Module 5: Tobacco Control

Interventions: Part II

Mass Media Campaigns

Introduction

Dr. Nandita Murukutla, Vice President, Global Policy and Research Policy, Advocacy and Communication Division at Vital Strategies, introduces the Mass Media Campaigns Lecture.

Educating the public about the harms of tobacco is a vital component of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy. The use of both traditional mass media and digital media enhances the ability to disseminate crucial information to large audiences cost-efficiently.

In this section, you will learn about the current evidence and best practices regarding effective tobacco control mass media campaigns. You will also be provided with links to existing mass media resources that you can examine and use. Well-designed tobacco control mass media campaigns comprise part of the “W” in MPOWER—Warn about the dangers of tobacco.

Learning Objectives

- Enumerate the characteristics of effective tobacco control mass media campaigns.
- Identify at least two examples of effective media campaigns.
- Explain what the evidence reveals about the impact of mass media campaigns on the behavior of smokers and nonsmokers, and on tobacco consumption.
What Are Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns and Why Do We Need Them?

Dr. Murukutla discusses what tobacco control mass media campaigns are and why we need them.

Tobacco control mass media campaigns utilize one or more forms of media to educate the public about the dangers of tobacco, change social norms around tobacco use, build public support for strong tobacco control policies and enforcement, and ultimately deter tobacco use or encourage cessation. Global data indicates that while people know about the harms of tobacco, particularly common illnesses like lung cancer, they are less knowledgeable about other adverse health impacts, like strokes, heart diseases, and the effect of secondhand smoke exposure on children.

Moreover, most adults do not feel the dangers of tobacco use and their immediate personal risk of developing tobacco-related illnesses. The tobacco industry contributes to these gaps in the public’s knowledge about tobacco harms, through disinformation and misleading claims. This is particularly true in low- and middle-income countries.

Media is a powerful force that shapes people’s behavior and attitudes, and can influence both community members and political decision makers regarding tobacco use and tobacco control issues.

The nature of mass media enables information to be widely disseminated, reaching diverse audiences.

Messages can be repeatedly broadcast over time. Mass media campaigns, if executed properly, can address the existing knowledge gaps among both smokers and nonsmokers, and shift social norms to discourage tobacco consumption while promoting tobacco control.

Do Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns Work?

Dr. Murukutla discusses if tobacco control mass media campaigns work.
Tobacco control mass media campaigns are effective in preventing tobacco use, reducing tobacco consumption, building support for strong tobacco control policies and promoting cessation. Even those designed primarily for adult smokers can affect youth, transforming their attitudes about tobacco use and discouraging smoking uptake.

These findings appear to hold true for low, middle-income, and high-income countries, with the effect being strongest for campaigns that are sustained over time, well-funded, and packaged together with other tobacco control interventions as a comprehensive strategy.

**Tobacco Control Mass Media: Impact**

A 2015 review of nearly 70 studies assessing the impact of tobacco control mass media campaigns demonstrated the following.

- Decreased tobacco use among adults
- Decreased tobacco use among those aged 11–24
- Increased tobacco cessation efforts
- Increased number of calls to quitlines
- Decreased uptake of tobacco use among young people aged 11–24
- Estimated cost of USD $213 for every year of life saved

**Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns: Public Perception**

Dr. Murukutla discusses the public perception of tobacco control mass media campaigns.

Tobacco control media campaigns can also alter public perceptions about the acceptability of tobacco use. For example, in 2004, Malaysia launched its Tak Nak (or the “Just Say No”) media campaign designed to raise awareness about the health risks of smoking. This initiative was extensively evaluated through 4 assessment periods from 2005–2009, with face-to-face and telephone surveys of nearly 2,000 adult smokers, 1,000 youth smokers, and 1,500 adult nonsmokers. Nearly three
quarters of smokers reported that they found smoking to be less socially desirable after exposure to the campaign.

Another example of this is a campaign in China that addressed the habit of giving cigarettes as gifts during the Chinese Spring Festival. The campaign, a collaboration between WHO, Vital Strategies (formerly known as World Lung Foundation), and the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, was called the ‘Giving Cigarettes is Giving Harm’ campaign (GCGH). It launched in 2009 and was designed to raise awareness about the deadly harms of tobacco and to change the cultural practice of giving cigarettes as gifts. An independent evaluation of the campaign found that the campaign led to increased knowledge about the harms of cigarettes and increased beliefs that cigarettes did not make good gifts.

China piloted a media campaign to highlight the inappropriateness of giving cigarettes as gifts.

Smokers in the cities where the campaign was aired were more likely to disagree that cigarettes are good gifts compared to smokers in other cities.

**Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns: Mobilization**

Dr. Murukutla discusses the mobilization of tobacco control mass media campaigns.

Tobacco control mass media campaigns can also aid in mobilizing support for policy change. Mass media campaigns using personal testimonials showcasing the personal stories of patients and their families and accompanied by coordinated offline advocacy can lead to desired policy change.

For example, in India, the “Voices of Tobacco Victims” combined mass media campaigns that rendered moving stories of individual patients—like a 24-year-old young man, Mukesh, or a 27-year-old mother, Sunita—with offline advocacy by senior oncologists, which is credited with influencing India’s policy makers to strengthen tobacco control policies, from graphic health warnings, to bans on certain smokeless tobacco products and to increases in tobacco taxes.
Access more information about the Voice of Tobacco Victims.  
Voice of Tobacco Victims

**What Makes a Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaign Effective? Best Practices**

Research indicates that effective mass media campaigns for tobacco control have the following characteristics.

Learn more about best practices.

**Content**

Emotionally charged or graphic portrayals of the adverse health consequences of tobacco use appear more effective than other approaches.

**Intensity**

Media campaigns require sustained exposure over prolonged periods to achieve lasting effects on population attitudes and behaviors. In general, at least 6 months are needed to raise awareness of tobacco’s harms, 12–18 months to change attitudes towards tobacco use, and 18–24 months to produce a change in behavior.

**Earned Media**

Media airtime can be earned or paid. Earned media involves coverage of a story or news item without payment for media placements, while paid airtime involves payment to place a message or story in any medium. Overall, television appears to be the most effective medium, resulting in wide audience reach and higher recall than print media or radio. Television also allows people to see the painful health impacts of tobacco consumption. While paid airtime can be expensive, it is also highly cost-effective. Additionally, successful campaigns have leveraged earned media and free airtime on public stations. Costs for development and production of ads or public service announcements can be minimized by using pre-existing ads, and adapting these to the socio-cultural context as needed. If no pre-existing materials are available, pre-testing of new materials should be conducted, if at all feasible.
Radio and Other

Radio can be used to supplement or broaden the reach of television ads. And, in low resource settings, radio can also be a powerful medium for tobacco control communication. Social media is gaining in prominence, especially among youth, and if used judiciously, can result in significant cost savings. More research is needed to assess the effectiveness of social media in tobacco control.

Other complementary media channels could include outdoor billboards, community posters, community radio, and locally distributed leaflets and brochures.

Cost

Research in high-income countries indicates that governments should allocate USD $1.50–$4.00 per capita annually on tobacco control health communication and counter-advertising, or roughly about 15–20% of total tobacco control expenditures. At present, there are no comparable studies to determine the recommended expenditure level for low and middle-income countries.

Best Practices: Other Considerations

Dr. Murukutla discusses other considerations with best practices.

Tobacco control media campaigns are effective as stand-alone tobacco control interventions, but their impact is heightened when integrated into a comprehensive tobacco control strategy.

Message testing is vital to ensuring that the campaign will resonate with the intended audience and motivate the desired action. Evaluation is critical to assess the effectiveness of any mass media campaign. Vital Strategies has developed a framework for developing tobacco control mass media campaigns with three phases: planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Framework for the Development of an Anti-Tobacco mass Media Campaign
A table compares a framework for developing an anti-tobacco mass media campaign. There are three framework categories: Phase, Assessment domain, and Performance objective. Under the Phase header are three components: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation with assessment domain and performance objectives listed.

The Planning Phase is defined as: Identification of target audiences; planning of objectives, strategies and activities; and adaptation or development of materials.

Planning assessment domains and performance objectives are:

- Tobacco control strategy: Campaign is integral component of comprehensive tobacco control programme
- Formative research: Thorough understanding of target audience knowledge, attitudes and smoking behaviour is gained to guide objectives and strategies
- Pre-testing: Materials pre-tested and refined to meet campaign objectives

The Implementation Phase is defined as: Design and implementation of media strategy to maximize target audience exposures and impact

Implementation assessment domains and performance objectives are:

- Advertising placement: Media planning and buying effectively and efficiently reaches campaign target audience
- Earned media and public relations: Additional unpaid media coverage for the campaign is gained

Outcome evaluation: Assess campaign impact
• Advertising placement: Media planning and buying effectively and efficiently reaches campaign audience target
• Earned media and public relations: Additional unpaid media coverage for the campaign is gained

The Evaluation Phase is defined as: Assessment of campaign implementation and impact

Evaluation assessment domains and performance objectives are:

• Process evaluation: Assess campaign implementation
• Outcome evaluation: Assess campaign impact


**Best Practices: WHO FCTC**

Dr. Murukutla discusses WHO FCTC best practices.

The WHO FCTC Guidelines for implementation of Article 12 outlines recommendations for running effective education, communication, and training programs to inform the public about the harms of tobacco.

Access the WHO FCTC Article 12 Guidelines.

[WHO FCTC Article 12](#)

**Examples of Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns**

Learn more about tobacco control mass media campaigns.

**“Tips from Former Smokers”**

“Tips” was the first nationwide, federally-funded tobacco control mass media campaign in the United States. It was launched in 2012 to raise awareness about the adverse health impact of smoking and secondhand smoke exposure, and to encourage cessation among tobacco users. “Tips” utilized first-person testimonials from former smokers, who shared highly emotional and graphic experiences about
the health consequences of their tobacco use. The campaign employed a multimedia approach, with ads shown on television, radio, online media, billboards, movie theaters, public transportation advertising spaces, and print media. “Tips” also highlighted the national quitline and cessation website. An evaluation of its impact documented an estimated 1.83 million additional quit attempts, 1.73 million additional smokers intending to quit within 6 months, and 104,000 sustained quits of at least 6 months.

The “Truth” Campaign

Florida developed the “truth” campaign in the late 1990s, with funding from its share of the Master Settlement Agreement. Working with youth and professional advertising experts, the campaign created “truth” as a brand and highlighted the deception of the tobacco industry. The multimedia “truth” incorporated youth events such as the “truth Train” with print and broadcast advertisements. Within 2 years, smoking among Florida’s middle school students dropped by 9%, while smoking among high school students dropped by 6%. The campaign’s funding ended; however, the campaign was adopted and expanded nationally by the American Legacy Foundation.

The more recent “truth” campaign is an interactive initiative, engaging youth through traditional and social media, and on-site events. Its edgy, in-your-face approach evolved from youth feedback and focus group testing. In 2014, the “truth” campaign unveiled the “Finish it” initiative, for youth aged 15–21, with the theme of “Let’s Be the Generation to Finish It” (end smoking for good). Veering away from protesting the tobacco industry’s deceptive practices, “Finish it” taps into today’s millennials’ desire for positive collective action by becoming social change agents. The current campaign seeks to empower the 94% of teens who are nonsmokers, and the 6% who are smokers, to assume an active role in ending the tobacco epidemic.

