

## **PATH Canada Guide**

### **Low Cost Research for Advocacy**

**Written by:**  
Debra Efroymsen

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### I. Introduction

#### What is advocacy?

In an ideal world, governments would always try to act in the best interest of the population, carefully weigh the effects of their policies and actions, and choose those most likely to contribute to the public good. In a more realistic scenario, NGOs and individuals encourage governments to act in the public interest, and plan their work so as to increase the chances of the government adopting positive policies and programs.

While it is easy to complain about the government's reluctance to act in the best interests of the population, we must remember that it is *our* responsibility to encourage the government to do what's right. This encouraging—and sometimes pushing—of the government or other institutions to pass laws and policies, or implement programs, that will benefit the public is *advocacy*.

For example, if the government is considering raising taxes on buses and lowering them on private cars, NGOs might meet together and create an *advocacy plan*. They would start with making objectives: to raise public protest against the move, to inform the government of their opposition, and finally to convince the government to reverse its decision. They would decide on activities likely to lead to the desired result—asking experts to write letters to the newspaper about the likely effects of the new taxes on traffic jams, highlight the problems faced by commuters, hold a meeting at which government representatives discuss the tax with NGOs, etc. If their advocacy effort is successful, the government would withdraw its plan, or possibly even decide to do the opposite—raise taxes on private cars, and lower those on buses. This would represent an effective advocacy effort, and the result would be a benefit to the general public (and a few upset auto manufacturers and salesmen).

### What is research for advocacy?

International experience demonstrates that the best way to reduce tobacco use is through strong tobacco control legislation and high taxes on tobacco products. But how do NGOs successfully campaign for such legislation and high taxes? One way is through research demonstrating the need for such laws and taxes, public support for them, and the likely results of their passage.

What distinguishes *research for advocacy* from other types of research is its focus on changing laws and policies. The research is conducted with specific policy aims in mind, as part of an overall strategy to obtain the passage of tobacco control laws and policies. While other research contributes to the overall understanding of tobacco, research for advocacy has very narrow and specific aims. While a study on the reasons for youth choosing to use tobacco may have important repercussions for programs working with youth, it is not likely to influence policy, and is thus not research for advocacy. Research showing that children are highly aware of tobacco advertising, or that people support a ban on tobacco advertising, feeds directly into your advocacy work, and *is* research for advocacy.

This guide is meant for NGOs and other agencies working on tobacco control, which may or may not have much experience conducting research, and may not have many resources for the work. The guide therefore attempts to include only research projects that are fairly easy and inexpensive to conduct. Much of what needs to be done to move forward the debate on tobacco control legislation can be accomplished with little money, and by organizations without vast experience in research. Research that is focused on a policy goal, interesting, and appropriate to the issue can have tremendous value for your advocacy campaign.

### Getting Started

When planning research for advocacy, it is important to keep in mind a few questions:

1. *What policy goal does this research address?* Since research for advocacy is so closely linked with policy goals, your goals should be clear before you plan the research to help you achieve them. Section IV of this guide offers suggestions on research projects targeted to specific advocacy goals.
2. *Is this research appropriate to the policy goal?* Research for advocacy should be targeted, meeting specific objectives. If a particular policy issue is being debated, it is important to have results specifically addressing that issue. In order to determine what sort of research will be useful, it is important to understand the political climate.

If the government is reluctant to pass tobacco control legislation due to fears of revenue loss if tobacco use declines, then a large study showing the number of people likely to die from tobacco may be of little use. It may be more important to produce a study or do some calculations showing the likely economic impact of tobacco control on government revenues, and population growth estimates—accompanied by some global estimates adjusted to your country, of deaths from tobacco. One excellent reference is World Bank. 1999. *Curbing the epidemic: Governments and the economics of tobacco control*. [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org). If the government is afraid that raising taxes, or making more places smoke-free, will be unpopular, then demonstrations of public support are key.

