



# TOBACCO CONTROL

## KICKSTARTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

photo: WBB (Work for a Better Bangladesh) Trust

### Tobacco use undermines public health and sustainable development

Almost 70 percent of global deaths are caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung diseases. These diseases have one major risk factor in common: tobacco use.

Over 1 billion people use tobacco today. Unless we take action now, tobacco will cause 1 billion deaths worldwide this century – 80 percent in low and middle-income countries.

Tobacco use also costs national economies enormously through increased health-care costs and decreased productivity. It's estimated that over the next 20 years, the economic loss associated with tobacco-related disease will be US\$12 trillion.

Tobacco use also worsens health inequalities and exacerbates poverty, as the poorest people spend less on essentials such as food, education and health care.

### We know exactly how to reduce tobacco use

The good news is that there is a clear roadmap for effective, feasible and globally endorsed action: the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Accelerated implementation of the FCTC has been recognised in the Sustainable Development Goals as a critical tool to help achieve well-being for all at all ages.

The FCTC is one of only three international conventions explicitly referenced in the SDGs, appearing as target 3a – 'a means of implementation' for Goal 3.4 on NCDs.

### Tobacco control is inexpensive and highly effective

At an average cost of US\$0.05 per person to implement in low- and middle-income countries, tobacco taxation is the least costly of all tobacco control policies, and always creates more revenue for governments than it costs to implement.

At the same time, raising tobacco taxes is the single most effective way to reduce consumption of tobacco products, and in turn diminish its detrimental effects on health and development.

Globally, raising the tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes by the equivalent of one dollar would increase average price by 42 percent and result in 81 million fewer deaths. Higher taxes also discourage minors from taking up smoking in the first place.



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### **Tobacco control can help fund sustainable development and reinforce all of the SDGs**

Not only are tobacco taxes good for health, but they can provide governments with significant additional revenue. It is estimated that a global increase in tobacco tax of the equivalent of one dollar would result in an extra US\$141 billion in revenue for governments.

The extra revenue generated by tax increases can, in turn, be used to finance other development priorities. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for development recognises tobacco taxes as a key tool to finance the SDGs.

Tobacco control is also a good way to build capacity to deal with other development challenges. As a relatively simple form of tax involving a small number of taxpayers (tobacco producers and importers), implementing and administering tobacco taxes can help pave the way for taxes on other unhealthy commodities, or for other more complicated forms of tax such as value-added tax (VAT).

## **The time to act is now**

**Governments must implement strong tobacco control measures today to protect the health of their citizens and promote sustainable development.**

## **Everyone has a role to play**

**The Sustainable Development Goals call on the international community, including United Nations agencies, the World Bank, international development banks and other public and private donors to assist governments to reach the SDGs.**

[www.fctc.org](http://www.fctc.org)