Senegal’s “Sponge” Campaign
Senegal launched its first nationwide tobacco control mass media initiative in 2013. The "Sponge" campaign, adapted from Australia, was aired on television, radio, and on outdoor billboards. A household survey undertaken by the World Lung Foundation measured campaign awareness, reactions to the campaign, and changes in smoking-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Calls to the national quitline were also tracked. The results demonstrated that 63% of Senegalese recalled the campaign, primarily through television, and rated the material as relevant and effective in raising concern about tobacco-related harms. The campaign was associated with increases in (1) nonsmokers' intentions not to take up smoking, (2) smokers' intentions to quit and, (3) public support for government tobacco control programs and policy initiatives, including the establishment of smoke-free public places. Calls to the quitline increased six-fold during the campaign period. A simultaneous social media petition calling on the government to enact a tobacco control bill garnered over 10,000 signatures; the bill was adopted by the legislature soon after the campaign.

Quiz

True or False? Emotionally charged or graphic portrayals of tobacco use are more effective than most other mass media campaign approaches.

Answer

True: Emotionally charged or graphic portrayals of the adverse health consequences of tobacco use are more effective than other approaches.

Summary

Dr. Murukutla summarizes the Mass Media Campaigns Lecture.

In this section, we have reviewed why it is important to warn people about the dangers of tobacco using mass media campaigns, and we have examined the evidence regarding the effectiveness and impact of tobacco control mass media campaigns.
We have also explored some examples of mass media campaigns that have been evaluated for effectiveness in reducing tobacco consumption and in creating social change to reduce tobacco use and promote tobacco control policies.

Want to Learn More?

A media resource with some highly adaptable tobacco control PSAs by Vital Strategies:

Vital Strategies

Information about various mass media campaigns to promote tobacco control around the world, also by Vital Strategies:

Vital Strategies: Vital Stories
Vital Strategies: Media Center

Examples of Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns

Learn more about the “Tips from Former Smokers” campaign by watching some of the videos:

Tips From Former Smokers®

Learn more about the “truth” campaign and view some of the campaign materials:

The truth
truth initiative

Health Warning Labels

Introduction

Dr. Tania Cavalcante, Head of the Tobacco Control Division at the National Cancer Institute of Brazil (INCA), introduces the Health Warning Labels Lecture.

As with any consumer product, people have the right to accurate information about the harmful consequences of tobacco use. Knowing about the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure can influence a person’s decision to take up or continue using tobacco.
In this section, you will learn about the current best practices regarding effective health warning labels on tobacco products, and review the emerging evidence on the impact of large, graphic health warnings on tobacco consumption. You’ll also learn about plain packaging and the experience of Australia and other countries in increasing graphic health warnings with plain packaging. Health warning labels comprise part of the “W” in MPOWER—Warn about the dangers of tobacco.

Learning Objectives

• Identify the elements of effective warning labels for tobacco products.
• Describe the evidence regarding the impact of effective warning labels.
• Explain why plain packaging can help boost the impact of health warnings on tobacco users’ knowledge and behavior.

What Are Health Warning Labels?

Dr. Cavalcante discusses what health warning labels are.

Health warning labels are text and/or pictorial messages that disclose the harmful effects of tobacco use. The messages are intended to describe the adverse physical and psychosocial consequences of tobacco consumption. Health warning labels are a form of health communications that aim to inform tobacco users and new potential users of their risks. In the past, only text warning labels were utilized on cigarette packages. However, Canada initiated the use of a combination of text and picture warnings in 2001, and since then, over 100 countries have adopted this approach.

Do health Warning Labels Work?

Dr. Cavalcante discusses if health warnings work.

While people in general are aware of the harms of tobacco, data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) indicate that large knowledge gaps exist in many countries. Tobacco users are less likely to be aware that smoking causes heart disease, stroke and cancers other than lung cancer, and are often unfamiliar with the variety of harmful chemicals in tobacco products and tobacco smoke. A significant
proportion of smokers also erroneously believe that “light” or “low tar” cigarettes are less harmful than regular ones. As a result, these tobacco users underestimate their risks from continued tobacco use, and may also fail to recognize the adverse health impact of secondhand smoke exposure for their families and friends.

In 22 low-income and middle-income countries that participated in GATS from 2008 to 2013, adults scored higher on knowledge about tobacco’s harms if they noticed antismoking media messages or health warning labels.

Moreover, countries that had pictorial health warnings had better knowledge scores than countries with text-only warnings.

**Pictorial Health Warning Labels**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses pictorial health warning labels.

As a means of communicating tobacco’s harms to tobacco users, pictorial health warnings on tobacco products are highly cost-effective. Warnings on tobacco products are an ideal way of communicating with smokers because they pair the warning directly with smoking behavior. A pack-a-day smoker confronts the cigarette pack 20 times a day—and is repeatedly exposed to large, visible, graphic health warnings on a pack.

Moreover, family members and friends of smokers also see the warnings, broadening the reach of the messages. Mandating pictorial health warnings is also cost-effective for governments, since the cost for the implementation is borne by the manufacturers.

Learn more about pictorial health warning labels.
Increase public awareness of health risks. Counter the pro-tobacco marketing effect of tobacco product packaging.

Increase the likelihood that tobacco users will consider cessation, especially when linked with information on where to obtain cessation help, such as a quitline number.
Reduce the appeal to tobacco when seen by non-smokers, especially youth.

Catalyze the “denormalization” of tobacco products or making them less acceptable socially by shifting perceptions about their attractiveness and desirability.
Ultimately, reduce tobacco consumption.

**Graphic Warning and Awareness**

Presently, we have solid evidence from many countries that graphic warnings increase awareness of the harms of tobacco use and are considered a source of health information. For instance, in Canada, where pictorial health warnings were introduced in 2001, 84% of smokers consider pack warnings as one source of information about the harms of tobacco. Multi-country studies consistently demonstrate higher awareness of the hazards of tobacco use where prominent tobacco pack warnings exist. In these studies, graphic warnings are superior to text-only warnings.

**Health Warning Labels: Effectiveness**

**Brazil**

A majority (67%) of smokers in Brazil reported that new graphic warnings on tobacco packs introduced in 2002 made them want to quit.

**Singapore**

In Singapore, over a quarter of smokers reported smoking less because of pictorial health warnings.

**Canada**
And in Canada, graphic warning labels increased the likelihood for smokers to make a quit attempt and reduced smoking rates between 2.9 to 4.6 percentage points. Graphic warning labels have also been shown to be associated with increases in calls to cessation quitlines.

**Pictorial Health Warnings and Youth**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses pictorial health warnings and youth.

Pictorial health warnings are particularly effective among youth, who tend to be highly susceptible to the marketing allure of cigarette packaging. Following Australia’s implementation of graphic warning labels, youth smokers were more likely to think of quitting, and nonsmokers who discussed the warning labels reported lower rates of intentions to smoke. In Canada, over 90% of youth agreed that graphic health warnings made them better informed about the health effects of smoking and made smoking less attractive.

The growing body of evidence supporting the use of effective warning labels has led numerous public health bodies, such as the WHO and the US Institute of Medicine to conclude: “...prominent health warnings on (tobacco) packages are among the most cost-effective forms of public health education available.”
What Makes a Tobacco Health Warning Effective?

The effectiveness of a tobacco product health warning is determined by its (1) physical design, (2) content, and (3) method of delivery.

Physical Design

Learn more about the physical design of health warning labels.

Larger Warnings Effective

Health warnings must be readily noticed and easily read. Earlier research in Canada and the US demonstrated that people preferred large warnings that covered more than 50% of the pack surface. More recent studies from countries that have implemented warnings that are 80% or more of the pack surface have shown even greater effectiveness in raising awareness of tobacco’s harms, increasing quit intentions, and cutting down on consumption.

Pictures with Text Messages

In the majority of studies, warnings with pictures were more effective than text-only warnings. Pictorial health warnings catch and hold a viewer’s attention and have a higher recall rate. Real photographs are better than cartoons. Using pictures also enables the health warning to be conveyed even with low levels of literacy, or when the tobacco users are not fluent in the language of the text messages. Care should be taken in selecting pictures for use among people with low literacy who are unable to read the text message, to ensure that pictures of smoking do not inadvertently suggest approval rather than warning of its dangers.

Do Not Blame the Victim

The WHO considers nicotine addiction as a brain disease. Most smokers have become addicted to nicotine in adolescence. They are victims of tobacco industry marketing strategies. Therefore, warning messages and images should avoid connotations that blame the smoker.

Location Matters
Data from New Zealand showed that people were more likely to recognize and remember warnings that are placed on the front of the package instead of the side. Warnings at the top of the pack are desirable, as people’s eyes naturally gravitate to the top of a package; further, this space is where tobacco companies normally highlight their brand.

**Color and Font Matters**

The use of color rather than black and white photos, and large fonts adjacent to pictures (size 12 or larger), are recommended by health literacy experts to increase impact.

**Physical Design: Exercise**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses physical design.

Look at these examples of warning labels on the front of the cigarette pack. What can you observe about the health warnings? Which of these are more likely to be effective in better informing tobacco users of tobacco’s harms and getting them to think about quitting?

Learn more about the warning labels.

---

**Philippines, 2002**

This combination text and pictorial warning occupies the bottom half of the front of the pack and is in the local language. The warning should be moved to the upper half of the pack surface, and information on where to get cessation help should be added.
Turkey, 2013

This warning covers 65% of the front of the pack (picture), and 65% of back (text). If the HWL was required to be at the top of the pack, it could be more effective.

Thailand, 2013

This graphic health warning covers 50% of the front of the upper pack, contains the national quitline number and is in the local language. It is likely to be effective.
Mexico, 2013

This graphic health warning occupies the top 30% of the front of the pack; 100% of the back of the pack provides additional information on the health effects of smoking and a quitline phone number for users. All information is in the local language. The color of the text on the graphic health warning label could be made more prominent.

Vietnam, 2013

This text-only health warning occupies only 30% of the bottom of the pack. A larger picture warning at the top of the pack would be more effective.
Thailand, 2015

This large warning occupies 85% of the upper part of the pack, and uses large font. It has information about the national quitline and is in the local language. But it uses an icon, not a color photo, reducing its visual impact.

India, 2016

This large graphic health warning occupies 85% of the upper part of the front of a cigarette pack, in large font. It could be improved by additional information on where to get cessation help.
Thailand, 2016

This large color graphic health warning occupies 85% of the upper part of the front of a cigarette pack and is in the local language. It has information on the national quitline number. It is likely the most effective of all the examples in this exercise.

China, 2017

This text-only health warning blends in with the background and occupies only 35% of the bottom of the pack front and back. It is unlikely to be effective.

The Effectiveness of Health Warning Labels

Dr. Cavalcante discusses health warning label effectiveness and the content of the message.
Warnings should be clear, direct, and accurately highlight the dangers of tobacco use. Messages about specific health consequences are the most effective. Evoking fear appears effective in generating the motivation to quit, especially if accompanied by information on where to obtain cessation assistance, such as quitline or cessation website. While the use of graphic pictorial warnings led to avoidance behavior (e.g., covering the pack) in some countries, this was still associated with increased intention to quit and the likelihood of quit attempts. Messages that reinforce self-efficacy for cessation may be useful, particularly for low socioeconomic populations. Because the impact of warning labels can be influenced by literacy and the cultural context of tobacco use, it is important to pre-test messages with the intended local audiences to determine readability and to guide the selection of the most effective warnings.

The WHO maintains a database of pictorial health warnings and messages from diverse countries. Select the link to access more real-life examples of tobacco package warning labels.

