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WEDNESDAY, 14 NOV. 18:15-19:15
FCA AND ITS MEMBERS WILL
LAUNCH A VARIETY OF REPORTS
ON TOBACCO CONTROL ISSUES.
ROOM 318-B

DEATH CLOCK

SINCE THE OPENING OF THE FIRST
WORKING GROUP FOR THE FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL ON
25 OCTOBER 1999

62,938,679

PEOPLE HAVE DIED FROM TOBACCO-
RELATED DISEASES. (AS OF 9AM SEOUL
TIME ON 14 NOVEMBER 2012)

**IT IS TIME: WORKING
GROUP ON
IMPLEMENTATION**

When it comes to assistance to Parties for FCTC implementation, it's time to move from complaints to solutions.

At past COP sessions, and in their reports, low- and middle-income Parties have been clear that lack of technical support and financial resources are significant obstacles to turning FCTC obligations into concrete tobacco control measures and programmes. But these complaints have so far done little to change the reality that FCTC implementation is barely on most countries' development agendas and hardly registers with bilateral and multilateral donors.

We've Discussed for Years

It is worth recalling some of the past efforts to develop mechanisms of assistance for the FCTC. The first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP1) reviewed an extensive study of potential sources of funding and mechanisms of assistance for treaty implementation. The study assessed then-existing funds for tobacco control initiatives, and also discussed the suitability of different funding mechanisms in the context of the FCTC. It identified both significant prospects and potential challenges.

In response to the findings of report A/FCTC/COP/1/4, COP1 established a framework for FCTC implementation assistance. Its parameters were based on several fundamental assumptions: sources for financing tobacco control do exist within the international development framework and some regional and international organisations can provide support in the form of technical assistance and expert advice.

Two tools were established within the Convention to assist Parties in accessing necessary support for FCTC implementation: needs assessments and the database of available resources.

Several workshops and meetings have also occurred to stimulate knowledge-sharing among Parties. Nevertheless, according to the report presented to COP5, no financial resources have been provided directly to Parties through bilateral development or other means.

One reason for the COP's failure to make sufficient progress on these issues is that they are simply too complicated to analyse and resolve at sessions of the COP, where many other important issues vie for delegates' time. Parties need time to analyse the obstacles to FCTC implementation, determine the types of assistance that are needed, and figure out how best to integrate delivery of this support into the numerous channels of international health and development assistance.

The Need is Clear

It is for this reason that the FCA – and, as we heard yesterday in Committee B, an increasing number of Parties – see the need for intersessional work, in the form of a working group on mechanisms of assistance. This working group, if established by COP5, would develop a long-term strategy to address obstacles to FCTC implementation.

Yesterday's discussions at Committee B started with an unprecedented pace and resulted in a fruitful exchange of views on FCTC mechanisms of assistance and financial resources. The importance of tools to streamline international cooperation, leading to mutual support on FCTC implementation, was raised by five countries.

Nigeria, Sudan and Bolivia went even further and brought up possible avenues for COP5 to tackle challenges that Parties experience when implementing the

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EL IMPUESTO ESPECIAL A LOS PRODUCTOS DE TABACO EN MÉXICO. AVANCES Y RETOS

El impuesto especial a los productos de tabaco en México ha experimentado diversos cambios a lo largo de la última década. Tres de estos cambios destacan pues concuerdan con las recomendaciones del borrador de lineamientos para el artículo 6 del CMCT de la OMS que se está discutiendo en la COP5: 1) la homologación del impuesto para todo tipo de cigarros y otros productos de tabaco, 2) la implementación de un sistema mixto, y 3) el incremento del componente específico en 2011. Aquí se comentan esos avances, sus repercusiones y algunos retos para el futuro.

