

FCTC 2030 PROJECT:

ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT FOR DONOR FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 March 2021

In 2016, the UK Government and the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) Secretariat (Convention Secretariat) established the FCTC 2030 project, with the aim of accelerating the implementation of the WHO FCTC in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The objectives and scope of the FCTC 2030 project are set out in the donor agreement that was signed by the Convention Secretariat and the UK Government on 16 October 2016. The FCTC 2030 work plan for this UK financial year (2020/21) was agreed with the UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

This annual technical report for the FCTC 2030 project provides an overview of the outcomes and achievements of the project for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. This report is provided in accordance with the reporting requirements set out at section VI (reporting) of the donor agreement.

Globally, the coronavirus disease pandemic has substantially impacted international development work. Consequently, the Convention Secretariat reassessed and readjusted the year five workplan and budget towards activities and support that could continue. Given the current limitations due to the pandemic, the Convention Secretariat maximized the use of virtual communications for remote support, undertook necessary desk research and promoted implementation action at country-level using national resources as much as possible to continue delivery.

Overview of outputs and achievements:

- a) **Support for selected Phase 1 FCTC 2030 Parties:** All FCTC 2030 project countries agreed work plans for FCTC 2030 project implementation during the reporting period. Although the pandemic slowed implementation in the first half of 2020, most project countries were able to pick up pace in the second half. Eleven¹ phase 1 project countries requested and were provided with human resources at country level (arranged through WHO Country Offices) to support project implementation. Some highlights of outputs by phase 1 project countries include:

¹ Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Myanmar, Nepal, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Zambia

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- *Cabo Verde*: Excise tax on tobacco products was increased. Draft tobacco control bill developed to be considered by Parliament. A three-day tobacco cessation training workshop (supported by Brazilian experts) was conducted and a pilot cessation programme initiated. A review to evaluate the costs of medicines to support cessation was conducted. Tobacco observatory to monitor implementation and progress of tobacco control policies in the country was launched.
- *Cambodia*: Local government enforcement officers trained on national tobacco control law and regulations. Although not initiated as part of the FCTC 2030 project, the Ministry of Health undertook enforcement action against tobacco companies for health warning and advertising violations. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports issued a circular to ban use, advertisement, display and sale of tobacco and all collaboration with tobacco industry. National Authority for Combating Drugs issued a circular on measures to prevent and avoid importation, trafficking, sale and use of heated tobacco products. Ministry of Tourism tightened requirements for tourism licenses to include compliance with smokefree regulations. Health professionals were provided with tobacco cessation training and evaluation was conducted to assess post-training application at primary health care facilities. The UN Cambodia Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 included availability of tobacco cessation services at primary health centres as one of the key performance indicators.
- *Chad*: Regional multi-sectoral coordination for national tobacco control strengthened. From 30 June 2021, the size of health warnings will increase to 80% of the main surfaces of tobacco packaging. Television and radio communications broadcasted to raise awareness about risks of smoking and COVID-19. Consultations conducted with managers of public places about implementation of the smokefree law. School programmes organized and tobacco control youth leaders trained.
- *Colombia*: Legal options for implementation of plain packaging and increase in size of graphic health warnings prepared. Virtual course on cessation being updated for national delivery. To facilitate knowledge transfer to the country, a virtual training on the WHO FCTC investment case methodology was conducted. Prepared a national communication strategy for policy-makers.
- *Egypt*: Guidelines for enforcement of smokefree policies in different settings including workplaces, educational facilities and health institutions developed. Guidelines for enforcement of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) policies developed. Current tobacco control legislation reviewed and opportunities to strengthen the law in line with the WHO FCTC identified. Tobacco observatory launched.