WHO: Health Warning Labels

How an Effective Message Is Delivered

Change the Message

Repeated exposure to the same messages can lead to “message fatigue,” which reduces the impact of a message over time. Using several different health warning messages that rotate over time can help prevent the loss of effectiveness of warning labels. Current evidence suggests having a set of 8–12 messages that are implemented concurrently, and rotating different sets of messages at least every 1–2 years.

Supplement Health Warnings

Mass media campaigns can augment and reinforce graphic health warnings, and extend their reach. People report higher awareness of smoking-related health
effects when they are highlighted in both pack warning labels and television public service announcements, than if health effects appeared only on packs.

**Remove All Distinct Elements**

Standardizing all cigarette packs and eliminating all corporate logos, trademarks, colors, and visual elements that create the unique cigarette “brand” makes graphic health warnings stand out even more, and enhances their impact. We will discuss plain packaging in a later lesson.

**What Comprises Best Practices for Tobacco health Warning Labels and Packaging?**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses what comprises best practice for tobacco health warning labels and packaging.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) outlines requirements for health warning labels on tobacco packaging in Article 11. These requirements constitute the minimum standard for effective warning labels. Parties to the WHO FCTC must implement these requirements within 3 years after entry into force.

Learn what Article 11 of the WHO FCTC requires regarding health warning labels and packaging.

**Approval, coverage, and visibility**

- Approved by the competent national authority.
- Cover 50% or more, but no less than 30% of the principal pack surfaces, which effectively includes the front and back of packages.
- Be clear, large, visible, and easy to read.

**Pictures, rotated, in principal language**

- May be in the form or include graphic pictures.
- Are rotated periodically to retain audience attention and interest.
- Are written in the principal language/s of the country.

**All tobacco products, harmful emissions, and misleading terms**
• Are utilized for all categories of tobacco products.
• Display information on potentially harmful tobacco constituents and emissions.
• Does not use misleading terms like “light,” “ultra light,” “low tar,” and “mild.”

**Surpassing the Guidelines for Article 11**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses surpassing the guidelines for Article 11. Countries may go beyond the Guidelines for Article 11 in developing their legislation for warning labels, and in fact, several countries have surpassed the requirements under Article 11. Implementing strong graphic health warnings is, in fact, the fastest MPOWER measure to be adopted by countries, with at least 105 countries and jurisdictions that have finalized requirements for pictorial warnings as of 2017.

There are at least 94 countries and jurisdictions that require health warnings to cover 50% or more of the cigarette pack front and back (on average), representing a marked increase from only 24 in 2008. At least 43 countries and jurisdictions have health warnings that comprise at least 65% of the tobacco pack, on average.

![Countries/Jurisdictions Requiring Pictorial Warnings on Cigarette Packages](image)

A bar graph titled “Countries/Jurisdictions Requiring Pictorial Warnings on Cigarette Packages” is shown. The x-axis is labeled with years. The years start at
2001 and go to 2017 in increments of 1 year. The y-axis starts at 0 and goes to 110. The first value after 0 is 10. From 10, the values increase in increments of 20.

The countries/jurisdictions requiring pictorial warnings on cigarette packages per year are:

- 2001: 1
- 2002: 2
- 2003: 2
- 2004: 3
- 2005: 5
- 2006: 11
- 2007: 12
- 2008: 18
- 2009: 26
- 2010: 35
- 2011: 41
- 2012: 56
- 2013: 65
- 2014: 72
- 2015: 77
- 2016: 102
- 2017: 105

The bar graph rises from the lower left to the upper right.


**Pictorial Health Warnings: Nepal**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses pictorial health warnings in Nepal.

Nepal first implemented pictorial health warnings in April 2014, following an unsuccessful challenge by the tobacco industry initiated in 2011. In 2015, Nepal was
first to mandate the largest pictorial health warnings in the world, covering 90% of both the front and back of the cigarette pack. Text warnings are required on 90% of both package sides and on the entire top of the package. Moreover, warning messages are required on 90% of the principal package display area for cartons and individual packages of other tobacco products, including bidis and chewing tobacco. Misleading terms including “light” and “less tar” are prohibited.

The country faced tremendous opposition from the tobacco industry and its allies, who filed numerous lawsuits in the country’s Supreme Court to challenge the introduction of graphic health warnings and the increase in size from the previously mandated 75% to 90%. The Court ruled in favor of the government, paving the way for the tiny nation to begin implementing the world’s largest health warnings.

A recent study found that 90% of Nepalese believe the warning labels are effective at preventing people from starting to smoke. Additionally, 95% of ex-smokers who participated in the study said the warning labels were effective at convincing them not to re-start tobacco consumption.

While consistent and widespread implementation remains challenging, Nepal’s example was taken up by the Pacific island of Vanuatu, which passed similar legislation in 2016.

**Pictorial Health Warnings: India**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses pictorial health warnings in India.

In 2016, India legislated an increase in its pictorial health warnings from an average of 20% of the total display area (40% front, 0% back) to 85% on both the front and back of cigarette packs. This catapulted it from a rank of 136th to 3rd in the world for size of graphic health warnings. India is also the first country in the world to implement pictorial health warnings for smokeless tobacco products. The graphic warnings currently in use were field tested for efficacy. Two pairs of warnings—one for use with smoked and the other for smokeless tobacco—are rotated every 12 months, and all tobacco products must carry these warnings.
Like Nepal, the tobacco industry and its allies vehemently resisted the legislation that introduced graphic warnings and increased the size of the warning labels, successfully delaying implementation by a year. Coordinated action by community advocates, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and judicial leaders at the Rajasthan High Court and Supreme Court of India, overturned the legal challenge.

Research documented a 63% increase in the number of cigarette smokers and an 84% increase in the number of bidi (cheap, hand-rolled cigarettes) users who thought about quitting due to warning labels.

Since 2010, in tandem with other MPOWER measures implemented, the country has seen a decline in adult tobacco use by 17%, and among youth aged 15–17, tobacco consumption dropped by 54%.

Furthermore, data from the most recent Global Adult Tobacco Surveys (GATS) revealed that the graphic warning labels depicting throat cancer (labels for smoked tobacco products) and oral cancer (labels for smokeless tobacco products) have motivated 275 million current users to quit.
Pictorial Health Warnings: Thailand

Thailand was the second South East Asian country to adopt pictorial health warnings (after Singapore) and at one point, it had the largest size warnings in the world. The current law requires pictorial health warnings on cigarettes, occupying 85% of the top of the front and back principal display areas. Pictorial health warnings also are required on shredded tobacco (which is typically used for hand-rolled cigarettes or smokeless tobacco products) and cigars.

Misleading terms such as “light” and “low tar” are prohibited. The health warnings are linked to the national quitline number, which is displayed on all tobacco packages.

Thailand also encountered legal challenges to its law, brought about by transnational tobacco companies in 2013. The lower court responded by issuing a temporary suspension of pack warning implementation. However, the Supreme Administrative Court reversed the lower court’s decision in 2014, citing the rational to “protect the people and our youth” and noting that the pack warning legislation
was consistent with the intended scope of the country’s tobacco control law. Today, Thailand is working towards plain packaging, and is also exploring the extension of pictorial health warnings to alcoholic beverages.

**Beyond Graphic Health Warnings: Plain Packaging**

Plain packaging is another important strategy in reducing the appeal of tobacco and motivating users to quit. It represents the gold standard for warning labels on tobacco product packaging.

IGTC’s Dr. Joanna Cohen explains what plain packaging is and why it is important for tobacco control.

**Understanding Plain Packaging Video Transcript**

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health logo is shown. Text reads: Institute for Global Tobacco Control. Intro music plays. Three cigarette packs are shown.

Dr. Joanna Cohen (narrates): With a lot of other restrictions on tobacco advertising promotion and sponsorship, the cigarette pack truly is the last remaining form of tobacco marketing in many jurisdictions and it’s really important to be able to break that chain.

As Dr. Cohen speaks cigarette packs with text warning labels are shown.

Text reads: Plain Packaging: Explained

Dr. Cohen is shown speaking.

Dr. Cohen: We’re really interested in tobacco packaging and we’re really excited about the World No Tobacco Day’s theme of plain packaging this year.

Images are shown: children look at tobacco branding images. A woman is asked questions outside a tobacco kiosk. A staff member at the Institute for Global Tobacco Control is shown taking pictures of tobacco pack labeling.

Dr. Cohen (narrates): We've done a number of studies looking at the impact of branding on cigarette packs as well as health warning label compliance on packs.
Dr. Cohen is shown onscreen.

Dr. Cohen: Plain packaging is an effort to remove all branding from cigarette packs.

A Marlboro cigarette pack is shown. Text reads: Marlboro, filter cigarettes. There is a Marlboro logo in the middle of the pack.

Dr. Cohen (narrates): This is our [US pack] iconic Marlboro Gold package. And this is Marlboro Gold in Australia with Plain Packaging.

The Marlboro Gold package with plain packaging is shown. Marlboro Gold is written in small type font on the bottom front of the pack. Large text at the top of the pack reads: Smoking Causes Blindness. An image of an eyeball is shown close up.

Dr. Cohen is shown holding both packs side by side.

Dr. Cohen: Plain packaging removes all the brand colors, imagery, symbols, logos from the package.

A close-up shot of the Australian pack is shown.

Dr. Cohen (narrates): So you can see the Australian pack just has the brand name in a standard font and font size on a standard color. The rest of the pack is a health warning. So we’ve got the health warning label on the front, a full health warning label on the back of the back, and an additional warning about the constituents on the side of the pack.

As Dr. Cohen narrates the front of the pack is shown, then the back of the pack of the pack, where a quitline number and website are printed, and the side of the pack. The two packs are then shown side by side.

Dr. Cohen (narrates): So you take away all the imagery of the cigarette pack in plain packaging.

Dr. Cohen is shown onscreen.

Dr. Cohen: One of the reasons that we’re interested in plain packages is the...sort of...very extensive branding that we’re currently seeing on cigarette packs.
Images of Glamour packs are shown. The packs have animal prints or patterns on the packaging. Then a Panda pack is shown. An image of a panda is on the front of the pack.

Dr. Cohen (narrates): Here are some examples of animal print packs. These are Glamour packs—very stark and attention-grabbing. This panda pack from China. There’s a lot of...it’s mostly branding and imagery on the packs.

Dr. Cohen is shown onscreen.

Dr. Cohen: At IGTC we’ve undertaken a tobacco pack surveillance system study, purchasing packs in 14 low- and middle-income countries. We’ve got a great resource on the web, so you can come to the site and see cigarette packs from all across those countries. That site can be found at www.globaltobaccocontrol.org/tpackss.

Text onscreen: www.globaltobaccocontrol.org/tpackss

**What Is Plain Packaging?**

Plain packaging refers to the elimination of all elements that comprise the brand marketing of a tobacco product. Specifically—logos, emblems, colors, and other components that advertise a tobacco brand on or inside the pack, or attached to the packaging or on individual products—are prohibited.

Packs should have a uniform plain color and texture, and be constructed using a standard shape, size, and material. Only the brand name and product name can appear on the packaging accompanied by graphic health warnings and tax stamps.

**Why Utilize Plain Packaging?**

Dr. Cavalcante discusses why to utilize plain packaging.

Standard, plain product packaging helps to reduce the demand for tobacco. It takes away the capacity of the tobacco package to advertise tobacco use, limits misleading promotional messaging, and minimizes the attractiveness of tobacco products.
When accompanied by large, graphic health warnings, it also enhances the effect of the warnings.