Avance 1. Mismo impuesto especial para todo tipo de cigarros y otros productos de tabaco

Hasta principios de la década pasada, el impuesto especial a los cigarros sin filtro había sido menor, pues se argumentaba, erróneamente, que con esto se protegía a la población de menores recursos que consumía ese tipo de productos. Sin embargo, a finales de 2001 se aprobaron incrementos graduales del impuesto especial a los cigarros sin filtro que permitieron homologarlo al de los cigarros con filtro cuatro años después. Los puros y otros productos de tabaco también estaban sujetos al impuesto especial que pagaban los cigarros sin filtro. Fue hasta el año 2007 cuando se incrementó para que todos los productos de tabaco pagaran el mismo impuesto especial. Los únicos productos de tabaco para los que se ha mantenido un impuesto menor son los puros y otros tabacos labrados hechos enteramente a mano.

El argumento más utilizado para justificar esa excepción es la protección del empleo ya que la fabricación de esos productos requiere más mano de obra que los productos enrollados con máquinas. La homologación del impuesto especial entre cigarros y entre productos de tabaco desincentiva el cambio hacia productos más baratos cuando se incrementan los impuestos.

Avance 2. Implementación de un impuesto especial mixto

Desde su creación al inicio de la década de los ochentas, el impuesto especial

a los productos de tabaco había sido un impuesto ad valorem, es decir, un impuesto que se establece como porcentaje de un valor (en este caso, el precio de venta al detallista). Pero a partir de 2010 se añadió un componente específico, es decir, un componente que se expresa en unidades monetarias por cantidad (en este caso, pesos por cigarro). Así, en 2010 los cigarros pagaban un impuesto especial de 160% sobre el precio de venta al detallista (componente ad valorem) y 4 centavos por cigarro (componente específico).



EL IMPUESTO ESPECIAL A LOS PRODUCTOS DE TABACO EN MÉXICO HA EXPERIMENTADO DIVERSOS CAMBIOS A LO LARGO DE LA ÚLTIMA DÉCADA.



El sistema impositivo mixto permite aprovechar las ventajas de los impuestos ad valorem y específicos y compensar sus desventajas. La principal ventaja de los impuestos específicos es que son fáciles de administrar y suelen reducir las diferencias de precios entre marcas pero tienen la desventaja de que requieren ajustes periódicos según la inflación. Por el contrario, los impuestos ad valorem no requieren ajustes por la inflación pero incentivan las diferencias de precios entre marcas y son más difíciles de administrar.

Avance 3. Incremento sustancial del componente específico del impuesto especial en 2011

Apenas un año después de implementarse el componente específico del impuesto especial a los cigarros, se incrementó de 4 centavos por cigarro a 35 centavos. Esto condujo a un incremento del precio de venta al público mucho mayor que los observados en años previos (27% para la marca más popular). Es de destacar que este incremento se dio en un entorno político desfavorable.

El efecto de los incrementos del impuesto especial a los productos de tabaco sobre la recaudación y el consumo

Los incrementos del impuesto especial a los productos de tabaco de la última década han estado acompañados de incrementos en la recaudación por ese concepto. Tan sólo en los primeros 9 meses de 2012 se ha recaudado 16% más en términos reales (ajustado por la inflación) que en el mismo periodo de 2010, es decir, antes de la implementación del incremento del impuesto especial más reciente. Al mismo tiempo, algunos indicadores sugieren que el consumo de cigarros en el país se ha reducido en la última década (e.g., la producción nacional se ha reducido al igual que las importaciones netas; la prevalencia de fumadores diarios también se ha reducido).

Algunos retos

Aunque la iniciativa que condujo al incremento más reciente del impuesto especial a los productos de tabaco incluía ajustes de acuerdo con la inflación, esos ajustes no fueron aprobados. Además, las ventas de cigarros nacionales se han incrementado sustancialmente en los meses previos a la entrada en vigor de los aumentos recientes del impuesto especial para evitar el pago del impuesto más alto. También se han tenido pocos avances en el monitoreo y combate al comercio ilícito. La industria ha aprovechado la falta de información oficial para argumentar que los incrementos del impuesto especial han incrementado las ventas de productos de tabaco de contrabando.

