



## Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **UK tobacco point-of-sale display ban leading to fewer youth buying cigarettes**

**Wednesday, 7 March, 2018 (Cape Town, South Africa)** – Research released on the opening day of the [17<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Tobacco or Health \(WCTOH\)](#) confirms the huge strides being made in tobacco control globally and demonstrates that point of sale restrictions, tobacco taxation and tobacco crop substitution continue to be key interventions in the fight against tobacco use.

“The high quality of the science being presented in Cape Town comes at a pivotal moment in tobacco control,” said **Dr Flavia Senkubuge**, President of the 17<sup>th</sup> WCTOH. “These studies confirm that we know what works in tobacco control. There has been astounding public health progress being made to eliminate smoking over the past two decades.”

Other conference highlights today included a special session on [electronic cigarettes](#).

Today’s press briefing highlighted the following four studies:

#### **The impact of a tobacco point-of-sale display ban on youth in the United Kingdom: findings from a repeat cross-sectional survey pre-, mid- and post-implementation**

In the United Kingdom a ban on the open display of tobacco products was phased in between 2012 and 2015. Three waves of the Youth Tobacco Policy Survey were used to examine the impact of the ban on youth pre-, mid- and post-implementation.

**Allison Ford** of the University of Stirling in Scotland reported that in 2016 the vast majority of the study’s sample (87%) indicated that shops should have to keep cigarettes behind closed shutters. They also felt that having them behind closed shutters made them seem unappealing (73%) and made them think that it’s not ok to smoke (83%). That smoking susceptibility was lower following the ban suggests that placing tobacco out of sight helps safeguard young people and justifies this policy approach in the UK and elsewhere.

*The impact of a tobacco point-of-sale display ban on youth in the United Kingdom: findings from a repeat cross-sectional survey pre-, mid- and post-implementation (FO-350-5), Room 2.41-2.46, Thursday, 8 March, 11:00-12:30*

#### **The economics of tobacco control in Nigeria: modelling the fiscal and health effects of a tobacco excise tax change in Nigeria**

The study examines potential for tobacco tax to contribute to mobilizing domestic resources, and improving public health in Nigeria. Primary and secondary data were obtained from domestic sources. Cigarette prices were collected through surveys of randomly selected retailers in six states across six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. For analyses, two tax simulations models were used: a home-grown model and the Tobacco Excise Tax

Simulation Model (TETSIm). Each model was run under two scenarios: Scenario 1-a 275 percentage increase in tobacco taxes, in line with WHO excise tax benchmark of 75 percent of retail price; Scenario 2 - a less stringent 150 percentage increase in line with a 50 percent benchmark.

**Chukwuka Onyekwena** of the Centre for the Study of the Economics of Africa, in Abuja, Nigeria reported that a more stringent increase in excise tax (Scenario 1) in both models would allow for the maximization of public health and government revenue within a one year period. Under scenario 1: total cigarette consumption will fall by 19.6 percentage points (short-run) and 71.4 percentage points (long-run); 4 million people (short-run) and 11 million people (long-run) will likely quit or fail to initiate smoking; 1 million (short-run) and 4 million (long-run) of those who quit could be saved from smoking-related deaths.

Under scenario 2: cigarette consumption will fall by only 12.7 percentage points, 2 million people will likely quit or fail to initiate smoking, 664,000 lives could be saved from smoking-related deaths. In terms of fiscal impact, an increase in excise tax would create a 114.5 percent increase in government revenue under scenario 1 –from approximately N1.48 billion to N3.2 billion. Under scenario 2 increase by 75.7 percent - N2.6 billion.

An effective tobacco control tax policy in Nigeria will entail a 275 percent increase in excise tax, a change in tobacco tax structure -from ad valorem to specific; and stronger tax administration and revenue-collecting agencies to yield the optimal results.

