perceived needs of different population groups.

<sup>3</sup> Note that FCA considers that this should specifically include 'monitoring'.

Importantly, the Outline of draft guidelines recognizes that public awareness 'is not only about information, but rather about changing social norms and behaviour ... Education, training and communication are the means for raising public awareness and achieving social change' (para 15).

### **Future work**

FCA considers that the good work so far performed by the working group on Article 12 will allow draft guidelines to be elaborated for presentation to the fourth session of the COP (COP-4). The draft guidelines should build on the progress report and provide detailed recommendations on how the identified principles can best be implemented in practice.

FCA will make further recommendations to the working group as it continues its work on the development of draft guidelines. For the time being, FCA recommends that COP-3 decide to mandate the working group to elaborate draft guidelines for presentation to COP-4, and to regard the progress report as a good basis for future work.