La experiencia mexicana muestra cómo se puede mejorar la política fiscal aplicada a los productos de tabaco con fines de salud pública, en línea con artículo 6 del CMCT de la OMS y el borrador de lineamientos para ese artículo, así como los beneficios que se pueden obtener en términos de recaudación y consumo. Si bien, se tienen pendientes y obstáculos por resolver en los próximos años.

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ESTABLISH AN FCTC TRAVEL SUPPORT POLICY: KEEP THE CONVENTION FIT FOR PURPOSE

As the work of the Parties moves forward through COP5 and beyond, its success will depend on ensuring the participation and representation of those developing countries that are at the sharp edge of the tobacco industry's global expansion, and which increasingly bear the greatest burden of tobacco's health impacts.

A defining feature of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) process has been the critical contributions of countries and regions that are often depicted as lacking influence in international relations and in global health. The active leadership roles played by developing countries are central to any explanation of the strength of the Convention and have been key to the substantial progress made across four COPs on four continents and towards the Protocol on Illicit Trade.

This prominence and pluralism contrasts starkly with other contexts for global governance. Voices of the global South are often seen as marginalized within the World Bank, World Trade Organization, environmental agreements and even global health initiatives like the Global Fund. Importantly, developing country participation in the FCTC hasn't happened by accident.

In 2000, the World Health Assembly took modest but significant steps to combat the systematic obstacles impeding developing country participation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB). It initiated a distinctive travel policy in which support was made available to cover air travel, accommodation and per diem for one delegate for all low- and lower-middle income countries. This arrangement remained in place until it became the subject of significant debate at COP4. Since then, this level of support has been maintained under an interim arrangement until COP5 only for least developed countries (LDCs), with travel funding for other low- and lower-middle income countries now confined only to air fares, and with further reductions projected.

The implications of such changes are likely to be profound for many Parties, some 46 percent of which are likely to be affected. While the general temptation to cut back on travel costs as a proportion of expenditure is understandable, in this

particular context it seems profoundly misguided for at least three reasons. Firstly, the arguments advanced by high income countries in proposing reductions rest on an implicit distinction between implementation of FCTC objectives (defined as core tobacco control activities) and supporting participation in FCTC meetings (seen as peripheral or unrelated). As a delegate from Brazil noted at COP4, it is hard to see the logic of an argument suggesting that measures that lower participation are somehow likely to result in improved implementation of the Convention.



IT IS CLEAR THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE TRAVEL POLICY IS OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE IN ENSURING THAT FCTC SESSIONS ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE.



Secondly, it is important to contextualize the scale of spending on supporting travel for eligible Parties, some US\$1.2 million in 2010-11. This is clearly significant given the comparative modesty of FCTC resources, but the overriding financial challenge confronting Parties and tobacco control more broadly is to address the huge disparity between tobacco's impact on global health and the resources devoted to curbing it. While annual deaths attributable to tobacco exceed those from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined, development assistance for those three diseases is a remarkable 300 times greater than the total for tobacco control, according to a 2012 article in *Tobacco Control* (21(5):465-70).

Thirdly, and most importantly, the decision to change the basis of travel support ignores emerging evidence of the gradual success of the funding arrangements endorsed by the World Health Assembly. A soon to be published analysis of participants in COP sessions demonstrates significant improvements in the extent of representation by low- and lower-middle income countries. Assisted by the practice of rotating COP meetings across WHO regions, the numerical dominance of

delegations from high-income countries, and regionally from WHO Europe, that characterised the first COP meeting in Geneva has been substantially reduced.