**Where Is Plain Packaging Being Implemented: Australia**

Australia was the first country to legislate plain (standardized) packaging of tobacco products. In Australia, since December 2012, all tobacco products must be sold in unattractive brown packaging with no branding, logos, or promotional text. Graphic health warnings cover 75% of the front of the pack and 90% of the back. Brand and variant names are all laid out in standard font, size and color.
Quiz

As defined in the course, plain packaging refers to the elimination of what elements that comprise the brand marketing of a tobacco product?

- logos, emblems, colors
- logos, “coolness” factor, hard packs
- logos, coupons, brand-specific fonts

Answer

Logos, emblems, colors: Plain packaging refers to the elimination of all elements that comprise the brand marketing of a tobacco product. Specifically—logos, emblems, colors, brand-specific fonts, and other components that advertise a tobacco brand on or inside the pack, or attached to the packaging or on individual products—are prohibited.

Plain Packaging Australia: Legal Dispute

Dr. Cavalcante discusses plain packaging in Australia and a legal dispute.

The tobacco industry aggressively fought against the legislation using both domestic courts and international legal venues such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). The domestic courts dismissed all the local lawsuits, and a claim against Australia under a bilateral investment treaty was likewise dismissed.

The impact of plain packaging was carefully assessed. During the transition period towards plain packaging, smokers of plain packs in Victoria, Australia (1) perceived their cigarettes to have lower appeal and quality than smokers of branded packs, and (2) were more likely to think about and prioritize quitting. One year after implementation, adult smokers in New South Wales had significantly higher negative perceptions about their cigarettes.

National surveys documented higher awareness of health warnings on plain packs, increased thoughts about quitting, and increased quit attempts. Observational
studies noted a sustained reduction in visible smoking at outdoor cafes, suggesting that plain packs contributed to a shift in social norms about smoking in public. In 2016, four years after plain packaging was implemented, there was a 0.55 percentage point reduction in smoking prevalence over 34 months, equivalent to 118,000 smokers who successfully quit.

Who’s Next for Plain Packaging?

Dr. Cavalcante discusses what’s next for plain packaging.

Both Articles 11 and 13 Guidelines of the WHO FCTC recommend that countries explore the implementation of plain packaging. Since Australia launched its law in 2012, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK), France, and Ireland have passed similar laws.

Several other countries such as Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Finland, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay have initiated legislative processes with the same goal.

The European Union, in its Tobacco Products Directive of 2014, explicitly mentions that its member countries may opt to implement plain packaging.

Summary

Dr. Cavalcante summarizes the Health Warning Labels Lecture.

In this section, we have reviewed why it is important to warn people about the dangers of tobacco, using tobacco package health warnings, and examined the elements of effective warning labels as well as the evidence regarding their impact. We have also considered the experiences of some countries in implementing best practice, including the gold standard of plain packaging.
Want to Learn More?

For the most recent international overview of the status of graphic health warnings, see this Canadian Cancer Society report:

Cigarette Package Health Warnings

Tobacco Labelling Resource Centre (University of Waterloo in Canada):

Tobacco Labelling Resource Centre

WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2011: Warning about the dangers of tobacco:

WHO Report: 2011

WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2017: Monitoring tobacco use and prevention policies:

WHO Report: 2017

Institute for Global Tobacco Control:

TPackSS

**Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship (TAPS)**

**Introduction**

Mr. Gustavo Sóñora, Legal Advisor for the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union), introduces the Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship (TAPS) Lecture.

Advertising and promotion are vital tools to sell products. This is particularly true for tobacco. In fact, the tobacco industry (TI) spends billions of dollars annually on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship campaigns to ensure people across the globe use tobacco products. Consequently, banning all forms of TAPS is a key element of tobacco control.

In this section, you will learn about the various ways that [the] TI promotes its products, explore the elements of a complete ban on tobacco advertising, promotion
and sponsorship, including at the point of sale (POS) and on the cigarette pack itself. You will also acquaint yourself with some real-world examples of TAPS bans, as well as learn about the impact of MPOWER: E—Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

**Learning Objectives**

- Identify the various ways that tobacco companies advertise, promote and sponsor their products.
- Describe the key components of a comprehensive ban on TAPS.
- Explain why point-of-sale (POS) TAPS bans and plain packaging of tobacco products are important elements of a comprehensive TAPS ban.

**What Is TAPS?**

Mr. Sóñora discusses what TAPS is and why it matters.

The tobacco industry (TI) consistently makes a high-level investment in TAPS. This investment highlights its importance to the TI in maintaining and expanding its consumer base.

Tobacco marketing presents an illusion that tobacco is just like any other consumer product. The “normalizing effect” of marketing increases the social acceptability of tobacco use and hampers efforts to educate people about its harmful effects. Marketing also falsely associates tobacco with desirable qualities like glamor, sophistication, “coolness,” and sex appeal, making it attractive to the general public.

Yet, while legal, tobacco is a LETHAL product, which kills up to half of its regular users when used as intended. Indeed, it remains the only legal product that is so deadly, but tobacco marketing renders it a highly desirable product.

**Types of Tobacco Marketing**

Tobacco companies use a range of direct and indirect approaches to promote their products.
The WHO FCTC defines tobacco advertising and promotion as “...any form of commercial communication, recommendation or action with the aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product or tobacco use either directly or indirectly.” Tobacco sponsorship is defined as “...any form of contribution to any event, activity or individual with the aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product or tobacco use either directly or indirectly.”

**Examples of TAPS**

Explore the different forms of TAPS that exist.

**Direct advertising** – includes ads on billboards, print media, radio, and television.

**Brand stretching or brand extension** – by imprinting tobacco brands on other non-tobacco merchandise or services, advertising for the non-tobacco product becomes advertising for the tobacco brand.
Point-of-sale advertising – includes cigarette pack “power walls” and other advertising at retail sources.

Product placement – tobacco products and brands featured in film and television.

Free samples – provisions of free tobacco product samples.
In China: sponsorship of schools – In this example, a sign on the school reads: "Talent comes from hard work – Tobacco helps you become talented."

Corporate social responsibility – tobacco industry-sponsored activities that project the image of the industry as a good civic partner.
Loyalty schemes and coupons – includes collecting cigarette packs or coupons to exchange for merchandise; also includes the use of coupons and other schemes (“Buy 2, get 1 free”) to lower the price of tobacco packs.

Internet and social media advertising – includes tobacco industry sites or other sites that are sponsored by the industry; may include blogs and video-blogs.

Why Does Tobacco Advertising Matter?

TAPS activities are designed to appeal to a broad audience, but specific efforts are made to persuade non-smokers to take up tobacco use.

Learn more about key target audiences.

Youth

Members of this target audience are at a vulnerable stage when people are most likely to start smoking.

Women

Members of this target audience in most low- and middle-income countries are currently less likely to be current smokers.

Learn more about tobacco marketing in a short video.

Tobacco Marketing Video Transcript

The UK Centre for Tobacco & Alcohol Studies logo is shown. Text reads: Tobacco Marketing. Gerald Hastings, Professor of Social Marketing, University of Stirling.
Professor Gerald Hastings is shown speaking.

Professor Hastings: Commercial marketing is much more than advertising. Advertising is—if you will—the tip of the iceberg; it’s the bit we see, but there’s far more under the surface than on the surface. Really what marketers try and do is they produce a product or a service, and they will chip away at that and develop that and produce that in a way that is attractive to us, both in terms of what it actually does and how it looks—the packaging of it and the display of it and so on—and they of course price it, and they will use pricing to encourage consumption.

Now the obvious way in which they do that is to make it cheaper, so that we are more likely to buy it. But sometimes we buy things because they’re expensive. So they will make it more expensive. The cigar market is an example of that.

An image of a lit cigar sitting next to a glass of brandy is shown.

Professor Hastings: Exclusivity is delivered by expense. They wrap it all up in the balm of the brand, the very evocative encapsulation of what this product has to offer. Not in just physical and literal terms, but in metaphysical terms, in emotional terms, in social terms. All really important things—particularly incidentally important to young people who are just beginning to form their identities—and are very anxious to make the right sort of signals to those around them.

A Marlboro advertisement is shown. A cowboy on a horse attempts to lasso two other horses running away from him and his horse. Another Marlboro advertisement is shown. A cowboy is shown, first from the legs and then panning up he is lighting a cigarette. Text reads: Marlboro Red or Longhorn 100’s – you get a lot to like.

Professor Hastings: Take a brand like Marlboro. You know, it epitomizes everything that tobacco can stand for, in the sort of twisted world of the tobacco industry, of independence, of rebellion, of manliness. Or, jump across another brand—womanliness. It’s trying to imbue, attach these very attractive emotional constructs to a product. If we look at it in the cold light of the day, which is highly addictive, very, very poisonous—I mean, they kill 1 in 2 of their long-term customer—the
tobacco industry, and they focus...they’re utterly dependent upon children starting to smoke, so they are a pariah industry by any measure. And yet contrast that with people’s responses to tobacco brands, which actually are seen as very positive and have a lot of positive accoutrements to them.

A Marlboro pack of cigarettes is shown.

Professor Hastings: So all that effort going into ordinary Joes, you and I, if you like. But they’re equally assiduous in their courting of people who affect not the individual decision making, but the environment in which those decisions are made, and therefore those decisions, in effect.

The houses of Parliament are shown.

Professor Hastings: So for example, if you are a tobacco company you are very concerned about decisions government might make about what’s going to happen with advertising, or what’s going to happen with point-of-sale display, and in that case, the stakeholder marketing takes a very hardball format. So in Scotland, for example, regulation of point-of-sale display has been greatly delayed by legal action by the tobacco companies.

The houses of Parliament are shown in a closer shot.

Professor Hastings: The tobacco industry has for years used the retail sector, who then go along to government and say, “Oh, you can’t introduce a ban on point-of-sale display, it will damage our members, or small shopkeepers, because they'll cost them a lot of money to replace these gantries and so on.” You know, quite a lot of the arguments are utterly specious and all of them disingenuous. So again what you've got is the tobacco industry using its marketing wiles, not this time on teenagers but on shopkeepers to kid them that they are their friends. When in fact exactly the same reality prevails, that what the tobacco industry is interested in is its own bottom line.

For more information, visit www.ukctas.ac.uk.
Youth Tobacco Experimentation

Mr. Sóñora discusses youth experimentation with tobacco.

Approximately one-third of youth experimentation with tobacco occurs as a result of exposure to tobacco marketing, and the exposure begins early in life. In China, for example, 86% of 5- and 6-year old children can recognize at least one cigarette brand logo.

An infographic is shown separated into two columns. At the top of the left column, text reads: Among 5 to 6 year-old kids in China. A pie graph has two sections. The large section reads 86%. Almost 9 in 10 can recognize 1+ (1 or more) cigarette brand logo(s). Five children icons are shown holding hands. Almost 4/5 of the children are shaded in. Text reads: 1 in 5 children say they expect to be smokers when they grow up.

At the top of the right column, text reads: Among 13 to 15 year-old young people in China. An illustration of a billboard advertisement is shown with a man smoking a cigarette on it. Text reads: Around half noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions on TV or at points of sale. An arrow points to a rectangle. Text inside the shape reads: Tobacco advertising – More young people taking up smoking.

Source: WHO, Western Pacific Region, WHO Representative Office China.
http://www.wpro.who.int/china/topics/tobacco/infographics/en/
Access the report of the research study for this infographic.

**International Reach of Tobacco Marketing Among Young Children**

**Tobacco Industry Strategies to Target Youth**

Learn some of the strategies that the TI utilizes to target youth.