3. *Will my research be done in time to meet my policy objectives?* Research for advocacy responds to actions in the policy arena. If the response takes too long, then the utility will be drastically reduced. It is often important to consider the benefits of quick results, as opposed to a more impressive study that will take much longer (and require much more money).
4. *How will I use the results to advocate for that policy goal?* When planning your research, be sure you have a plan for releasing your results. The nature and size of the research, as well as the format of your presentation, will depend on the target audience. Research for advocacy can be an important part of your media advocacy campaign. Gaining media attention to the tobacco control problem is critical, and new research findings can be one way of gaining publicity. Creative results may be more successful than repeated “body counts” in attracting the media to the issue of tobacco control.
5. *Is there another (cheaper, easier, more effective) way to gain the same results?* Don’t reinvent the wheel, or repeat research that already exists and can serve your purposes. Always start with what is already available. There is a huge amount of existing information and research on tobacco. Some data is specific for different countries; for example, figures on deforestation caused by tobacco, by country (Geist, H. “Global assessment of deforestation related to tobacco farming.” Tobacco Control 1999; 8:18-28 [www.tobaccocontrol.com](http://www.tobaccocontrol.com)) and the American Cancer Society country profiles (Corrao MA, Guindon GE, Sharma N, Shokoohi DF (eds). Tobacco Control Country Profiles, American Cancer Society, Atlanta, GA, 2000). Other sources include WHO, universities, FAO, and the UN.

Gathering nationwide prevalence data is no easy task. If a government institution is able to do so, and just needs some lobbying to include questions on tobacco consumption (and expenditure) to the surveys they already conduct, then your efforts may best be spent on the lobbying. WHO has a standardized questionnaire and definition of terms.

Collecting existing national statistics to demonstrate the need for action, and the effects thereof, can be important advocacy tasks. However, the lack of such data, and the inability to collect it, should not deter anyone from doing advocacy!

While the tobacco industry likes to argue that every study needs to be redone in each country, this is a delay tactic, that you needn’t accept. Since resources for tobacco control are quite limited, it is always important to consider the wisest use of whatever funds are available.

## **II. Types of Research for Advocacy**

### Opinion polls/Surveys

Opinion polls can be useful to show—when it is the case—that the general public supports tobacco control. Evidence of public support can reassure the government that they will not lose popularity if they enact laws to protect public health. If the public is not supportive, then it may be your task to educate people about the importance of tobacco control policies, so that they will support their passage, and obey the laws when they are passed.

While you may fear that providing background information will bias your answers, remember that some information is needed to weigh the necessity of different policies. If you polled people who had never heard of CFCs, or did not know that they harm the ozone layer (and why the ozone layer is important!), then you would find a very low level of support for banning products that contain CFCs. If you first provided the basic information, you would be much more likely to find public support. This would simply indicate that it may be helpful to provide at least minimal information on the issue at the time of passing public policy, in order to guarantee public support.

Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) surveyed 1,073 passengers of an inter-city bus service. Less than half (41%) of the passengers surveyed say they ever smoke on buses, but even among those who do, 67% said it would be good to have buses be smoke-free, and 23% said it would not be a problem for them. Only 9% of the smokers objected. The reaction from non-smokers was stronger, with 99% saying buses should be smoke-free. WBB used the results to convince two bus companies to introduce smoke-free bus service.<sup>2</sup>

#### Economics research

Politicians often need to see research or simply numbers illustrating that tobacco control will not destroy the economy, and that it could in fact be beneficial. As a first step, obtain, and study, the World Bank's book (World Bank. 1999. *Curbing the epidemic: Governments and the economics of tobacco control*. [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)). PATH Canada and Work for a Better Bangladesh have conducted research on tobacco and poverty; see their websites ([www.pathcanada.org](http://www.pathcanada.org); <http://wbb.globalink.org>).

addictive and deadly, and that tobacco ads are aimed mainly at young people, do you think tobacco should be advertised?"