While still underrepresented, delegates from low- and lower-middle income countries collectively accounted for around one-third of country delegates at COP4 in 2010, up from one-quarter in 2006. The regional diversity of participation has also improved with the sessions in Thailand, South Africa and Uruguay providing the largest delegate presence from WHO SEARO (Southeast Asia), Africa and AMRO (the Americas) respectively. The diversity of delegations by institutional affiliation has also increased, with delegations from national focal points for tobacco control and ministries of health, agriculture and trade all becoming more prominent as participants.

The assumption that travel funds constitute a peripheral issue is perhaps understandable, and they can seem an easy target in the context of budget constraints. But it is clear that the maintenance of an effective travel policy is of central importance in ensuring that FCTC sessions are fit for purpose. If the critical need to expand the global coverage of tobacco control is to be addressed, then so do the obstacles to promoting developing country participation. The appropriate way to achieve this is by establishing a distinctive FCTC travel support policy to cover air fare, accommodation and per diem for one delegate from each low- and lower-middle-income Party. Its centrality to the work of the FCTC suggests that this should be supported via its core funding rather than from extrabudgetary contributions.

For a more detailed analysis, see: Plotnikova E, Hill S, Collin J (in Press). The 'diverse, dynamic new world of global tobacco control'? An analysis of participation in the Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. *Tobacco Control*.

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ARTICLE 19: IT'S TIME TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE

HOLD THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY LIABLE FOR ITS ABUSES

FCTC Article 19, perhaps second only to FCTC Article 5.3 and its Guidelines, has the potential to neutralize the tobacco industry's ability and incentive to engage in the unlawful, deceptive and abusive practices that impede the implementation of the FCTC (See "Implementation of Article 19 of the WHO FCTC: 'Liability'" (FCTC/COP/5/11) for more). Article 19 "stipulates that Parties shall consider taking legislative action or promoting their existing laws to deal with criminal and civil liability, including compensation where appropriate," and that "Parties shall also cooperate in exchanging information on various matters, such as legislation, regulations in force and pertinent jurisprudence, and afford one another assistance in legal proceedings relating to liability, as appropriate and mutually agreed."

Despite Article 19's life-saving potential, implementation has been sporadic, with only a few countries using liability to hold the tobacco industry accountable.

EVEN AS TOBACCO'S ANNUAL DEATH TOLL SOARS BEYOND SIX MILLION, BIG TOBACCO HAS STEPPED UP ITS EFFORTS TO PREVENT PROVEN TOBACCO CONTROL LAWS FROM BEING IMPLEMENTED

Meanwhile, even as tobacco's annual death toll soars beyond six million, Big Tobacco has stepped up its efforts to prevent proven tobacco control laws from being implemented. The tobacco industry uses lawsuits to intimidate governments and subvert their tobacco control policies. But why should Parties abandon the courts to the tobacco industry? While additional legislation may sometimes be needed, it may be possible in every country for the government, NGOs or individuals to sue multinational tobacco corporations for their well-demonstrated misbehavior and the harm they have

caused. Now, as the tobacco industry ramps up its "intimidation by litigation" tactic, governments should collaborate to defeat the industry at its own game – and perhaps recoup costs resulting from tobacco addiction while they're at it.

“THE FIRST STEP IS CLEAR, AND THE FCTC SECRETARIAT RECOMMENDS IT. LET'S TAKE IT..”

In order to do this, the COP should establish an expert group to focus on Article 19 implementation this week.

Here's why:

For decades, the tobacco industry has deceived the public about the harms of its products and addicted children and young people through aggressive, targeted marketing. Civil litigation has proven to be one of the most effective ways to publicly expose these misdeeds, change public perception of the industry so that it ceases to be seen as viable "partner" or legitimate "stakeholder", as well as recouping the costs of treating tobacco-related disease. Article 19, like Article 5.3, is a cross-cutting tobacco control measure, facilitating the implementation of all of the FCTC's other articles. Litigation can expose Big Tobacco's strategies to undermine public health, educating the public and lawmakers about decades of industry deception and sabotage. This sets the stage, as it did in the United States, to accelerate policies that keep Big Tobacco out of public health policymaking, shut down front groups, and pass life-saving tobacco control laws.