- Advertising heavily at retail outlets near schools and playgrounds using large ads and signs that are clearly visible from the outside.
- Sponsor schools, school programs, or special school events.
- Develop counter-productive youth tobacco prevention programs, which actually encourage use.
- Place cigarette ads at children’s eye-level.
• Position cigarette products and cigarette ads near items that children often purchase, like candies, juice drinks, or gum.

• Sponsor sports with a large youth fan base, such as soccer and cricket.
• Advertise in popular youth-oriented magazines.
• Place tobacco products in movies aimed at a youth audience.

**Advertising and Tobacco Use Among Youth**

The relationship between advertising and uptake of tobacco use among youth is consistent and appears to be global, prompting the US Surgeon General to conclude in his 2012 report:

"There is a causal relationship between advertising and promotional efforts of the tobacco companies and the initiation and progression of tobacco use among young people"


**Quiz**

Approximately what percentage of youth experimentation with tobacco occurs as a result of exposure to tobacco marketing?

• one-hundredth (1%)
• one-tenth (10%)
• one-fifth (20%)
• one-third (33%)

Answer

One-third (33%): Approximately one-third of youth experimentation with tobacco occurs as a result of exposure to tobacco marketing, and the exposure begins early in life. In China, for example, one study found that 86% of 5- and 6-year old children recognized at least one cigarette brand logo.

Another Target Group: Women

Mr. Sóñora discusses women as another target group for the tobacco industry.

Women are another target group for tobacco industry advertising.

In many developing countries, smoking and tobacco use rates among women are traditionally much lower than in men. With their increasing financial independence and social empowerment, women are viewed by the TI as a significant potential market for their products. Certain cigarette brands have been developed, designed, and advertised to appeal specifically to women. As a result, smoking among women is expected to double between 2008–2025.
Why TAPS Should Be Banned

Article 13 of the WHO FCTC states: “Each Party shall, in accordance with its constitution or constitutional principles, undertake a comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. This shall include, subject to the legal environment and technical means available to that Party, a comprehensive ban on cross-border advertising, promotion and sponsorship originating from its territory.”

This is such a crucial component of tobacco control that it is one of only two FCTC Articles to carry a mandatory timeline for implementation. Parties are expected to undertake a TAPS ban as comprehensive as possible within five years of ratifying the Treaty.

Banning TAPS Works

Mr. Sóñora discusses how banning TAPS works.

Comprehensive bans on TAPS are effective in decreasing the consumption of tobacco products. Some countries have experienced a decline in consumption of up to 16% after the introduction of advertising bans.
A study of 22 high-income countries concluded that comprehensive bans on TAPS reduced tobacco consumption by up to 7.4%. However, partial bans have limited effect since when one form of TAPS is banned, the tobacco industry simply shifts expenditures to more indirect forms of TAPS in order to circumvent restrictions.

**What Should Be Included in a TAPS Ban?**

Governments should act to ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship through well-drafted and well-enforced laws. To be effective, bans must be comprehensive and apply to all types of advertising, promotion and sponsorship—both direct and indirect.

Learn more about effective bans.

**Direct and indirect advertising**

Ban all direct and indirect advertising, including sponsorship of music, cultural and sporting events, brand stretching, endorsement by celebrities, and price discounts.

**Product displays**

Ban product displays, point-of-sale (POS) advertising, and vending machines.

**Cross-border TAPS**

Ban all cross-border TAPS (both incoming and outgoing).

**Corporate social responsibility**

Ban corporate social responsibility activities.

**Free samples**

Ban the provision of free samples and giveaways.

**Plain packaging**

Move toward plain packaging for all tobacco products.

**Restrict tobacco use**
Restrict tobacco use and prohibit tobacco product placement in movies and other entertainment media.

**TAPS Bans: Enforcement**

Mr. Sóñora discusses the enforcement of TAPS bans.

TAPS bans should be consistently enforced and also be periodically updated to accommodate innovations in media technology and emerging industry tactics. TAPS activities should be monitored to ensure compliance with bans. Monitoring should include traditional media and marketing channels as well as novel and evolving technologies, social trends, and marketing strategies.

How is your country doing in relation to banning TAPS?

Access the Tobacco Atlas marketing page.

*Tobacco Atlas*

**Point-of-Sale TAPS Bans**

POS advertising and promotions account for a significant share of tobacco industry marketing expenditures. This indicates the relative importance of POS advertising and promotions in ensuring a steady supply of tobacco users. For children and youth, POS marketing is particularly effective in capturing their attention and enticing them to try tobacco.
Point-of-Sale: Advertising and In-store Displays

Mr. Sóñora discusses advertising and in-store displays at the point-of-sale.

POS advertising and in-store displays of tobacco products should be banned. Research shows that bans on product display lead to reductions in youth smoking and also reduce impulse purchases among adults wanting to quit. Keeping tobacco behind the counter and out of public view can be effective. Data from the Global Youth Tobacco Survey of 130 countries showed an association between banning POS tobacco displays and a reduction in experimental smoking among youth.

In countries with POS display bans, significant reductions in smokers’ reported exposure to tobacco advertising, and decreased impulse purchasing, have been recorded.

Point-of-Sale Display Bans in Action

Mr. Sóñora discusses point-of-sale display bans in action.

Several countries have already enacted a ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship at the point of sale. These countries have seen large reductions in smokers’ reported exposure to tobacco advertising. Reducing the visibility of tobacco products reduces cues that can prompt smokers to think about smoking. Banning POS displays reduces purchasing behavior, including impulse purchases.

New Zealand

In July 2012, New Zealand required the removal of POS tobacco displays concurrently with increased enforcement and penalties for selling tobacco to minors and additional restrictions on tobacco sponsorship. Data from annual surveys of more than 25,000 14 to 15-year-old students were analyzed before and after these measures were implemented. Between 2011–2014, smoking experimentation decreased from 23% to 17%; current smoking prevalence declined from 9% to 7% and initiation in the last year decreased from 13% to 11%. Attempted purchases of cigarettes in the past 30 days among smokers decreased from 30% in 2012 to 26%
in 2013. The introduction of a POS display ban and concurrent measures was followed by significant reductions in initiation, experimental and regular smoking, and attempted purchase of cigarettes, with reduced association between visiting tobacco-retailing stores and smoking behaviors. The findings suggest that POS display bans are important components of strategies to reduce smoking initiation among young people.

**Norway**

Norway implemented a POS display ban for tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco (snus) and smoking accessories on January 1, 2010, through an amendment of its 1973 Tobacco Control Act. In 2013, the display ban was extended to imitations of tobacco products and tobacco substitutes. The Norwegian POS display ban was challenged by the tobacco industry (Philip Morris Norway). In 2012, Oslo District Court ruled that the display ban does not constitute a barrier to trade, achieves a public health objective, and does not go further than necessary.

**Panama**

Law No. 13 of January 24, 2008 “Which Adopts Measures to Control Tobacco and Its Harmful Effects on Health” bans all forms of TAPS, including POS advertising and display—products may not be visible at point of sale.

**Thailand**

Thailand was the first Asian country to impose a POS display ban, in 2005, following mandatory graphic health warnings on all tobacco product packages and a tobacco control mass media campaign. Data from the International Tobacco Control Southeast Asia Survey (2005–2011) showed reduced exposure to POS tobacco advertising in Thailand, as compared to Malaysia, a neighboring country with no POS bans. Smokers’ reported awareness of tobacco displays and tobacco advertising at POS were lower among Thai smokers.

However, over time, the percentage of smokers noticing the displays and POS advertising increased from earlier waves of the survey, suggesting that the POS bans
were incompletely enforced. This highlights the importance of ensuring that POS bans are completely and consistently enforced, to maintain its population effect.

**Uruguay**

Article 7 of the Law No. 18.256, as amended by Law No. 19.244 as of July 25, 2014, broadly bans all forms of TAPS and specifically prohibits “the display of tobacco products, tobacco derivatives or accessories for smoking in display stands or any other kind of shelving located in places where tobacco products are sold.” Only a written list of tobacco products and their prices is permitted.

**Plain Packaging**

Mr. Sóñora discusses plain packaging.

Plain packaging is another important strategy in ensuring a comprehensive TAPS ban. But what is plain packaging and why is it important for tobacco control?

The ultimate advertising happens on the cigarette package. Brand colors, logos, eye-catching designs that establish the image of the tobacco product “brand” make the tobacco product package appealing. This helps to drive sales and promote the tobacco brand.

A thorough ban on tobacco product advertising includes a ban on advertising on the tobacco product package. This implies that tobacco products need to be packaged in a way that does not promote the tobacco brand, and that reduces the appeal of the package itself. The WHO defines “plain packaging” as: “...an important demand reduction measure that reduces the attractiveness of tobacco products, restricts use of tobacco packaging as a form of advertising and promotion, limits misleading packaging and labeling, and increases the effectiveness of health warnings.”

Learn more about what the WHO FCTC and its guidelines recommend if a country intends to implement plain packaging.

**Application of plain packaging**

Plain packaging should apply to all tobacco products.
**Standard color and font style**

Brand names and product names should be in a standard color and font style, and should be the only form of logo, color, brand image or promotional information on the package.

**Prohibit branding**

Branding, logos or other promotional elements in, on, inside or attached to the packaging or on individual products should be prohibited.

**Information clearly defined**

Mandatory information such as health warnings, tax stamps and quitline information should be clearly defined.

**Plain Packaging: A First**

Mr. Sóñora discusses a first in plain packaging.

In 2012, Australia became the first country to implement laws requiring plain (standardized) packaging of tobacco products. Since then, France, Ireland, and the United Kingdom have passed laws to implement plain packaging, and several other countries have initiated legislative processes with the same goal.

Initial research after Australia implemented its plain packaging law confirmed that plain packaging changed the appeal of tobacco products to smokers, increased the likelihood that the public noticed the health warnings, increased the effectiveness of the warnings, and changed smokers’ attitudes and behaviors.

Subsequent research in 2016 documented a reduction in smoking prevalence after the initiation of the law, with an estimated 0.55 percentage point drop in smoking attributed to the measure, leading to 118,000 fewer people smoking.
Tobacco Industry’s Attempts to Circumvent TAPS Bans

Mr. Sóñora discusses the tobacco industry’s attempts to circumvent TAPS bans. TAPS bans are effective in reducing consumption, and in diminishing the appeal of tobacco as a consumer product. Not surprisingly, the tobacco industry actively tries to impede and weaken legislation banning TAPS, and circumvents the effective implementation of the existing legislation.

Learn more about how the TI circumvents existing legislation.

Legal challenges

The tobacco industry aggressively pursues legal challenges to efforts to enact TAPS bans, as in Uruguay, and threatens legal action against low- and middle-income countries such as Togo, the Solomon Islands, and Namibia.

Bypass TAPS legislation

The tobacco industry also pursues tactics to bypass TAPS legislation. For example, in 12 African countries from 2012–2013, tobacco billboard advertising decreased, and aggressive advertising through POS marketing and the use of brand pictures on cars and candy products was extensive.
Summary

Mr. Sóñora summarizes the Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship Lecture.

In this section, we have reviewed why TAPS can perpetuate the tobacco epidemic by increasing tobacco consumption and inciting tobacco use initiation, including among youth and women.

There are diverse forms of TAPS. To be effective, TAPS bans must be comprehensive and apply to all types of advertising, promotion and sponsorship—both direct and indirect. POS TAPS bans and plain packaging reinforce the impact of TAPS bans in reducing tobacco consumption; the experiences from countries demonstrate that these are feasible strategies.

