



## CTC National Coordination Meeting

CTC-Pak organized a **one day national coordinating and networking meeting with coalition members** was held to discuss the current situation of tobacco control in Pakistan. The purpose was to develop a future strategy on how to build an interactive relationship between government implementation authorities and civil society organizations at district level for effective implementation of tobacco control laws.

The meeting was organized by Coalition for Tobacco Control Pakistan (CTC-Pak), SAMAR on April 13, 2010 at Islamabad, Pakistan which was attended by 45 coalition members from all four provinces of Pakistan. The Director General of Tobacco Control Cell, Federal Ministry of Health (TCC) and the EMRC Technical Officer of International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (U-TO also attended this meeting. The representatives from Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Washington and The Union, Edinburgh were supposed to attend the meeting but they were unable to participate due visa constraints.

The Director General (DG), Tobacco Control Cell explained the tobacco control laws and their history. He emphasized the need for raising awareness regarding the issues of tobacco control and the laws enforced by the Government of Pakistan on much larger scale. He informed the participants that Tobacco Control Cell is now focusing on issues like promoting smoke-free

places, smoke-free public transports and to prohibit underage sales. The TCC is in the process of organizing various awareness raising seminars at district levels which are to be participated by district implementation authorities, press clubs, bar associations, educational institutes and civil society organizations in those districts as there is no education of the tobacco control or the laws available at the district level government offices. This will result in the formation of District Implementation Committee (DICs) which shall then replicate the efforts of raising awareness at district level.

The Technical Officer from the Union informed the participants upon the role and responsibilities undertaken on behalf of Bloomberg donor agencies in an approved grant. He explained the process of preparing proposals with respect to the requirements of donor, the procedure of grant reviews and approvals.

The Executive Director, SAMAR, then briefed the participants on the overall role of a coalition as a representative of a civil society, its importance to provide support to policy makers as well as its impact on policy changes. He highlighted the issue of lack of updated data on tobacco control issues and how tobacco is directly related to increase in poverty and health hazards. He suggested to pool in sources and resources for research to acquire latest data.

Chief Editor: **Khurram Hashmi**, Editor/Resource Coordinator: **Jafar Mehdi**, Assist. RC/IT: **M. Idrees**

**COALITION FOR TOBACCO CONTROL - PAKISTAN, 204 KIRAN PLAZA, F-8 MARKAZ, ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN  
TEL # +92 51 285 5011 & 22, EMAIL: INFO@CTCPAK.ORG, WEBSITE: CTCPAK.ORG**

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## Amplifying warnings . . . blocking deception

### Guidelines on tobacco packaging and labelling a top priority

Warnings on tobacco product packs have the power to increase awareness of the health effects of tobacco use and to reduce tobacco consumption. The bigger the warnings are, the better they work. And when pictures and words are used together, the warnings have greater impact. This simple-sounding wisdom is the result of careful evaluation of various compulsory warning requirements implemented by governments in a range of countries. (See research references at end of media brief) Article 11 of The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) requires governments of all countries that have ratified the treaty to adopt and implement effective measures to ensure that:

- Every packet or package containing tobacco products carries a health warning describing the harmful effects of tobacco use. These warnings should have official government approval. They should be large, clear and visible, preferably covering at least 50% of the principal display areas (but must cover no less than 30%). And they may include pictures.

- There is no "false, misleading or deceptive" packaging or labelling of tobacco products. Terms such as "low tar", "light", "ultra-light" or "mild" are considered examples of such misleading information.

- Every packet or package of tobacco products displays information on relevant constituents and emissions of the products, in addition to the main health warning.

#### A mixed bag of results

Explicit though Article 11 may seem, experience has shown that there has been mixed progress in putting its provisions into effect.

On the positive side:

- At least 25 countries have finalised requirements that tobacco packs must carry picture warnings. Many other countries are in the process of introducing these requirements.

- The size of warnings is increasing, with a growing number of countries requiring warnings even larger than the 50% of front and back display areas recommended in the FCTC.

- At least 43 countries have specifically banned the descriptors "light" and "mild" for cigarettes.

- Countries have found accurate, effective and simple ways of providing additional information on the content and emissions of tobacco products.