In France, the tobacco control NGO Comité National Contre le Tabagisme (CNCT) has won more than 250 enforcement cases against the tobacco industry, authorized by 1982 legislation which allows the government to collect fines, and NGO to recover its operating expenses, and the French people to benefit from having their tobacco control laws strictly enforced. In Canada, all 10 provinces have passed laws enabling the recovery of tobacco-related health care costs through litigation, and nine have already filed lawsuits.

In the United States, State Attorneys General – who had previously avoided direct confrontation with tobacco companies – successfully sued tobacco corporations for their misconduct, forcing tobacco companies to agree to a settlement funding tobacco control efforts and repaying the states billions of dollars each year. In another US case, a federal court concluded that tobacco companies' profits were so dependent on their fraudulent activities that the judge found them to be "racketeers" and imposed a variety of sanctions.

Though Big Tobacco claims to have turned over a new leaf, it has instead exported its aggressive marketing, willful deception and racketeering to countries in the global South to addict people to its deadly products. This leaves the tobacco industry vulnerable to similar lawsuits. Parties to the FCTC should do everything in their power to share legal strategies and resources to hold the industry accountable.

“BIG TOBACCO HAS INSTEAD EXPORTED ITS AGGRESSIVE MARKETING, WILLFULL DECEPTION AND RACKETEERING TO COUNTRIES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH”

Of course, in order to do this, Parties need legal resources, expertise and guidance on cases. They may need to update their national or local laws in order to handle these kinds of cases. They need the international community to support their efforts. That's what this expert group can provide – the tools to determine how governments can collaborate to hold the tobacco industry liable for its abuses, generate much needed revenue to treat tobacco-related disease, and expose decades of deception.

The first step is clear, and the FCTC Secretariat recommends it. Let's take it.

T.J. Faircloth
Research Director
Corporate Accountability
International

INDIA'S TOBACCO TAX SYSTEM: THE IMPORTANCE OF SIMPLIFYING TAX STRUCTURE

India presents a unique case: myriad tobacco products are in use and, unlike much of the world, the prevalence of smokeless tobacco use is greater than of smoking. The tobacco tax structure is also complex with both central and state governments having the power to levy tax. The structure of central excise itself is diverse in terms of ad valorem and specific taxes for smoked and smokeless tobacco products. Generally, cigarettes and bidis (tobacco rolled in tendu leaf and then smoked) are subject to specific taxation, whereas smokeless products are taxed on an ad valorem basis. A cursory look into the tax structure outlined in Table 1 indicates, for instance, cigarettes are classified into five product tiers in the filtered category and three types of taxes are imposed on them. The tax rate on premium filtered cigarettes is almost 3 ½ times more than for the lowest brand in this category, which results in a high degree of brand switching in reaction to price changes. The tax rate on bidis, on the other hand, is extremely low, varying from machine-made to hand-rolled. In addition, the political economy of the country favours a low tax rate on bidis on the grounds that they are consumed largely

by the poor. Further, bidi manufacturing takes place largely in informal settings, providing greater opportunity to evade taxation.

For smokeless tobacco products, the tax rate is uniform across various products, which may limit switching between the products. However, the unit price of smokeless tobacco products is too low to prevent consumption in spite of price increases due to tax.

The differential tax rates within and across categories of tobacco products are also difficult to administer.

Article 6 draft Guidelines and their Implications for India

The draft Article 6 guidelines being discussed at this COP, perhaps, is developed keeping in view of the countries with limited products and may pose difficulty in the countries where diverse products are in use. Perhaps the best illustration of this is India, where cigarettes make up only a small portion of the tobacco market, and tobacco tax

discussions are accordingly very complex.