Want to Learn More?

The U.S. National Cancer Institute assesses the impact of tobacco marketing on tobacco consumption and the effectiveness of comprehensive bans. Access Monograph 19: The Role of Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use

Guidelines for implementing Article 13 of the WHO FCTC: Article 13 of the WHO FCTC

Plain packaging, its policy design and implementation strategies, legal issues, and common TI objections against plain packaging: Plain Packaging of Tobacco Products: Evidence, Design and Implementation

Product Regulation

Introduction

Dr. Ghazi Zaatari, Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the American University in Beirut, and Chair of the WHO’s
Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation, introduces the Product Regulation Lecture.

Tobacco products are unique in that they are deadly, but legal. Yet tobacco products remain largely unregulated in terms of contents and emissions.

In this section, you will learn about the rationale for tobacco product regulation, with specific attention to regulating nicotine and menthol. You will also review Canada’s and Brazil’s experience in banning menthol and other flavor additives in cigarettes, and other tobacco products. Tobacco product regulation is covered under Articles 9 and 10 (Regulation of the contents and disclosures of tobacco products), and Article 11 (Packaging and labelling of tobacco products) of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Learning Objectives

• Describe at least one regulatory action at each stage of the life of tobacco products.

• Identify at least two substances that could be regulated to be prohibited from tobacco products.

• Discuss the regulatory approach taken by two countries—Canada and Brazil—to address the attractiveness of tobacco products.

Why Should We Regulate Tobacco Products?

Dr. Zaatari discusses why we should regulate tobacco products.

Most commercial products are subject to government regulations if they have the potential to cause harm to consumers. Ironically, tobacco products are the most dangerous legal consumer products, killing half of users, yet they are subject to very little regulation. To a large extent, tobacco manufacturers can freely introduce new products into the various consumer markets around the world, with no or even misleading information about the contents and characteristics of these products released to the regulators and public.
The WHO FCTC recognizes the critical role of tobacco product regulation as part of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy. The FCTC includes provisions to develop guidelines for testing and measuring the contents and emissions of tobacco products, and for the regulation of these contents and emissions. Making the products less toxic to consumers augments interventions directed toward influencing consumer behavior. Tobacco control has traditionally emphasized the use of policies to reduce smoking and other tobacco use; regulating tobacco products adds a different but complementary strategy to decrease the public health toll of tobacco.

**At What Stage of Tobacco Production Does Tobacco Product Regulation Apply?**

Dr. Zaatari discusses at what stage of tobacco production tobacco product regulations apply.

Tobacco regulations can potentially be applied throughout the life cycle of tobacco product production. For this module, we will focus on regulations that address tobacco product ingredients.

Learn some of the associated tobacco product regulatory approaches. These approaches represent potential policies that governments could enact and implement.
An infographic is shown titled “Targets for Tobacco Regulation.” Eight images are arranged in a circle. There are buttons to select for each image to list information about the image. The eight images are arranged under four broader categories: Production, Display, Purchase, and Use.

**Production**

- Growing (an image of tobacco leaves)
  - Regulate pesticide use.
  - Provide occupational safety and health safeguards for farmers, including labor protections.
  - Protect the environment and prevent deforestation that occurs from tobacco curing and agricultural practices.
  - Prohibit all incentives to grow tobacco, such as subsidies.
- Manufacturing (an image of stacked cigarettes)
  - Ensure sanitary manufacturing practices.
o Ensure proper storage. Improper storage can contribute to microbial overgrowth, which increases the level of toxicants in harvested tobacco leaves.

o Set product standards, including regulating nicotine content and additives.

o Disclose ingredients and emissions to government regulators.

Display

- Packaging and Labeling (health warning labels are shown on two cigarette packs)
  o Establish plain/standardized packaging as the gold standard.
  o Require warning labels, including graphic or pictorial images.
  o Ban "kiddie"-sized packs and sale of single cigarettes. ("Kiddie" packs have 10 cigarettes instead of 20. These "kiddie" packs are cheaper, more affordable to young people, and thus limit how taxation on cigarette packs deters smoking.)

- Marketing (an ad for Salem Lights is shown)
  o Ban or restrict advertising, promotion and sponsorships.
  o Restrict health claims or language suggesting reduced risk, including descriptors such as “mild” or “light.”
  o Ban free samples.
  o Restrict price promotions, including coupons and discounts.

Purchase

- Tax Policies (a stack of cash is shown)
  o Implement higher tobacco excise taxes.
  o Earmark taxes for tobacco control or other public health programs.
  o Require application of tax stamps to packaging.

- Point of Purchase (an ad is shown at a point of purchase)
  o Require retail licensing.
  o Set a minimum age of purchase.
o Mandate face-to-face transactions rather than self-service.
o Ban vending machines.
o Ban prominent displays in retail environments.

**Use**

- Product Use (anti-smoking ads are shown on billboards)
  - Enforce smoke-free public places (indoor and outdoor).
  - Ban smoking in multi-family dwellings, homes, and cars with children as passengers.
- Disposal (a mound of cigarette butts is shown)
  - Establish litter and environmental clean-up regulations.


**Why Should We Regulate Tobacco Product Ingredients?**

Dr. Zaatari discusses prohibiting the use of ingredients that increase tobacco product attractiveness and addictiveness.

Tobacco product ingredients comprise all of the substances and raw materials that make up the final consumer product, whether it be cigarettes, or other smoked tobacco products, or smokeless tobacco. These ingredients contribute to the attractiveness, addictiveness and toxicity of tobacco products, making users more likely to continue tobacco use. Prohibiting or restricting the use of ingredients that increase tobacco product attractiveness and addictiveness can help reduce the prevalence of tobacco use and dependence among new and continuing tobacco users.

Learn more about these ingredients.

**Processed Tobacco Leaf**

Nicotine levels in tobacco leaves can be manipulated by various agricultural techniques, including the use of nitrogen-rich fertilizers. The post-harvest method selected for “curing” of raw tobacco also determines nicotine and sugar content of the processed tobacco.
The Material

The material holds together the processed tobacco leaf and usually gives shape to the tobacco product, such as paper and wrappers, and the filter if the product has one.

Residual Substances

Processing aids and residual substances can accumulate or get added to the tobacco products following the storage and processing of the tobacco leaf.

Packaging Material

These are substances that migrate from the packaging material into the product.

Attractiveness of Product

These are substances that migrate from the packaging material into the product.

What Can Be Regulated in Tobacco Products?

Dr. Zaatari discusses what contributes to tobacco product addictiveness, palatability and attractiveness, and toxicity.

Tobacco product ingredients and design features contribute to the addictiveness of the products, their palatability and attractiveness, and toxicity.

Learn about product regulations aiming to combat tobacco product addictiveness.

- Reduce and eventually, eliminate, the addictive potential of tobacco.
- Remove substances that make tobacco products more attractive.
- Decrease the toxicity.
- Prohibit design features that enhance addictiveness, attractiveness, and toxicity.

Reducing Addictiveness

Dr. Zaatari discusses reducing addictiveness.

Nicotine is the substance in tobacco that results in addiction. Some ingredients in the final tobacco products are intentionally added to heighten the addictiveness of
Modern day cigarettes are considered to be expertly engineered nicotine delivery devices. Learn about some of the strategies the tobacco industry uses to increase tobacco’s addictiveness.

**Increasing Nicotine Levels**

The tobacco variety, the weather, and the amount of applied nitrogen (as fertilizer) all affect the nicotine level in tobacco leaf. Different varieties have inherently different nicotine levels, with nicotine yields ranging from 0.17 to 4.93% by weight. Nicotine content can be enhanced further by limiting root growth, preventing excess water from leaching nitrogen from the soil, and applying nitrogen-rich fertilizer.

**Brown & Williamson**

The Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation created Y-1, a genetically engineered tobacco. This tobacco doubles the amount of nicotine delivered in some cigarettes.

**Speeding Nicotine Delivery**

Ammonia or ammonia compounds are added to accelerate nicotine’s actions; this speeds the delivery of nicotine to the brain.

**Sugars**

Sugars are added to facilitate the inhalation of tobacco smoke, which also increases nicotine’s addictiveness.
Regulating Nicotine

Dr. Zaatari discusses regulating nicotine.

Nicotine preserves the smoker’s addiction to tobacco use. A central issue in tobacco product regulation is eliminating nicotine addiction by reducing the level of nicotine in tobacco products to a level below which addiction is unlikely. Cigarettes and other tobacco products may claim to have lower nicotine content, but if the level of nicotine is above the addiction threshold, addicted smokers compensate by inhaling more deeply and retaining the smoke longer, and/or smoking more cigarettes per day.

The threshold level for nicotine addiction has not been definitively established, and could vary across individuals, but a review conducted by a WHO experts’ group indicated that regulatory policies should aim for a level of 0.4 mg of nicotine per gram of cigarette tobacco filler, or less. A single-time substantial mandated decrease in nicotine content is recommended over a gradual reduction.

Mandated Nicotine Reduction

Dr. Zaatari discusses mandated nicotine reduction.

As of 2018, no countries have required nicotine reduction (Note: The WHO Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation recommends a nicotine level at or below 0.4
mg per gram of tobacco cigarette filler. However, in 2017, the US Food and Drug Administration announced the launch of a multiyear roadmap to address this strategy. Canada, Finland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom have also indicated they would consider nicotine reduction policies.

The WHO recommends that mandated nicotine reduction should:

- Be supported by comprehensive regulation of all nicotine and tobacco-containing products.
- Comprise one element of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy that incorporates the core demand reduction and supply restriction interventions elucidated in the WHO FCTC and MPOWER.
- Be accompanied by effective health communication strategies and effective treatment for those who experience adverse effects.
- Be pursued only if the country has developed capacity for market surveillance and tobacco product testing.
- Examine the potential health benefits against the potential adverse health impact and increased use of alternative nicotine products.

Removing Additives That Make Tobacco Use More Palatable and Attractive

Dr. Zaatari discusses removing additives that make tobacco use more palatable and attractive.

Tobacco smoke is usually harsh and difficult to tolerate, especially for new or experimenting smokers. Specific ingredients can be added to alter the taste and enhance the smoothness of tobacco smoke to make smoking more pleasant and tolerable for tobacco users. This is an effective strategy to lure young smokers to take up and continue smoking.

Learn more about examples of these additives.

**Bronchodilators**

Bronchodilators, which are used to help people with asthma, help widen the airways, facilitating the entry of tobacco smoke into the lungs.
Flavorings

Flavorings, such as cocoa and licorice, impart a sweet taste to the tobacco smoke, making it more tolerable, and also more appealing to young smokers.

Levulinic acid

Levulinic acid reduces the harshness of nicotine, creating a smoother and less irritating smoke.

Menthol

Menthol numbs the throat, making it less sensitive to tobacco smoke, and imparts a sensation of “coolness” to soothe any irritation.

Molasses

Molasses, a major ingredient in water pipe tobacco, contributes greatly to enhanced palatability, aroma, and production of the toxic aldehydes.

Increasing Toxicity

Dr. Zaatari discusses increasing toxicity.

Data indicate that today’s smoker has a much higher risk of developing lung cancer and chronic obstructive lung [pulmonary] disease (COPD) than smokers in the 1960s. This increased risk of lung cancer is due to two factors in the design and composition of cigarettes and the chemistry of cigarette smoke.

Learn more about these two factors.

