

## ***Tobacco Control in Developing Countries***



### **TOBACCO: FAST FACTS**

#### **THE PROBLEMS:**

- Tobacco currently kills 4 million people a year worldwide. Half of these deaths occur in productive middle age.
- Unless smoking patterns change:
- About 500 million people alive today will eventually be killed by tobacco.
  - By 2030, 10 million people a year will die from tobacco-related diseases – 70% of them in developing countries.
  - In the 21st century, about 1 billion people will die from smoking – ten times the number killed by tobacco throughout the 20th century.
  - During 1995, the world's 1.1 billion smokers consumed almost 6000 billion cigarettes.
  - Out of every 100 cigarettes smoked worldwide, about 6 to 8 are smuggled.
  - In all countries, smoking and its disease burden is increasingly concentrated among the poor.
  - Most smokers in low-income countries are unaware of the health consequences of smoking. In 1997, 70% of Chinese smokers believed smoking did them "little or no harm".
  - Even with their shorter lifespans, smokers have higher health care costs than non-smokers do.
  - Annual gross health care costs attributable to smoking are about 6%-15% of total health care costs in high-income countries.
  - As much as 1% of a wealthy nation's GDP is spent on the treatment of tobacco-related diseases. Some lower-income countries may also spend that much.

#### **THE SOLUTIONS:**

- The demand for tobacco must be reduced. Cutting off supply doesn't work.
- Price is the single most effective measure to reduce consumption.
- There is still ample scope for cigarette tax increases – especially in low-income countries where, on average, taxes account for less than half the retail price of cigarettes.
- Increasing the price of cigarettes by 10% will reduce smoking by an estimated 4% in wealthy countries and 8% in lower-income countries – and prevent 10 million deaths.
- Despite the downturn in cigarette sales, overall tax revenues would go up.
- Tax increases that raise the price of cigarettes by 10% worldwide would increase revenues by about 7% on average. In China, which accounts for a third of global tobacco consumption, a 10% increase in cigarette tax would cut consumption by 5% and increase revenues by 5% – enough to finance a package of essential health measures for one-third of China's poorest 100 million people.
- In most countries, there would be no permanent job losses. Transient job losses would be gradual, occurring over decades.
- Use of non-price measures – such as a total ban on advertising and promotion – and wider access to nicotine replacement therapy are also effective in reducing demand.
- A combination of non-price measures would persuade 23 million current smokers to quit and prevent 5 million deaths worldwide.
- Control of smuggling is the key supply-side measure.
- Smuggling has less to do with the price of cigarettes and a lot more to do with the level of corruption within individual countries.
- Even in the presence of smuggling, a rise in cigarette tax results in higher tax revenues and lower consumption.

The 512-page book, *Tobacco Control in Developing Countries*, is an authoritative and comprehensive study that examines such key issues as poverty and smoking, rationale for government intervention, taxation, advertising and promotion bans, smuggling, trade and the supply side impact of control policies. Building on the comparative advantages of WHO and the World Bank in epidemiology and health economics, an international team of 40 professionals from 13 countries, under the guidance of Dr Prabhat Jha and Dr Frank Chaloupka, prepared this book over a period of three years. It is targeted primarily at ministries, academics and health professionals engaged in tobacco control.

The book is available in English only; Price: US\$ 49.50 paperback ISBN 0192632469. For more details or to place your order, please contact:

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