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- *El Salvador*: Proposed amendments to the national tobacco control law developed. A protocol for government officials to protect public health policies from commercial and other vested interests has been prepared, which also includes a Code of Conduct. Terms of reference for the national tobacco control coordinating mechanism (NCM) and roadmap for implementation of WHO FCTC Article 5.2 developed. Technical documents finalized for establishment of the national NCM, including an explanatory memorandum, executive decree proposal, as well as rules of procedure.
- *Georgia*: National Center for Disease Control and Public Health drafted Georgia's new tobacco control strategy and action plan; to be presented for Ministry of Health's approval. Legislative amendments to strengthen tobacco control laws to be reviewed by the lawyer of the Parliament, after which a strategic communication plan will be executed to secure support of the amendments. Study to model taxation and tobacco end-game scenarios conducted, with results to be publicly disseminated. Workshop to strengthen enforcement and compliance with smokefree law conducted. No-smoking signage designed and distributed to all sport federations for smokefree stadia. Article 5.2 advocacy strategy created to strengthen multisectoral coordination.
- *Jordan*: Prepared a five-year national strategy for tobacco control and a Ministerial decree for graphic health warnings on tobacco packaging. Preparing guidance for inspection of public places to build compliance and enforce the smokefree law. "Supporting Ministry of Health tobacco cessation services" was included in the Socio-Economic Framework for COVID-19 Response.
- *Madagascar*: National Tobacco Control Strategy approved. Draft tobacco control bill currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Justice. Multisectoral coordination mechanism for tobacco control revitalized and two additional regional coordination mechanisms established, and terms of reference for subcommittees prepared.
- *Myanmar*: Plain packaging notification drafted and reviewed by internal and international experts. Intersectoral collaboration to enforce and promote compliance with the ban on TAPS increased. Concept notes to strengthen enforcement and strategic communications developed. "Directive to Comply with Guidelines on Contact with Cigar and Tobacco Product Manufacturer, Distributor, Seller or Related Person" issued. Drafting of new tobacco control law initiated.
- *Nepal*: International experts provided advice and made recommendations on tobacco taxes in Nepal. Prepared a communications strategy. Cessation training for healthcare providers conducted.
- *Samoa*: National consultation undertaken on draft Code of Conduct to protect public health policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco

industry. Cabinet paper for tobacco tax increase being prepared at request of Prime Minister after WHO FCTC Investment Case was handed over. Tobacco control integrated into the national health promotion programme (community and school). Tobacco control mainstreamed in media and outreach programmes including for COVID-19 prevention. Cessation training manual finalized and training in preparation.

- *Sierra Leone*: Support provided to develop draft tobacco control bill which is now undergoing a second round of review by the Ministry of Justice to ensure its constitutionality before submission to Cabinet for approval and then to Parliament for consideration.
- *Sri Lanka*: Tobacco control defined as a key policy target in the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2020 with the importance of multisectoral action and use of effective legal action and strict enforcement measures highlighted. Progressive tax proposal and formula developed with support of international experts. Cessation service capacity improved with launch of online course for health care professionals and medical students. Cessation training conducted for healthcare professionals at provincial level and cessation manual developed for district health programmes.
- *Zambia*: The Business Review Regulatory Authority approved the draft Tobacco Control Bill and the Ministry of Health is in the process of conducting an inter-ministerial consultation on the current version of the Tobacco Control Bill. A plan for the implementation of the Tobacco Control Law is currently being developed.

b) **Expansion of the FCTC 2030 project (Phase 2)**: All FCTC 2030 Parties had agreed work plans for FCTC 2030 project implementation during the reporting period. Four project countries² in phase 2 requested and were provided with human resource support. Some highlights of outputs at country level by phase 2 project countries include:

- *Armenia*: Needs assessment mission undertaken virtually and needs assessment report now with Ministry of Health for review. The WHO FCTC investment case report drafted and translated for review by the government. UNDP engaged with the Ministry of Finance to model tobacco tax revenue projections as part of the investment case. Reviewed draft national tobacco control strategy with recommendations put forward to strengthen it.
- *Costa Rica*: A webinar was organized for national stakeholders to review preliminary results of the WHO FCTC investment case. Additional modelling under the investment case examined the equity impacts of tobacco tax increases, finding

² Costa Rica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Serbia and Suriname.

that those with the lowest incomes in society would benefit the most in terms of deaths avoided. Terms of reference for the national multisectoral coordinating mechanism for tobacco control developed together with a draft decree for its establishment. A report on enforcement of the TAPS ban on social media and one analysing current tobacco cessation services in Costa Rica have been prepared. A paper on how to study the magnitude of illicit trade was prepared as well as an analysis of the current tobacco tax system and administration.