Ventilation Holes

By introducing ventilation holes in cigarette filters in the 1970s, tobacco manufacturers artificially lowered the tar and nicotine measurements by smoking machines. This enabled them to label their products as “low tar” and “light” and “ultra-light.” These terms imply less harm. However, these holes also stimulated a response in smokers, leading them—often unconsciously—to block the filter vents, increase puff volume and velocity, and inhale more deeply. Consequently, their
exposure to tobacco’s toxic ingredients, including carcinogens, increased markedly, ultimately leading to greater harm.

**Tobacco-specific Nitrosamines**

Changes in the composition of cigarette smoke have increased levels of carcinogens. The chemistry of cigarette smoke can be changed by several factors: the geographic location of where the tobacco is grown (which can alter heavy metal content of smoke), agricultural practices (influencing levels of nitrates and pesticides), how the tobacco is cured and processed (which can influence tobacco-specific nitrosamine levels (TSNAs)), the blend of tobacco used, and additives used in tobacco.

US cigarettes have much higher levels of TSNAs than cigarettes distributed in Canada or Australia, resulting in higher cancer risks for most smokers of US cigarette brands. Smokers in most of Europe, Latin America, and many Asian markets smoke blended cigarettes similar to US cigarettes.

**Eliminating Menthol**

Dr. Zaatari discusses eliminating menthol.

Menthol cigarettes have been shown to be favored by youth, and in the United States, by people of color. Thus, banning menthol could protect vulnerable populations from tobacco’s harms.

The Parties to the WHO FCTC have issued partial guidelines to address the restriction or prohibition of ingredients used to enhance the palatability and mask the harshness of tobacco products. These include recommendations to prohibit or restrict sugars and sweeteners, flavoring products such as menthol and vanilla, and spices and herbs. A number of countries and the European Union (EU) have started pursuing legislation to ban additives, including menthol, in all tobacco products. Some of the regulatory options being considered in the EU include mandatory full disclosure of all additives, as well as the reduction and ultimate removal of all harmful constituents of tobacco, beginning with tobacco-specific nitrosamines (TSNAs).
In February, 2018, Brazil’s Supreme Court rejected the industry’s constitutional challenge to its ban on all flavored additives in tobacco products, including menthol.

**Quiz**

Which of the choices is **NOT** one of the factors that has increased toxicity in cigarettes?

- geographic location of where tobacco is grown
- how the tobacco is cured and processed
- the blend of tobacco used
- how the tobacco is transported to market

**Answer**

How the tobacco is transported to market: The chemistry of cigarette smoke can be changed by several factors: the geographic location of where the tobacco is grown (which can alter heavy metal content of smoke), agricultural practices (influencing levels of nitrates and pesticides), how the tobacco is cured and processed (which can influence tobacco-specific nitrosamine levels), the blend of tobacco used, and additives used in tobacco product manufacturing.

**Case Study: Brazil**

**The situation**

Brazil, the largest Latin American country with a population of 210 million, is the world’s second largest tobacco producer. Despite the strong presence of the tobacco industry, Brazil has aggressively pursued tobacco control over the past two decades, resulting in a significant drop in population tobacco consumption, from 35% in 1989 to 11% in 2014. However, 60% of Brazilian youth aged 13–15 years experiment with flavored cigarettes, especially menthol.

**The response**

In 2012, Brazil became the first country in the world to issue a ban on all flavors and additives in tobacco products, including menthol. However, the tobacco industry
filed a lawsuit against Brazil’s National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA), which issued the ban, and implementation stalled.

The result

In February 2018, after nearly 6 years under legal challenge from the tobacco industry, Brazil’s Supreme Court rejected the industry’s constitutional challenge to the ban. There remain a few hurdles to cross before Brazil’s ban on tobacco product flavor additives, including menthol, can go into effect.

Case Study: Canada

The situation

While smoking among Canadian youth has decreased over time, about 4% of young Canadians between the ages of 12–17 still smoke. Twenty-nine percent prefer menthol cigarettes compared to only 5% of adult smokers. Thus, there was concern among Canadian health authorities that menthol facilitated youth experimentation and eventually, addiction to smoking.

The response

Canada amended its Tobacco Act in 2009 to ban the use of additives that have flavoring properties or enhance flavor. However, the act at that time excluded menthol. Subsequently, seven Canadian provinces enacted legislation to prohibit the use of all flavorings in tobacco products, including menthol.

Despite legal challenges, the regulations went into effect, starting with Nova Scotia and Alberta in 2015, New Brunswick and Quebec in 2016, and Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador in 2017.

In Alberta, research by IGTC, the University of Toronto and Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids documented the tobacco industry’s response to the ban using menthol replacement packaging. This study provided further insight into how to minimize tobacco industry attempts to circumvent restrictions on menthol. In April 2017, Canada’s federal government finalized the amendment to their national tobacco
control law to ban all menthol tobacco products; these new provisions on menthol came into effect in October 2017.

The result

It is too early to assess the impact of the federal law on cigarette sales and tobacco consumption, but data on the provinces where the menthol ban was implemented in 2015 revealed large reductions in the volume of retail sales of menthol cigarettes post-ban. None of the provinces required increased resources for enforcement, and none of the legal challenges were successful.

These findings indicate that enacting a complete ban on menthol cigarettes is feasible. It also highlights the power of local governments in proactively setting the standard for national tobacco regulations.

Summary

Dr. Zaatari summarizes the Tobacco Product Regulation Lecture.

We have reviewed why it is important to regulate tobacco products. Reducing the addictive potential by decreasing nicotine levels in tobacco products, and eliminating additives like menthol that make tobacco more attractive to users, are core strategies in tobacco product regulation. Keep in mind that tobacco product regulation is just one part of the broader comprehensive approach of tobacco control. Making tobacco products less harmful should be complemented by policy measures to influence population behavior and reduce the demand for tobacco.

The MPOWER strategies to reduce tobacco use by encouraging users to quit, preventing youth from taking up smoking, and measures to protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke exposure are fundamental to tobacco control; tobacco product regulation is complementary to these strategies and should not replace or detract from these key policy interventions.
Emerging Issues

Introduction

Dr. Olalekan A. Ayo-Yusuf, Professor of public health at the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University in South Africa and Director of the Africa Center for Tobacco Industry Monitoring and Policy Research (a WHO Secretariat Observatory for Tobacco Industry Monitoring), introduces the Emerging Issues Lecture.

Much progress has been made in tobacco control in recent years, especially with the entry into force of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Yet, gaps remain, and new challenges to tobacco control legislation continue to emerge. Among these challenges are novel tobacco products like electronic cigarettes, “heated tobacco products,” and “roll-your-own” (RYO) tobacco as well as tactics to evade price and packaging controls such as the sale of single cigarettes or “loosies.” Several of these novel formulations are discussed in other modules; we’ll concentrate on loosies and RYO tobacco and the need for sustained capacity building for enforcement.
In the next lessons, you will learn about some of the emerging issues that continue to pose a challenge to effective and comprehensive tobacco control interventions.

Learning Objectives

- Describe how sales of loosies (single cigarette sticks) and RYO tobacco continue to evade the protections afforded by the WHO FCTC and MPOWER interventions.
- Discuss the rationale for investing in capacity building for implementation and enforcement of tobacco control policies and legislation, as well as leadership in tobacco control.

What Are Loosies?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses what loosies are.

While the enactment of tobacco control policies has strengthened globally throughout the past few decades, the tobacco industry, its front groups and allies continue to discover new ways to subvert, weaken, or otherwise render tobacco control policies ineffective. One way to achieve this is to promote the sales of single sticks of cigarettes, often called loosies.

Loosies are single sticks of cigarettes or cigars that are sold out of their original packaging and not meant for single sale. Selling loosies has been reported in both low- and middle-income and upper-middle- and high-income countries.

In some countries, the absence of laws prohibiting the sales of single sticks of cigarettes and other tobacco products contributes to the widespread distribution of loosies. In other countries with bans on single stick sales, some vendors sell loosies illegally.
How Prevalent Is the Sale of Loosies?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses how prevalent the sale of loosies are.

The prevalence of selling single sticks of cigarettes across the various countries in the world is diverse, but commonly over 25% of cigarettes are sold as loosies. In India, using data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), nearly 57% of current cigarette smokers (equivalent of about 3.5 million smokers) bought loose cigarettes during their last purchase. Another study estimated that nearly 75% of all cigarettes consumed annually in India are sold as single sticks. This equates to 30% of India’s excise revenues from all cigarettes, representing nearly half a billion US dollars in sales that evades taxation, representing a significant fiscal loss to the government.

Purchasing by the stick appears to be the major mode for acquiring cigarettes in Bangladesh and the Philippines, as well. And in countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Thailand, Uruguay, and Vietnam, over 25% of cigarettes are bought as loosies.

The prevalence of consumption of loosies is not limited to low- and middle-income countries. In the United States, research in Baltimore, New York City, and other jurisdictions indicates higher than expected rates of both selling and purchasing single sticks.

What Can Be Done to Regulate the Sale of Loosies?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses what can be done to regulate the sale of loosies.

Article 16 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (which deals with sales to and by minors) obligates Parties to prohibit the sale of single stick sales or small cigarette packages in order to address the affordability of such products to minors. Banning single cigarette sales should be included as part of a country’s comprehensive approach to tobacco control.

Access the WHO FCTC Article 16 Guidelines.

WHO FCTC Article 16
What Is Roll-Your-Own (RYO) Tobacco?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses roll-your-own (RYO) tobacco.

Unlike manufactured cigarettes, users of roll-your-own (RYO) tobacco create their own cigarettes using loose tobacco and rolling paper. The RYO sticks can be rolled by hand, or by using a machine that automates and markedly speeds up the process. Filters can be purchased and added to the final product. The loose tobacco is sold in pouches or cans, and consists of shredded tobacco leaf; some now come in different flavors.

How Prevalent Is the use of RYO Tobacco?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses the prevalence of the use of RYO tobacco.

Evidence from several countries in the Americas and Europe, spanning the years 2002–2012, indicate that RYO cigarettes are increasing in popularity. The International Tobacco Control (ITC) Europe Surveys demonstrated a rise in exclusive RYO use in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the Netherlands over a period of 3–5 years.

A 2010 survey in South Africa, revealed 28.8% of smokers used RYO tobacco.

A larger European survey conducted between June 2006 and December 2012 in 18 countries, revealed that 10.4% of smokers in Europe are predominant RYO users.

Smokers who used RYO tobacco were more likely to be older males with lower incomes and lower education. RYO users also tended to believe that the RYO cigarettes are “safer” than manufactured cigarettes.

In the UK and Australia, predominant users of RYO tobacco were less likely to intend to quit smoking. In Canada and Australia, they tended to be heavier smokers.

What Is so Significant About the Sales of Single Sticks of Tobacco Products and RYO Tobacco?

Single stick sales of cigarettes and RYO tobacco circumvent or weaken the impact of several key tobacco control strategies.
Learn more about the impact of single sticks and RYO in neutralizing good tobacco control.

The Impact of Single Sticks and RYO on Tobacco Control infographic is shown. Seven categories are arranged in a circle. There are buttons to select for each category listing information about the category. In the middle of the circle a single cigarette stick is being sold.

**Protecting minors and disadvantaged communities**

- Loosies and RYO are cheaper than regular packs, making them affordable for students and youth with limited incomes, as well as disadvantaged population groups, such as communities with low socioeconomic status. Studies confirm that smokers who use RYO cigarettes predominantly are more likely to have lower incomes and education.