*The economics of tobacco control in Nigeria: modelling the fiscal and health effects of a tobacco excise tax change in Nigeria (LB-1359-3), Room 1.41-1.42, Friday, 9 March, 15:45-16:45*

### **Successful experience with tobacco crop substitution in Yuxi, Yunnan, China**

China is the largest tobacco producer globally, with Yunnan province being the largest tobacco-producing region. In China there are 20 million tobacco farmers. Showing that income from crop substitution can exceed that from tobacco growth is essential to persuading farm families to stop planting tobacco. In Yuxi Municipality, collaborators from Yuxi Bureau of Agriculture, University of California at Los Angeles School of Public Health, and Kunming Medical University initiated a tobacco crop substitution project. At 3 sites, 458 farm families volunteered to participate in a new, for-profit cooperative model. This project successfully identified an approach engaging farmers in cooperatives to substitute food crops for tobacco.

**Kelvin Khow Chuan Heng** of the World Health Organisation reported that compared to 2012, Yuxi tobacco planting area has dropped significantly from 763,494 Chinese mu (one Chinese mu equals 0.16 acres) to 586,404 Chinese mu in 2015, whereas the area devoted to vegetables and fruits has increased 24%. The net income change directly linked to the tobacco crop substitution was an increase of more than 3000 yuan (\$ 484) per capita in Yuxi city and the three pilot project areas, observed from the 2012-2015 data. By mid-2014 and for the first time, farmers' per capita income passed 10,000 yuan (\$ 1613).

The tobacco substitution pilot project in Yuxi reduced the density of tobacco planting and increased planting area of vegetables and fruits. The results not only increased the economic status of farmers, but also benefited the health of the public by reducing the availability of tobacco in China. The diffusion of tobacco crop substitution in Yunnan provides a good example for China.

*Successful experience with tobacco crop substitution in Yuxi, Yunnan, China (LB-1366-5), Room 1.61-1.62, Friday, 9 March, 15:45-16:45*

### **Alternative crops to tobacco: a gateway for tobacco farmers Ruvuma region, southern Tanzania**

Tanzania is second in Africa in tobacco production after Malawi. Despite the increased production, Tanzania remains a poor country with tobacco farmers getting poorer and the country losing more than 61,000 hectares of forests annually due to tobacco growing and curing. Since 2006, Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum (TTCF) has been working closely with tobacco farmers of Namtumbo District in Ruvuma Region, Southern Tanzania to adopt alternative crops. A survey was carried out in Namtumbo in 2011, using a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and a structured questionnaire to determine the extent of adoption of alternative crops.

**Lutgard Kokulinda Kagaruki** of the Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum reported that more than 70% of the farmers had adopted alternative crops. Current data from Namtumbo District Council indicate that, between 2006 and 2014, there has been increased tonnage in both food and cash crops and a decrease in tobacco production. For example, maize and rice production increased by 452% and 377% respectively, while pigeon peas and sesame increased by 5,839% and 1,302% respectively. Tobacco production increased by 583% from 2006 to 2009, but dropped by 491% between 2010 and 2014.

Increased farmers' sensitisation coupled with sustainable and viable markets, could enable total replacement of tobacco with alternative crops in Ruvuma Region.

*Alternative crops to tobacco: a gateway for tobacco farmers Ruvuma region, southern Tanzania (LB-1362-5), Room 1.41-1.42, Friday, 9 March, 15:45-16:45*

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#### **Further information:**

The complete press programme is available [here](#).

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#### **About the 17<sup>TH</sup> World Conference on Tobacco or Health**

The 17th World Conference on Tobacco or Health (WCTOH) is being held in Cape Town, South Africa from 7-9 March 2018. It will unite researchers, academics, non-governmental

organisations, civil society, scientists, healthcare professionals, policymakers and public officials working on all aspects of tobacco control from more than 100 countries.

Convened by WCTOH's Advisory Board, the Cape Town Consortium and the Conference Secretariat (The Union), WCTOH is a call for a collective resolution to fight tobacco use by working together and integrating tobacco control into our health and development goals. Held every three years, WCTOH is the premier international conference on tobacco control.

The conference theme – *Uniting the World for a Tobacco Free Generation* – recognises that tobacco control is a global issue, crossing all geographic boundaries. The World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) stands as the backdrop for the conference and for our global response to the tobacco epidemic. It is the only internationally, legally-binding health treaty of the 21st century.