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Fifth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the
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FCA Policy Briefing:
FCTC Mechanisms of assistance and financial resources

Key recommendation

FCA recommends that COP5 establish and finance a working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC.

Introduction

Already in early 2000, most developing countries emphasised that they would not be able to put in place tobacco control measures unless additional resources were made available. Sadly, more than 10 years later, lack of resources still hampers implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). In the latest reporting cycle, more than 70 Parties indicated disparities between needs and available resources to implement the FCTC¹.

The latest review on progress in mobilizing resources for FCTC implementation does not indicate that any bilateral development assistance or other financial support is being directly provided to Parties. It is essential that COP5 address this matter and allow for solutions to be developed. Effective FCTC implementation and the current lack of resources for this are one of the most complex issues concerning the Convention. At COP5, Parties should establish a working group with a mandate to address the shortfall in resources for FCTC implementation.

FCTC implementation: How much does it cost?

In 2006, COP1 reviewed an extensive study of potential sources of funding and mechanisms of assistance for treaty implementation². Although many potential funding sources were identified, it was not possible to assess whether these resources would be sufficient to meet Parties' needs arising from implementation of the Convention.

In 2011, WHO developed a financial planning tool to assist low- and middle-income countries in scaling up their interventions to tackle non-communicable diseases (NCDs). According to these calculations, the total annual cost of putting in place four FCTC measures³ – including overall programme management and media support – is projected to be US\$0.6 billion for all low- and middle-income countries⁴. In comparison, only US\$268 million⁵ was provided through international

¹ COP5 report FCTC/COP/5/15 para 8.

² COP1 report A/FCTC/COP/1/4.

³ Smoke-free policies, tobacco taxation, package warnings, advertising bans.

⁴ WHO. 2011. Scaling up action against noncommunicable diseases: How much will it cost? Geneva: WHO.

assistance for the prevention and control of NCDs; this represents only 1 percent of total development assistance for health⁶. No breakdown of funds devoted to FCTC implementation through international development assistance is available.

Review of progress – COP4 discussions and outcomes

At the last session of the COP, many countries expressed concerns about the lack of significant progress made in mobilizing international cooperation and resources for tobacco control, particularly at the country level. Several Parties suggested that an intersessional working group on this topic should be set up⁷.

In the end, it was decided that an initial assessment of mobilized resources, including the effectiveness of the FCTC mechanisms of assistance, should be undertaken by the Convention Secretariat⁸.

FCA congratulates the Convention Secretariat for a comprehensive overview of the FCTC system of assistance and its different components. As outlined in report FCTC/COP/5/15, the framework for assistance includes activities undertaken by the Convention Secretariat to stimulate international cooperation on FCTC implementation or the exchange and transfer of technology, as well as tools such as needs assessments and the database of available resources. Activities undertaken by the Convention Secretariat to promote the Convention internationally and mobilize resources for its implementation are included in reports FCTC/COP/5/15, FCTC/COP/5/16, and FCTC/COP/5/17.

As highlighted by decisions of past COP sessions, the work of the World Health Organization (WHO), particularly its Tobacco Free Initiative (TFI), as well as WHO regional and country offices, also has an important role to play in the implementation of the Convention. An overview of relevant WHO activities and their immediate outcomes is part of report FCTC/COP/5/15.

FCTC mechanisms of assistance and their performance

Two specific tools – needs assessments and the database – have been set up within the Convention to facilitate implementation. On one hand, needs assessments aim to scope out capacities or resources that Parties require to put in place FCTC measures. The database of available resources, on the other hand, gathers information on existing financial or technical assistance. Together, these two tools are designed to provide a supply of resources that meets the demand for assistance.

The report of the Convention Secretariat indicates that the immediate requirements of several Parties where needs assessments were undertaken in past years are being fulfilled. At the same time, more than 40 entities, including governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental entities, identified being able to provide support for tobacco control work.

Mobilization of resources for implementation of the FCTC

Financial resources play an important role in achieving the objectives of the Convention. In fact, this is exactly what Article 26 of the FCTC states. As extensively described in report FCTC/COP/5/15, tools

⁵ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). 2011. Financing Global Health 2011: Continued Growth as MDG Deadline Approaches. Seattle: IHME.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ See the summary records of the proceedings of Committee B at COP4 (third meeting) in document FCTC/COP/4/REC/3 (p.76-82): http://apps.who.int/gb/fctc/PDF/cop4/FCTC_COP4_REC3-en.pdf.

⁸ COP4 decision FCTC/COP4(17).

such as needs assessments, as well as various processes to encourage international coordination and cooperation, were set up to mobilize and direct financial resources towards Parties as they put in place FCTC measures.