- *Eswatini*: The draft WHO FCTC investment case report has been reviewed and cleared by the Ministry of Health with a launch planned for Q2 of 2021. Additional modelling under the investment case examined the equity impacts of tobacco tax increases, finding that those with the lowest incomes in society would benefit the most in terms of deaths avoided.
- *Fiji*: After the training of enforcement officers on the Tobacco Control Act and its Regulations, officers from various Ministries (Health, Revenue and Customs, Police, Biosecurity Authority) and local government worked to improve tobacco control enforcement in their respective areas of responsibility. This group also provided feedback on proposed amendments to tobacco control legislation and the National Tobacco Control Standard Operating Procedure. Existing policies to prevent tobacco industry interference were analysed and a set of recommendations provided to boost implementation of Article 5.3. A webinar for national stakeholders to review preliminary results of the WHO FCTC investment case has been scheduled; and Ministry of Finance was engaged in modelling tobacco tax revenue projections as part of the WHO FCTC investment case.
- *Lao People's Democratic Republic*: Government reviewed the draft WHO FCTC investment case report and the launch is planned for Q2 of 2021. Two additional analyses were performed as part of the WHO FCTC investment case for the country: (i) an equity analysis examining the differential impact of tobacco taxes on across different income levels, and (ii) tobacco tax revenue projections. Planning for a consultation to develop enforcement guidelines is underway. Lao PDR is also working to promote smokefree tourism and has strengthened enforcement of their smokefree law at airports. Capacity building for Article 5 implementation provided and a roadmap for Article 5.1 developed.
- *Mozambique*: WHO FCTC investment case draft report to be finalized for the government review. The investment case included an additional equity analysis examining the differential impact of tobacco taxes on different income segments of society. Request for technical support to strengthen tobacco taxes initiated with the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub on Tobacco Taxation and Illicit Trade. Process to conduct a preliminary review of the current tobacco control legislation initiated.

Conducted reviews of the national tobacco control strategy and terms of reference for the national coordinating mechanism.

- *Serbia:* WHO FCTC needs assessment mission conducted virtually. An online consultation with national stakeholders to examine the preliminary results of the WHO FCTC investment case is being organized. Both an equity and a tax revenue projection analysis are included in the investment case. Developed an Article 5.2 advocacy strategy outlining arguments for stronger multisectoral coordination and sectoral contributions, and strengthened implementation of core demand reduction measures.
 - *Suriname:* WHO FCTC needs assessment conducted and report being drafted. Webinar for national stakeholders to review preliminary results of the investment case to be provided. Initial review of different tax scenarios conducted. Terms of reference for the national coordination mechanism (NCM) drafted as well as a code of conduct for civil servants. Situation analysis drafted and Article 5.1 roadmap created for the national tobacco control strategy. NCM guidance, stakeholder analysis and terms of reference prepared. Review of WHO FCTC Article 5.3 implementation was completed and codes of conduct reviewed. Review of the enforcement of smokefree places and tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship regulations completed.
 - *Tunisia:* Draft WHO FCTC investment case report drafted and currently under review by the government. Equity impact analysis additionally modelled under the investment case. Initiated review of tobacco control legislation to identify areas for strengthening. Initiated process to prepare ministerial decrees related to Articles 8, 11 and 13 of the WHO FCTC. Proposed decrees to be considered by the Minister of Health for approval in Q2 of 2021.
- c) **Specialist consultant support:** From September 2020, the FCTC 2030 project has three specialist consultants engaged and operating in accordance with WHO policies and procedures. These consultants work closely with WHO FCTC focal points in Ministries of Health and technical partners to support the implementation of the project.
- d) **WHO FCTC Investment Cases:** the Investment Cases have been handed over and published in 14 Phase 1 project countries.

WHO FCTC investment cases are being finalized for the nine Phase 2 countries. Webinars to share preliminary results are to be held in two remaining countries (Fiji and Costa Rica), two reports have been cleared by the Ministry of Health (Lao People's Democratic Republic and Eswatini), and five draft reports are in the process of review or refinement after receiving comments from the government (Armenia, Mozambique,

Suriname, Tunisia and Serbia). When finalized, the investment cases will be formally handed over to governments, with an offer to deliver awareness raising events with stakeholders and press at country-level.

- e) **Article 5 support to countries:** Technical support to 14 FCTC 2030 countries to strengthen implementation of WHO FCTC Article 5 has been provided. In addition, the FCTC 2030 project supported training for LMICs in the WHO Region of the Americas on implementation of Article 5. Support provided at country-level included:

(i) *National coordination mechanisms:* support to project countries on developing terms of reference, rules of procedure, roadmaps and guidance for national coordination mechanisms.

(ii) *National tobacco strategies:* technical support on preparation including gap and situation analyses, roadmap development, in-depth review and assistance with drafting.

(iii) *Article 5.3:* preparation of discussion papers to sensitize decision and policy makers to Article 5.3 and support the development of codes of conduct.

- f) **SDG and WHO FCTC Briefs:** SDG briefs for eight project countries have been drafted.

Three drafts are with governments for review (Cabo Verde, Nepal and Sri Lanka), other three are at a near-final stage and are awaiting government clearance to publish (Chad, Colombia and Zambia), and two briefs are ready to be launched when the opportunity can be arranged (Lao People's Democratic Republic and Sierra Leone). When finalized, the SDG briefs will be formally handed over to governments, with an offer to deliver awareness raising events with stakeholders and press at country-level.