But the urgency of adopting clear guidelines to direct and expedite implementation of Article 11 is underscored by the fact that:

- A number of countries that have ratified the FCTC have still not effectively implemented Article 11.

- The tobacco industry is finding ways around the ban on misleading descriptors specified in the text of Article 11 - such as "light" or "mild" - by adopting alternative descriptors ("smooth" and "fine") or by devices such as colour coding or incorporating ISO tar yield numbers into the brand (Kent Blue 8 or Kent Silver No 4). The WHO Scientific Advisory Committee

on Tobacco Product Regulation has concluded that the ISO tar and nicotine ratings are misleading.

#### Guidelines are ready for debate

Much-needed guidelines for implementation of Article 11 will be considered by the 3rd Conference of the Parties to the FCTC.

The draft guidelines to be discussed provide specific guidance on how regulations on package warnings can ensure that they have the strongest possible impact. They provide countries with guidance on how to prescribe the location of messages, the size of messages, the use of pictures, the use of colour and the rotation of messages for optimal effect.

They also provide direction on the content of messages, suggesting particular themes, and noting that "the tone should be authoritative and informative but non-judgemental" and that simple, clear, concise and culturally appropriate language should be used.

In most cases the rationale for specific guidelines is given, utilising the evaluative research that has been done in pioneering countries. For example, in recommending the combined use of text warnings and pictures, the guidelines explain that there is evidence that picture warnings are:

- More likely to be noticed.
- Rated as more effective by tobacco users.
- More likely to remain salient over time.
- Better able to communicate the health risks of tobacco use.
- More thought-provoking, in terms of tobacco use and cessation.
- More likely to increase motivation and intent to quit.
- Associated with more attempts to quit.

Other matters on which the guidelines provide direction are:

- Advising how information on constituents and emissions of tobacco products can be made meaningful to the public by governments requiring "qualitative statements," such as: "Smoke from these cigarettes contains benzene, a known cancer-causing substance."

- Explaining how pre-marketing testing of messages can be done inexpensively and can prevent the publication of messages that have counter-productive results.

- Recommending measures for the enforcement of labelling and packaging provisions, including the empowerment of authorities to recall non-compliant tobacco products and publicise the names of offenders.

- Recommending the imposition of penalties that are severe enough to deter non-compliance and that increase with repeat violations.

The Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) believes that the adoption of guidelines on packaging and labelling is a top priority for promoting FCTC implementation and that the 3rd Conference of the Parties should adopt the draft guidelines in full and without change.



Islamabad

Tobacco is the second major cause of death worldwide and death toll is rising rapidly specially in low and middle-income countries where most of the world's 1.2 billion tobacco users are living.

Almost 1.3 billion people currently smoke worldwide the majority of whom live in developing countries. Tobacco kills one in two long-term users - 4.9 million such deaths occurring each year, said a report of 'The Network for Consumer Protection'.

Developing countries already account for half of all deaths attributed to tobacco. The proportion will rise to 7 out of 10 by 2025 because smoking prevalence has been increasing in many low and middle-income countries even as it is falling continue, it will cause some 10 million deaths each year by

# Tobacco second major cause of death worldwide

2020. Half the people, who smoke today that is about 650 million people will eventually be killed by tobacco.

Tobacco also accounts for a large portion of the disease burden in developing countries and is currently the fourth most common risk factor for disease worldwide. Tobacco is the cause of at least 85 percent case of long cancer of mouth throat, kidney bladder and stroke besides chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

Passive smoking is dangerous for unborn babies children and adults. Smoking threatens the future health of children.

Globally nearly 25 percent of all students smoking and lit their first cigarette before the age of 10. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that almost half of all the children worldwide live with smokers and regularly subjected to second hand smoke in the home environment.

In a number of developing countries household expenditure survey show that low-income household spend 5 to 15 per cent of their dispensable income on tobacco. Many poor households spend more on tobacco than on healthcare or education.

In Pakistan the government

has withdrawn the Statutory Rules and Orders (SRO) on designated smoking areas, imposing a complete ban on smoking at all public places to protect non-smokers from the hazards of passive smoking. After the withdrawal of the SRO, smokers would not allowed to use tobacco in any form at any public or work place.