The draft guidelines make the point that it is important that tobacco tax increases do not simply cause tobacco users to switch to comparable products that are lower in price. FCA advocates modifying the recommendation on comparable tax rates, including by adding the following: "Parties with multiple tax tiers for the same product category (such as cigarettes) should reduce the number of tiers, if possible to a single one." In this context,

India's complex tobacco tax requires simplification. The goal should be to reduce the multi-tier tax regime within and across products, making it more effective from both the health and revenue points of view. A uniform tax structure may be generally desirable in most countries to improve tax administration and increase revenue. However in the Indian context, as in countries with a similar diversity of products, applying a uniform tax structure could prove challenging.

This does not undermine the necessity for uniformity across products, but underlines the difficulties of achieving it. For example, from the health point of view it is highly desirable to increase the current low tax rate on bidis to a level approaching that of the rate for cigarettes. However, based on the differences in cost and consumer base of the two products, ways and means to achieve this increase will have to evolve over time.

Given these challenges, the first step should be to abolish multi-tier specific taxes for cigarettes. In the case of smokeless products, the existing provision for similar taxes across categories may not result in lower consumption due to the low unit prices of these products. In this case, what is needed is revising upward the tax on low priced smokeless products of Rs 1.50/2 per pouch in order to prevent the sale of low a low-priced products. To ensure the effective implementation of the Guidelines, tax reform should simultaneously emphasize strengthening of tax administration, countering unbranded sales, and compulsory reporting of sales of bidis to, for example, the excise department.

Products	Product Tier	2010-11				Total	Smokeless Tobacco Products	Duty: 2010-11				
		B	AA	NCCD	SED			Total	B	AA	NCCD	SED
Unfiltered Cigarettes (Rupees Per 1000 sticks)	Size < 60 mm	509	70	90	669		Chewing Tobacco/ Preparation Containing Chewing Tobacco	60%	10%	10%	16%	96%
	60-70 mm	1218	110	145	1473							
Filtered Cigarettes (Rupees Per 1000 sticks)	Up to 60mm	509	70	90	669	Pan Masala Containing Tobacco	60%	10%	10%	16%	96%	
	60-70 mm	809	70	90	969							
	70-75 mm	1218	110	145	1473							
	75-85 mm	1624	145	190	1959							
	> 85 mm	1948	180	235	2363							
Cigarettes of Tobacco Substitutes (Rupees Per 1000 sticks)		1258		150	1408	Snuff of Tobacco and Preparation Containing Snuff of Tobacco	60%	10%	10%	16%	96%	
Bidis Without Machine and Other Than Paper Rolled (Rupees Per 1000 sticks)		12		1	13	Tobacco Extracts and Essence	60%	10%	10%	16%	96%	
Other Bidis (Rupees Per 1000 sticks)		30		2	32	Jarda Scented Tobacco	60%	10%	10%	16%	96%	

Table 1. Tobacco Tax Structure across Products in India

B- Basic Excise Duty

AA- Additional Duty on pan Masala and Certain Tobacco products (2007 onwards)

NCCD- National Calamity Contingent Duty

SED- Special Excise Duty

Sarit Kumar Rout, Sakthivel Selvaraj, Amit Yadav & Shoba John - India

COMMITTEE B CONSIDERS IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW MECHANISMS

IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP

continued from page 1

Committee B moved fast through the agenda on Tuesday – but not too fast for important proposals to be put forward on the agenda items. In the first discussion of the day a number of Parties raised ideas and proposals on an IRM.

Micronesia, speaking on behalf of the Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands and Palau called on COP5 to set up an expert group on the implementation review mechanism. The proposal mentioned the availability of funding for the review mechanism in the draft budget. The idea received support from the EMRO countries and raised interest from the Australian delegation in hearing more details about its specifics.

Norway, in turn, proposed that Parties consider working on an impact assessment of the FCTC ten years after adoption, to be launched in 2015. That would require the preparatory work to start at this session, such as asking the Secretariat to report to COP6 on possible ways of conducting the assessment.

