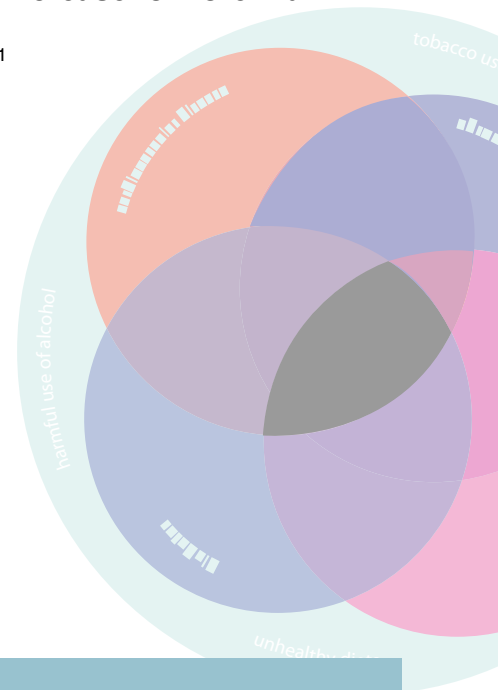
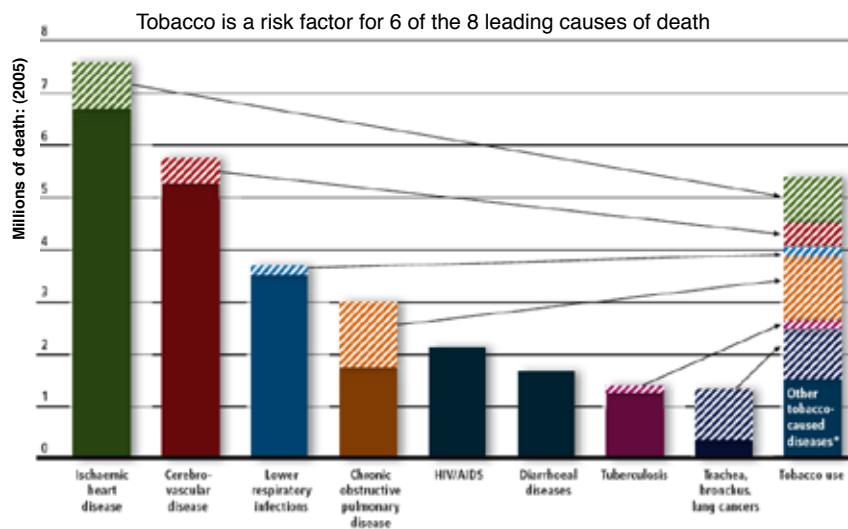


TOBACCO

The Problem

Tobacco

- Is the single greatest preventable cause of death in the world today.¹
- Kills 5.4 million people a year. If left unchecked that number will increase to more than 8 million a year by 2030.¹
- Contains the highly addictive psychoactive ingredient, nicotine.¹



In industrialized countries, where smoking has been common for decades, it is estimated to cause over 90% of lung cancer in men and about 70% of lung cancer among women, and about 22% of all cardiovascular disease.

Water pipes are not a safe alternative to cigarette smoking. Water pipe smokers and second-hand smokers are at risk for the same diseases as cigarette smokers such as cancer, heart disease, respiratory diseases and adverse effects during pregnancy. Since people use waterpipes longer than smokers tend to smoke cigarettes, someone using a waterpipe may inhale as much smoke as the equivalent of smoking 100 cigarettes.³

Smokeless tobacco products are not a safe substitute for tobacco smoking. Harmful health effects include cancer of the head and neck, oesophagus and pancreas, as well as many oral diseases. There is also evidence that some forms of smokeless tobacco may also increase the risk of heart disease and low-birth-weight babies.



Photo by: LHIL/Gary Hampton, WLF

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish at www.who.int/fctc/text_download/en/index.html

The WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008: The MPOWER Package is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish at www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/gtcr_download/en/index.html

TOBACCO

The Solution

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

In May 2003, the 192 WHO Member States adopted the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), the first coordinated global effort to reduce tobacco use. It is WHO's first public health treaty. The WHO FCTC entered into force on 27 February 2005 and requires countries that have ratified it to implement comprehensive measures, covering both the demand for and supply of tobacco products, as well as counteracting the tobacco industry and promoting international cooperation for global action. It has since become one of the most widely embraced treaties in UN history and, already has 164 Parties as of 21 April 2009. ⁴

The treaty commits countries to:

1. Ban or restrict tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship;
2. Place large, graphic health warnings on cigarette packs and prohibit the use of false and misleading terms such as “light” and “low-tar”;
3. Implement measures to protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke;
4. Increase the price of tobacco products, particularly through taxation, to discourage tobacco use;
5. Eliminate the illicit trade of tobacco products;
6. Regulate the content of tobacco products and require public disclosure of ingredients;
7. Provide cessation assistance and treatment for tobacco dependence;
8. Prevent sales of tobacco products to minors;
9. Protect tobacco control policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry;
10. Promote economically viable alternatives to tobacco growing and trade in tobacco products;
11. Co-operate internationally including through transfer of knowledge and technology between the Parties. ¹

Support to Countries

To assist Parties in the implementation of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties adopted several implementation guidelines, covering key areas such as counteracting the tobacco industry; protecting the public from exposure to tobacco smoke; packaging and labelling of tobacco products and banning advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

Another set of guidelines addressing public awareness; regulation of contents and disclosure of ingredients; tobacco dependence and cessation; and economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing, is currently under elaboration by intergovernmental working groups for consideration by the Conference at its next session in late 2010.

To help countries meet their commitments to the WHO FCTC, and its' guidelines, WHO developed a technical assistance package called **MPOWER** – a package of six tools to support demand reduction policies that when implemented are proven to drive down tobacco use and save lives. The six demand reduction policies are: **M**onitor tobacco use and prevention policies, **P**rotect people from tobacco smoke, **O**ffer help to quit tobacco use, **W**arn about the dangers of tobacco use, **E**nforce bans on tobacco advertising,

¹ WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008. The MPOWER package: www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/en/

² Gender, Health and Tobacco, WHO 2003. www.who.int/gender/documents/Gender_Tobacco_2.pdf

³ Waterpipe Tobacco Smoking: Health Effects, Research Needs and Recommended Actions by Regulators, TobReg Advisory Note, 2005. www.who.int/tobacco/global_interaction/tobreg/waterpipe/en/index.html

⁴ www.who.int/fctc/en/index.html