Earlier, all public and private offices were allowed to designate a separate place within office premises for people to smoke, with adequate arrangements to protect non-smokers from the hazards of passive smoking. — APP

## Pakistan

### Tobacco Policy Status

**SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS:** Smoking is banned in indoor offices, restaurants, health-care and educational facilities and on public transportation in Pakistan. Enforcement on the ban on smoking is lax.

**BANS ON ADVERTISING, PROMOTION AND SPONSORSHIP:** Pakistan does not have a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising and promotion.

**HEALTH WARNINGS ON TOBACCO PACKAGES:** Pakistan implemented pictorial warnings on cigarette packs on May 31, 2010. The new warnings cover 40% of both the front and back of cigarette packs. 30% of the warning is pictorial and 10% text.

**TOBACCO TAXATION AND PRICES:** A variety of tobacco products are used in Pakistan. Tax on tobacco products is high in comparison with other countries in the region but tax rates have remained steady in recent years and remain under internationally recommended levels. The vast majority (80%) of cigarettes are priced at the low end of the market.

#### BANS ON ADVERTISING, PROMOTION AND SPONSORSHIP

|                                    |    |   |                  |
|------------------------------------|----|---|------------------|
| National TV and radio              | No | Free distribution                                 | Yes <sup>3</sup> |
| International TV and radio         | No | Promotional discounts                             | Yes <sup>3</sup> |
| Local magazines/newspapers         | No | Non-tobacco products with tobacco names           | No               |
| International magazines/newspapers | No | Non-tobacco brand used for tobacco product        | No               |
| Billboards and outdoor advertising | No | Appearance of tobacco products in TV and/or films | Yes              |
| Point-of-sale                      | No | Sponsored events                                  | Yes              |
| Internet                           | No |   |                  |

#### HEALTH WARNINGS ON TOBACCO PACKAGES

|   |                  |  |                  |
|---|------------------|--|------------------|
| Law mandates specific warnings                        | Yes              | Number of approved warnings                            | 12               |
| Warnings describe harmful effects of tobacco use      | Yes              | Warnings required to rotate                            | Yes              |
| Warnings include a picture or graphic                 | Yes <sup>2</sup> | Warnings are written in the principal language(s)      | Yes              |
| % of principal display areas covered (front and back) | 40% <sup>2</sup> | Warnings have mandated font style, font size and color | Yes <sup>2</sup> |
| Front   | 40% <sup>2</sup> | Ban on misleading descriptors                          | No               |
| Back  | 40% <sup>2</sup> |  |                  |



## Introduction

Women Social Organization (WSO) was established in 1986 by a group of passionate women as a civil society organization committed to social and economic empowerment of women. It got registered under the Volunteer Social Welfare (Registration & Control) Ordinance 1961. WSO is also registered with the *Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP)*. It started its journey with small skill enhancement activities for women. Today, it has full-fledge package for the social and economic empowerment of women. It adopts participatory approach in its internal functioning and all its activities.

WSO **envisions** "A society assuring equal resources, freedom and opportunities to women for a prosperous life."



Its **mission** is "To provide an integrated & innovative package of interventions to redress society in favour of women." To bring this about WSO works for the

- provision of free legal aid and advice about rights to destitute women of target area
- women's poverty eradication through Microcredit and enterprise development.
- increasing literacy by establishing formal schools in the communities of District Muzaffar Garh.
- provision of reproductive health care facilities through the Community Health Centers and Medical Camps.
- promotion of democratic values, peace and social harmony in society through awareness campaigns and advocacy programmes.
- protection of environment and provision of Sanitation through Community Physical Infrastructure Development.

WSO has an integrated **approach** towards development and women's rights that combines service delivery, advocacy and capacity building based on social mobilization, networking and publications. WSO emphasizes on the "Right Based Approach" towards development.

It catalyses the women empowerment through participatory process that involves community, civil society organizations such as media, lawyer's unions, teacher's unions, trade unions, political representatives, CBOs, NGOs and line departments.

We believe in the following **organizational values** and pledge to uphold these values in our work, in all of our decisions and in our relationships within the organization and with the outside world