On a general note, several Parties and regions expressed their desire to establish a mechanism that is efficient and cost-effective. The system should make the most of existing reports and indicators while avoiding duplication with WHO and Secretariat work.

The issue was deferred to Wednesday's agenda. Parties will consider a draft decision prepared by the Secretariat based on the discussions, as well as a written proposal to be submitted by Norway. Implementation reporting and review are crucial to the overall FCTC implementation moving forward. As the discussions on IRMs continue, it is important for Parties to select the best and most suitable of many potential approaches. Establishing an intersessional Expert Group on the possible systems will provide for a careful and thorough consideration of the options for COP6. Ultimately, this will lead to a more sustainable implementation review system.

FCTC. Focused discussions among parties on strategies to unlock the potential of international cooperation, development assistance and innovative mechanisms were spelled out as a necessary component of the intersessional work.

On Wednesday, Parties will have an opportunity to review proposals from Bolivia and Nigeria on the terms of reference of the proposed working group. No doubt, further discussions may be needed to address the wide spectrum of experiences. Finding consensus and working cooperatively will be key to moving forward. Now that the "public" is away the only enemy of the Parties is time.



University students practice for a flashmob Tuesday near hall D2

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS TO TOBACCO: APPROACHES & EXPERIENCES

On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day 2012, the project Unfairtobacco.org of the NGO BLUE 21 published the study *Alternative Livelihoods to Tobacco: Approaches & Experiences*. The study includes a description of projects from three different parts of the world:

- Adriana Gregolin, director of Brazil's National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas, outlines the key principles and structure of the programme. Potential alternatives include poultry farming, aquaculture and cultivating grapes, for grape juice. The Programme acts as a nexus between farmers, research bodies, civil society and government entities.
- Jacob K. Kibwage leads a university-based project that assists farmers in Kenya with switching from tobacco to bamboo cultivation. He describes how the project provides technical support and training for the launch of bamboo farming activities and for manufacturing bamboo products.
- Farida Akhter, director of the policy research organisation UBINIG in Bangladesh, shows how farmers looking for a way out of tobacco cultivation were assisted by UBINIG and the agricultural movement Nayakrishi Andolon. UBINIG helped to identify transition and substitute crops. Nayakrishi farming practices were applied for the new crops, emphasising seed and soil conservation, chemical-free agriculture and mixed cropping, among others.



MERE SUBSTITUTION IS NOT ENOUGH. THE SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVE CROPS REQUIRES CONSIDERATION OF WIDER ISSUES SUCH AS FOOD SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.



Discussing current approaches to alternatives, the study summarises the following principal observations:

- Mere substitution is not enough. The selection of alternative crops requires consideration of wider issues such as food security and environmental impact.

- Most projects surveyed focus on providing agricultural extension services and strengthening market opportunities for alternative crops/products. Many of these projects encouraged cultivation of food crops and the practice of poly-culture.
- Institutions that are structurally devised to support the tobacco production sector are not likely to encourage a total shift out of tobacco.
- The tobacco industry lobby is jeopardising the search for genuine alternatives by:

- 1) lobbying politicians to promote tobacco cultivation,
- 2) using front groups to oppose draft guidelines to articles 17&18 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), and
- 3) promoting supposedly sustainable tobacco farming methods.

- Publicly funded bodies involved in diversification strategies have been subject to tobacco industry interference (in violation of FCTC Article 5.3).

- Civil society organisations (CSOs) can play a key role in monitoring supply-side tobacco control activities, making governments accountable for official and legal commitments they have made to support alternatives.

The recommendations include:

- Involve tobacco growers and farm workers in every step of the process, including research for alternatives, policy development and implementation on the ground.
- Encourage dialogue between research institutes, CSOs and governments.
- Foster networking between organisations that already have expertise in areas relevant to the implementation of alternatives.
- Promote a holistic approach spanning several components of the livelihoods of farmers.
- Protect projects for alternative livelihoods from the influence of tobacco industry and leaf companies.
- Hold governments around the world, and especially those of industrialised countries, accountable for the

commitments made under Article 26 of the FCTC (provision of financial resources).



CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOS) CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN MONITORING SUPPLY-SIDE TOBACCO CONTROL ACTIVITIES, MAKING GOVERNMENTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR OFFICIAL AND LEGAL COMMITMENTS THEY HAVE MADE TO SUPPORT ALTERNATIVES.



To further its work, Unfairtobacco.org is organising the international conference *Tobacco: a cash crop without alternative?* on 28 November 2012, in Berlin. The main aims are to raise awareness among development organisations, smoking prevention agencies and political decision makers about the conditions of tobacco growing, as well as to discuss how the shift out of tobacco growing could be supported by industrialised countries.

Conference topics include:

- the impact of tobacco farming in countries of the South;
- tobacco industry interference;
- short-term options for improving farmers' lives and,
- long-term options for tobacco growers searching for alternative livelihoods.

The main speakers will be Adriana Gregolin, Jacob K Kibwage, and Farida Akhter. For more information see www.unfairtobacco.org/en/alternativen/alt-tagung.

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DIRTY ASHTRAY AWARD



To Ukraine for treating the COP like a tobacco company shareholders' meeting.

ORCHID AWARD



To MERCOSUR (Mercado Común del Sur) for promoting regional cooperation on implementing the FCTC, for putting tobacco control on the development agenda, and for prioritizing health over trade.



The Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) is a grouping of global NGOs working to achieve the strongest possible Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Views expressed in signed articles in the Bulletin are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the views of the FCA. Front-page articles are unsigned as they do represent the consensus of the FCA membership at COP5.

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LARGER, PICTURE HEALTH WARNINGS: THE GROWING WORLDWIDE TREND

An up-to-date international report on cigarette package health warnings is being formally released today at COP5. This new report – Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report – provides an overview ranking 198 countries/jurisdictions based on warning size, and lists those that have finalized requirements for picture warnings. Regional breakdowns are also included.

Copies of the report are available at the FCA table located near the registration area. Delegates are welcome to take as many copies of the report as they would like for use in their home countries.

Sixty-three countries/jurisdictions – covering more than 40 percent of the world's population – have now finalized requirements for picture warnings, and many more countries are in the process of doing so. The total is an increase from the 34 countries that had implemented warnings by 2010.

By size, Australia is the new world leader at 82.5 percent of the package front and back (75 percent front, 90 percent back), surpassing Uruguay, the previous leader, at 80 percent of the front and back. Here are the world leaders, by size:

- 82.5% - Australia (75% of front, 90% of back)
- 80% - Uruguay (80%, 80%)
- 80% - Sri Lanka (80%, 80%)
- 75% - Canada (75%, 75%)
- 75% - Brunei (75%, 75%)
- 65% - Mauritius (60%, 70%)
- 65% - Mexico (30%, 100%)
- 60% - Ecuador (60%, 60%)
- 60% - New Zealand (30%, 90%)
- 60% - Cook Islands (30%, 90%)

There are now 47 countries/jurisdictions (up from 32 in 2010) requiring warnings to cover at least 50 percent (on average) of the package front and back, and at least 119 requiring a minimum size (on average) of at least 30 percent.

Since COP4, enormous progress has been made around the world. This is illustrated

by the cover of the new report, which features new Australian plain packages, including the series of seven new Australian picture warnings.

Well-designed package warnings are a highly cost-effective means to increase awareness of the health effects of tobacco and to reduce its use. Picture-based messages are far more effective than text-only messages.

Indeed, a picture says a thousand words. Pictures attract more attention and reach individuals who are illiterate or who cannot read the national language(s). The effectiveness of warnings increases with size: A larger size allows for bigger and better pictures, additional information and/or a larger font size.



The new report was prepared by the Canadian Cancer Society, in collaboration with the Framework Convention Alliance. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is assisting with translations into Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

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