**Tax increases**

- Single sticks of cigarettes and other tobacco products such as cigars are cheaper than buying full packs. By breaking up a pack of cigarettes into loosies, the impact of tobacco price increases from tobacco taxes on the consumer is lessened.
- For governments, it can be challenging to collect taxes on single stick sales. Thus, governments can lose significant amounts of tax revenue when loosies thrive in the marketplace.
- Loose tobacco generally is taxed at a lower rate than manufactured cigarettes. Thus, RYO products are generally cheaper than manufactured cigarettes of comparable weight. This reduces the impact of price increases on reducing or stopping smoking.
- Sales tax revenues decrease when smokers switch from manufactured to RYO tobacco products, diminishing government income.

**Pack warnings**
• Removing the cigarette sticks from the pack eliminates the full impact of graphic health warnings on cigarette packages that have been discussed in-depth previously.

• In most countries, there are no pack warnings for RYO. This may contribute to the perception of RYO users that these products are natural and therefore less harmful to health. There is emerging evidence that, in the United Kingdom at least, the tobacco industry has embarked on a systematic campaign to change the image of RYO into the “cool” and “natural” choice.

Advertising bans

• Vendors selling loosies in public spaces may normalize and promote smoking, even in the absence of tobacco advertising.

Monitoring

• Tracking and tracing single stick cigarette sales can be an insurmountable exercise. The usual surveillance mechanisms may fail to capture the extent of illegal single stick sales.

Quitting tobacco use

• When single sticks are readily available, the readiness to quit of smokers can be severely tested, delaying or preventing successful cessation efforts.

• RYO users are an effective way to continue smoking at a lower cost. This reduces the financial pressure for cessation; RYO users are less likely to report an intention to quit.

Illicit trade

• Evidence from the United Kingdom indicates that RYO tobacco is easier to smuggle, and may facilitate illicit trade on tobacco products across countries where the tax difference on tobacco products markedly differs.

What Can Be Done to Regulate RYO Tobacco?

Ideally, RYO products should be banned from the market.
These are some policy options:

- Raise taxes on RYO products to eliminate the price differential with manufactured cigarettes.
- Work towards a tax equalization scheme across countries to eliminate cross-country price differences.
- Mandate pack warnings and targeted health messages for RYO products, emphasizing that the health harms are NOT reduced.
- Prohibit duty-free RYO tobacco.
- Counter tobacco industry promotional activities and targeted marketing of RYO.

**Quiz**

Is each statement about roll-your-own tobacco true or false?

Sort each card into the correct category.

Statements include:

- Increasing cigarette taxes may push smokers to RYO, decreasing tax revenue.
- RYO products are generally cheaper than manufactured cigarettes.
- RYO users are less likely to intend to quit.
- RYO users are likely to have higher incomes and education levels.
- The tobacco industry has not marketed RYO as the “cool” and “natural” choice.
- RYO tobacco is harder to smuggle than manufactured cigarettes.

**Answer**

True

- RYO users are less likely to intend to quit.
- RYO tobacco is cheaper than regular cigarette packs.
- Increasing cigarette taxes may push smokers to RYO, decreasing tax revenue.

False
- RYO tobacco is harder to smuggle than manufactured cigarettes.
- The tobacco industry has not marketed RYO as the “cool” and “natural” choice.
- RYO users are likely to have higher incomes and education levels.

The Role of Implementation and Enforcement of Tobacco Control Interventions

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses the role of implementation and enforcement of tobacco control interventions.

Tobacco control is only as good as its implementation. Once evidence-based policies are enacted, effective implementation will determine the ultimate impact on countering the tobacco epidemic. A component of effective implementation is often consistent and sustained enforcement efforts.

What Are the Elements of Good Implementation?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses the elements of good implementation.

Implementation is facilitated when tobacco control policies are made normative by an educated and engaged public that feels empowered and vested in the full implementation of these policies.

Learn more about what tools the WHO has identified for monitoring implementation of tobacco control policies.

Monitoring

Monitor trends and patterns in tobacco use with a research and surveillance program.

Ensuring awareness

Ensure public awareness about why the policy intervention is necessary.

Monitoring mechanisms

Implement monitoring mechanisms such as compliance checks and toll-free phone lines for public reporting of violations.
Reporting of constituents

Require reporting of tobacco product constituents and additives, as well as industry advertising expenditures.

Inspections

Conduct inspections, including of manufacturing facilities.

Monitoring the tobacco industry

Monitor tobacco industry activities to ensure industry compliance with the policy requirements.

Assessing fines

Assess fines and issue citations for noncompliance.

What About Enforcement?

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses enforcement.

Once tobacco control laws are enacted, and regulations are in place, enforcement is vital. Ideally, enforcement should be built into the law—that is, tobacco control laws should be drafted so that the provisions are, in fact, enforceable.

Enforcement requires public education about the law. Those charged with enforcement need to fully understand what the law entails and what it excludes, while the general community needs to be aware that the law is in effect. A critical component of law enforcement is monitoring—without knowledge of where the law is being violated, enforcement is not possible. Involving a wide range of tobacco control stakeholders in monitoring, including the general public, makes monitoring more feasible, especially in large countries. Traditional and social media can be valuable tools to support monitoring.

Learn how to make tobacco control laws more enforceable.

Include a clear definition
Include a clear definition of terms, straightforward language, and the avoidance of legal "loopholes" that may make enforcement challenging.

**Establish**

Establish well-defined inspection and enforcement authorities, their roles, and responsibilities.

**Define**

Define a process of enforcement inspections.

**Describe**

Describe how to handle evidence and inspection/enforcement records.

**Explain**

Explain how to deal with noncompliance—including penalties and fines.

**National Capacity Building**

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses national capacity building.

To ensure that low- and middle-income countries have the necessary skills and mindset for tobacco control policy implementation, national capacity building is necessary. The WHO FCTC recognizes this in Article 5, which mandates “[The] Parties develop, implement, periodically update and review comprehensive multisectoral national tobacco control strategies, plans and programs...to establish or reinforce and finance a national coordinating mechanism or focal points for tobacco control; and to adopt and implement effective legislative, executive, administrative, and/or other measures.”

Building national capacity to carry out effective and sustainable national tobacco control programs is an urgent priority and an important measures required to combat the tobacco epidemic. It requires government commitment and investment.

**Capacity Building: A Closer Look**

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf discusses more about capacity building.
Various capacity building workshops and training curricula for tobacco control are available. Some focus on the technical aspects and the evidence base for comprehensive tobacco control policies. These need to be supplemented by investments in implementation infrastructure and organizational resources, leadership and expertise, research capacity, and partnerships and networks.

Take a closer look at components of capacity building.

**Tobacco Control Sustainability**

A tool developed by The Union, and tested among participants from seven low- and middle-income countries, identified the most critical indicators for tobacco control sustainability. These included having a national law, a dedicated national tobacco control unit, a network of civil society tobacco stakeholders, financial mechanisms for fiscal allocations, sound national data, a national policy to protect against the tobacco industry, and national policy evaluation mechanisms.

The sustainability of tobacco control is dependent on generating local capacity for these key elements.

**Resource Mobilization**

Resource mobilization that creatively engages traditional and innovative mechanisms (such as through tobacco tax-funded health promotion foundations) needs to be pursued to ensure that countries and governments are at an optimal state of readiness not just to enact policies, but to implement them in practice.

Learn from some graduates of the IGTC Tobacco Control Leadership, Certificate and Regional Leadership programs.

**Ten Years of Tobacco Control Capacity Building Video Transcript**

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health logo is shown. Text reads: Institute for Global Tobacco Control. Intro music plays.

Text reads: Ten Years of Tobacco Control Capacity Building
Kelvin Khow (off screen then on): I think the program at Hopkins, it’s not just a regular lecture program; it’s both inspirational, it’s empowering. It really, sort of, unlocks the leaders in all of us. We all are leaders in our own way. So it’s about sort of unearthing that leadership potential in us.

Text reads: Kelvin Khow, Technical Officer (Tobacco Free Initiative), World Health Organization, Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2014 Global Tobacco Control Leadership Program.

Images are shown: Michael Bloomberg speaks at a meeting, people sit in a meeting in Turkey about tobacco control, people attend a conference.


Geni Achnas (off screen and on): Learning from people all over the world, for example, learning from Turkey on how to increase tobacco excise, learning from Brazil on dealing with tobacco farmers, and also from Thailand on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship that really was a menu, that I think not only me, I can speak for the rest of my alumni colleagues that we took back to our own country.

Text reads: Creating an International Network of Tobacco Control Professionals.


Mawya Al Zawawi (onscreen and off): A global tobacco leadership program is a program where all individuals from all around the world can come together to build a network base to learn the essence and the two elements of fighting the tobacco epidemic and elevate the problem all over the world.

As Mawya Al Zawawi speaks images of global tobacco leadership groups holding flags from their home countries are shown.
Text reads: Alejandro Madrazo, Professor, CIDE, Coordinator of the Drug Policy Program, Aguascalientes, Legal Studies Division, Mexico, 2009 Global Tobacco Control Leadership program.

Alejandro Madrazo (onscreen and off): A lot of the pleasure of participating in the course was meeting great people, people who are committed, and people who were really understanding things from perspectives wholly different from mine. And that is, I believe, invaluable. I mean, I think that a lot of the value of the program is academic, it teaches us a lot. But also a lot of it is networking, and trying to understand and learn the different problems that different activists, different movements in different countries face, both because the similarities and the differences are relevant in understanding the problems of your own country.

As Alejandro Madrazo speaks images of global tobacco leadership groups meeting and speaking to each other are shown.

Text reads: What makes the Global Tobacco Control Leadership Program Unique?

Text reads: Dr. Bhaktimay Bhattacharyya, Nodal Officer of District Tobacco Control Cell of Jorhat, Assam, India, 2012 India Regional Leadership Program.

Dr. Bhaktimay Bhattacharyya (onscreen): Yes, sir, for me the leadership program is very different from other program I had in past. I know how to think beyond imagination, it is possible actually.

Text reads: Dr. Shaojun Ma, Deputy Secretary General, China Organ Transplantation Development Foundation, 2008 Global Tobacco Control Leadership Program

Dr. Shaojun Ma (onscreen): I think it’s a unique point for the leadership program is addressing issues outside the tobacco controversies, and talking about how to position yourself as a future leader or think like a leader or particularly as a leader and you do things with a mindset from a leader’s perspective.

Images are shown of attendees at tobacco control conferences. Images include Dr. Joanna Cohen of the IGTC and Michael Bloomberg of Bloomberg Philanthropies.
Kelvin Khow (off screen then on): I think in the field of tobacco control, it's about passing on the baton and that's sort of what makes the Hopkins training so special because you really learn from the best. I mean, and you know these are people who are not just there to lecture to you, but who actually share a common goal and vision as you do.

Text reads: Our leadership, certificate and regional programs have trained 1,493 participants from 54 different countries.

**Summary**

Dr. Ayo-Yusuf summarizes the Emerging Issues Lecture.

We have reviewed why it is important to address the emerging issues that represent “gaps” in effective tobacco control interventions and policies, and how to address them effectively.

We also talked about how investing in capacity building for policy implementation is as important as investments in policy development and enactment.

**Want to Learn More?**

To learn about the various capacity building initiatives available from JHSPH-IGTC, go to the following webpage:

IGTC Capacity Building Projects

Listen to some experts talk about various issues in tobacco control interventions:

IGTC Lectures and Events

See what resources are available from JHSPH-IGTC:

IGTC Resources

**Module Complete.**