Both the Convention Secretariat and WHO's TFI have successfully secured resources to support Parties in FCTC implementation. These resources were provided either by governments or private donors, such as foundations. In total, more than US\$6 million was raised by the Convention Secretariat since 2006 to further mobilize support for FCTC implementation. Similarly, WHO was provided with additional resources to, among other measures, develop training materials, deliver workshops, or help countries assess capacities needed to effectively implement selected tobacco control measures.

Resources for both the Convention Secretariat and the TFI are essential to allow them to assist Parties. This assistance, however, cannot replace direct financial support provided to low- and middle-income country Parties as they fulfil requirements of the Convention and build their own capacity to fund tobacco control. Financial resources provided directly to Parties through bilateral development assistance or other means are not captured by report FCTC/COP/5/15.

Coming years might see major shifts in the international community's priorities concerning the allocation of resources for global health. According to the WHO, one of the major expected changes is a full recognition of the societal and economic impact of NCDs⁹. It is essential that such recognition is also accompanied by clear understanding that an effective tool to address NCDs – the FCTC – is available, and that resources are needed to implement it. Similarly, the development framework which will be established after 2015, the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), should recognize the critical role of the FCTC in tackling NCDs and achieving sustainable development.

COP5: time to establish a working group on mechanisms of assistance

In 2011, unprecedented attention was paid to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and strategies to tackle them. Governments repeated often their commitment and determination to accelerate implementation of the FCTC^{10 11 12 13 14 15 16}.

COP5 provides Parties with a unique opportunity to turn these commitments into action and take full advantage of the upcoming deliberations on the post-2015 development framework. One of the biggest threats to achieving progress on the FCTC – chronic lack of resources for its implementation – needs to be addressed by Parties, and should be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Both donor and recipient Parties need to participate in finding solutions.

Over the past years, working groups under the FCTC allowed Parties to engage in discussions between COP sessions and develop technical guidelines to strengthen implementation of the Convention. At COP5, it is time to demonstrate that a working group of interested Parties can also address practical challenges related to insufficient resources for the FCTC at the country level.

⁹ WHO. 2012. Positioning Health in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Geneva: WHO.

¹⁰ UN resolution A/RES/66/2 – Political Declaration of the UN HLM on NCDs.

¹¹ First Global Ministerial Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Noncommunicable Disease Control - Moscow Declaration.

¹² World Conference on Social Determinants of Health – Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health.

¹³ PAHO Ministerial Declaration for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.

¹⁴ Jakarta Call for Action on Noncommunicable Diseases.

¹⁵ Seoul Declaration on noncommunicable disease prevention and control in the Western Pacific Region.

¹⁶ The Brazzaville declaration on NCDs prevention and control in the WHO African Region.

Meetings of a **working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC** will no doubt differ from existing practices. Parties will need to engage in considerable preparations before working group meetings. They should present their proposals on solutions to increasing investment in FCTC implementation, or share their views on necessary improvements to existing mechanisms of assistance. Parties might also need to request that additional research be undertaken before the working group can meet for the first or second time.

Although resources within the FCTC budget may be scarce and many COP5 priorities will compete for the available funding, FCA urges Parties to establish and fund such a working group to address the lack of resources for country-level work on the FCTC.

The working group's mandate should include:

- Undertake a review of successes in mobilising resources for FCTC implementation at the country level through existing mechanisms of assistance, as well as through bilateral and multilateral development assistance;
- Provide recommendations on additional means that have the potential to channel existing resources or generate innovative funding for FCTC implementation;
- Propose a format for impact assessments of FCTC needs assessment missions and the database of available resources; and
- Commission the development of any necessary guidance materials, such as toolkits for implementation of FCTC Article 5.2, and an estimate of the resources required for implementation of all FCTC articles in low- and middle-income countries.

This working group should also discuss other components of the FCTC system of assistance, particularly international cooperation¹⁷. As a result, the mandate of the working group should also include:

- Identify and promote best practices on accessing international resources for tobacco control;
- Research barriers to accessing international development assistance for implementation of the Convention; and
- Elaborate a roadmap to promote the Convention at international and regional events during the upcoming review of the MDGs and during establishment of post-2015 international development goals.

Conclusion

Insufficient investment in tobacco control undermines FCTC achievements to date and threatens further progress on implementation of the Convention. An ongoing engagement of a wide variety of Parties, both donor and recipient Parties, will be essential to address the matter and elaborate solutions. FCA recommends that COP5 establish and finance a working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC.

¹⁷ More information on the mandate of the working group in terms of international opportunities is provided in FCA's Policy briefing on International Cooperation.