- g) **Development planning and WHO FCTC Analyses:** An analysis of development plans in FCTC 2030 project countries was conducted to assess whether countries are acting to promote WHO FCTC implementation within the context of sustainable development. Titled *Centering tobacco control in sustainable development – an analysis of 24 countries' integration of the WHO FCTC in development planning*, the paper is being finalized and will include recommendations for action by countries.

- h) **Parliamentary Network:** Work has begun to build the virtual parliamentary network on the [REDACTED] platform.³ Next steps are to finalize a list of parliamentarians

³ [REDACTED] manages [REDACTED], the Global Portal for Parliamentary Development, which is the leading knowledge hub for the parliamentary development community. More information at: [REDACTED]

with a history of promoting WHO FCTC implementation to approach to seek a contribution towards the content for the network, and to finalize a plan for its launch. A sectoral brief for parliamentarians has also been developed and to be published in Q2 of 2021. Together with the Global Fund and UNDP, the Convention Secretariat is investigating possibilities for a global event for parliamentarians to promote strengthened tobacco taxes, to be held in Q4 of 2021.

- i) **Sectoral briefs:** UNDP has completed draft briefs for parliamentarians and for finance/revenue ministries on how they can support WHO FCTC implementation. Briefs for environment, agriculture, trade and industry, and labour ministries are also under development.
- j) **Review of national COVID-19 response strategies:** UNDP worked with the Convention Secretariat to undertake an early review of national COVID-19 response strategies for 71 countries to determine whether tobacco control was included, and to inform how we can provide support for stronger WHO FCTC implementation as part of country-level response and recovery. Of the 13 countries that included tobacco control in their national COVID-19 response strategies, seven were FCTC 2030 project countries. Consideration is being given to whether to publish an article on the findings.
- k) **Governance missions:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no face-to-face missions have been conducted since April 2020. Support from the FCTC 2030 project continues to be provided to project countries via electronic means of communication. Regular contact with countries is made to discuss and evaluate progress, address issues and provide technical support.
- l) **Monitoring and evaluation:** The [REDACTED] is on track to deliver the independent external evaluation of the FCTC 2030 project.
- m) **FCTC 2030 Annual Planning Workshop:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the proposed March 2020 and March 2021 meetings could not take place.
- n) **Illicit tobacco dialogue:** On 9 and 10 April 2021, Wilton Park organized a virtual dialogue, in partnership with the Convention Secretariat, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and UK Border Force. The UK and participating countries shared strategies and experiences on how to successfully tackle illicit trade in tobacco, and examined the policy cycle from development of government strategies to effective enforcement. The virtual dialogue was an opportunity to facilitate future international cooperation between countries on tackling illicit tobacco. Some 45 participants from 11 FCTC 2030 countries joined the event (most participants were at a senior level in their ministries). Scoping with Wilton Park for a follow-up event is underway.

- o) **Regional activities to support FCTC 2030 project:** Financial resources were made available to WHO Regional Offices to implement joint projects to advance FCTC 2030 project priorities at the regional level. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans needed to be reviewed and revised. Regional activities undertaken included support for tobacco surveillance, assessment of cessation services, smokefree tourism, webinars on Article 5 and workshops and video case studies to strengthen enforcement.

Strengthening tobacco taxation: Many FCTC 2030 project countries are working to strengthen tobacco taxation. The Convention Secretariat reviewed the Parties' priorities and identified expert support for each Party. The Convention Secretariat has worked closely to mobilize support for FCTC 2030 project countries from experts, including from the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub on Tobacco Taxation and Illicit Trade (based at University of Cape Town, South Africa). The Tax Knowledge Hub conducted three webinars for FCTC 2030 project countries and a 3-day virtual workshop on tobacco tax modelling that was made available to all LMICs. Six phase 2 project countries received additional economic modelling as part of the FCTC investment case to estimate government tax revenue, and five countries received modelling to estimate the effect of tobacco taxes on different income segments of society.

- p) **Connection with UK FCO to promote FCTC 2030 at country level:** As the UK has requested, the Convention Secretariat has remained in communication with UK diplomatic posts in FCTC 2030 Parties to collaborate to promote the implementation of the FCTC 2030 project at country-level. Representatives from the UK FCDO and DHSC participated in Armenia's and Suriname's virtual launch events for the FCTC 2030 project. DHSC officials made presentations during a series of training events on strengthening the implementation of WHO FCTC Article 5 in the WHO Region of the Americas.
- q) **Fundraising:** The Convention Secretariat has worked with other donors to raise funds for the FCTC 2030 project. In addition to the UK, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have made financial contributions to the project during the reporting period.



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Budget:

Certified financial statements of income and expenditure will be provided in accordance with the donor agreement.

Convention Secretariat, Geneva

31 March 2021

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