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<sup>1</sup> *Public Support for International Efforts to Control Tobacco: A Survey in Five Countries*. Environics Research Group Limited, Canada: October 2001.

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<sup>2</sup> Syed Mahbul Alam, "Creating Smoke-Free Places: Meeting Public Demand". Work for a Better Bangladesh. Printed in INB4 *FCA Bulletin*, March 2002.

Research possibilities include (see more details below):

- Loss of foreign exchange (comparing import and export figures on tobacco, for the majority of countries where far more tobacco is imported than exported)
- Comparisons of per capita spending on tobacco vs. basic needs
- Health care costs (e.g. hospital costs for the three main tobacco-attributable illnesses, if no other data is easily available)
- Fires caused by careless smoking

#### Review of internal tobacco industry documents

Some excellent information taken from tobacco industry documents is available, for instance, on the ASH UK website. References to tobacco industry behavior in your country can be very useful for attracting the attention of media and politicians. If you aren't experienced at searching tobacco industry websites, see Appendix I for websites which can help you get started.

#### Qualitative research

It can be very helpful to have quotes and stories with which to illustrate your argument. When Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) studied BAT's youth smoking prevention campaign, it gathered many interesting quotes by allowing one line on the survey form for students to write their opinions freely. WBB was surprised by the savvy and strong opinions of the students, in criticizing BAT for its cynical attempt to mislead the public. Such quotes not only make a research report far more interesting reading, but are more likely to be picked up by the media.

Various methods of qualitative research exist; entire books are written on the subject. For the purpose of tobacco control advocacy, what you are looking for is quotes or stories that illustrate a truth you may or may not also be illustrating through qualitative research. In some cases, one person's story may be

more "real" and convincing than numbers, and help add the personal perspective to otherwise dry statistics. For example, the tragic situation of many tobacco farmers—using both quantitative and qualitative data—is well illustrated in the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' excellent publication *Golden Leaf, Barren Harvest*.

Quotes can illustrate different points, such as:

- The harmful effect of tobacco on the economy. For instance, an individual or family harmed by tobacco expenditures, or who have benefited by quitting tobacco use. A farmer heavily in debt due to growing tobacco, who would like to switch to an alternate crop. A farmer who has switched from tobacco to another crop who is now doing much better:

*"All we're doing is falling deeper and deeper [into debt] each year."*  
--Tobacco farmer, Brazil<sup>3</sup>

- The miserable conditions of someone working in a tobacco-related field (factory worker, bidi roller, farmer affected by green tobacco sickness...):

*"Before I was healthy. Now I am weak and thin. Everyday I breathe tobacco gas and fine tobacco dust. It is very hot at the factory. There is no circulation of air. And for hours I must sit in the same position. ... I go to the factory at 8 in the morning and return at 8 at night. ... It is not possible to bathe daily and if we stay dirty we get sick."*

--12-year-old boy working in a bidi factory, Bangladesh<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, *Golden Leaf, Barren Harvest, The Costs of Tobacco Farming*, November 2001. <http://tobaccofreekids.org>

<sup>4</sup> Therese Blanchet, *Child Work in the Bidi Industry*. Report presented to UNICEF, Dhaka, March 2000.

- The deceptiveness of tobacco companies pretending they want youth not to smoke (to campaign against allowing the industry to run youth prevention campaigns):

*“If any cigarette company told me not to smoke, I’d think it was some sort of slyness on their part.”*

--13-year-old male student, Bangladesh<sup>5</sup>

- The need to make places smoke-free, to help people quit and to make life better for non-smokers:

*“It’s really hard to quit smoking when people around still smoke regularly; the surrounding environment is really important.”* --male medical student, Vietnam<sup>6</sup>

- Support for strong warnings on cigarettes:

*“I think that it’s very necessary to print information about the dangers on the pack, and maybe they should be printed in big, clearer letters.”* --43-year-old male doctor, Vietnam<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Debra Efroymson, Raton Deb, Aminul Islam Sujon, et al. *British American Tobacco’s Youth Smoking Prevention Campaign: What are its actual objectives?* Work for a Better Bangladesh, Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance, and PATH Canada, Dhaka, August 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Debra Efroymson, Vu Pham Nguyen Thanh, Dao Tran Phuong, *It’s Rude to Say No: Vietnamese opinions about tobacco control.* Report for the International Tobacco Initiative (now RITC), Hanoi, January 1998.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

- Support for bans on tobacco promotion (including children’s awareness of tobacco advertising a child describing in detail a tobacco ad, or singing a tobacco song on video); in this case, supporting enforcement of the existing law:

*“You should completely remove Dunhill ads for jewelry on TV. Dunhill is a cigarette so the government should act decisively in this matter.”* --38-year-old man, Vietnam<sup>8</sup>

### III. Presenting your research

You may, for your own uses, wish to have an exhaustive research report which goes into great detail about your methodology, presents many detailed tables, and references hundreds of documents. But often you need to present your results quickly, and to people who are unlikely to read a lengthy report. A useful tool may well be a short report with a few charts and graphs that illustrate your findings, rounded out with some quotes and/or case studies. Focus on what is directly relevant to the policy issue at hand, rather than on information that may prove interesting to you and other researchers, but that may not interest the media or politicians.

When presenting your research findings, be sure to link them explicitly to a policy issue. For instance, if you are showing that children are highly aware of tobacco advertising, use the results not only to shock parents, but to convince lawmakers to ban tobacco advertising. If you are highlighting the negative economic impact of tobacco cultivation and/or use, use the results to press for various tobacco control measures. A newspaper headline “Study shows more children know Marlboro than the name of the Vice

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

President”, with the article emphasizing the need to ban tobacco advertising, is much more useful than “Study conducted among 500 students in the capital” that goes on to discuss the findings, without mentioning your call for an ad ban.

Depending on the significance of your findings, and the size of your budget, ways of presenting your research include:

- ◆ Communicate the results directly with policymakers. If your report is long (more than a few pages), be sure to include a summary highlighting the key findings and the policy relevance (e.g. people want more smoke-free places; the government should include language in its proposed tobacco control bill to this effect...).
- ◆ Hold a press conference. If possible, invite well-known people in the field covered by the research, to discuss the significance of the finding (assuming that they support tobacco control!).
- ◆ Invite members of the press to come to a meeting at your office to discuss the results. This can work well if you have little money available, if you fear the media will not attend a press conference, and if you have good relations with some members of the press.
- ◆ Call one journalist with whom you have a good relationship, or who has written on tobacco control, and giving him/her “exclusive” rights to the research, with the possibility that it will then be an important feature.
- ◆ Write a press release and fax/send it to various media. Be sure to make it interesting as well as policy relevant—a press release, not a scientific abstract.
- ◆ Refer to your findings in letters to the editor, letters to politicians, speeches, and in banners at rallies.

- ◆ Share your results—if not a formal report, at least the key findings, which may be all that most people read anyway—with other organizations potentially interested in tobacco control. Enclose a letter encouraging them to join your alliance, write to the newspapers or politicians, cover the issue in their newsletter, and/or get in touch with you for collaborative action for tobacco control.

#### **IV. Specific suggestions on research to conduct to meet your advocacy objectives**

##### General guidelines when conducting research:

- Your advocacy objectives should guide your research. Start with what information you need to press for a certain policy change; then plan your research.
- Use the information in this guide as guidelines only; always adapt the questions for your local context.
- Test the questions before use, to make sure they are clear.
- Decide which questions you need and which you don’t.
- Plan your data analysis in advance—if you will use a computer, set up the form on the computer before you conduct the survey. Make sure you have the time and ability to do the analysis.
- Only do the survey if you know how it will be useful for you.
- When possible, share information about the harms of tobacco, and advice on quitting, with the people you interview, after you finish the questions; also explain to them how you will use the information.
- Remember to tie the results in to your policy initiatives!

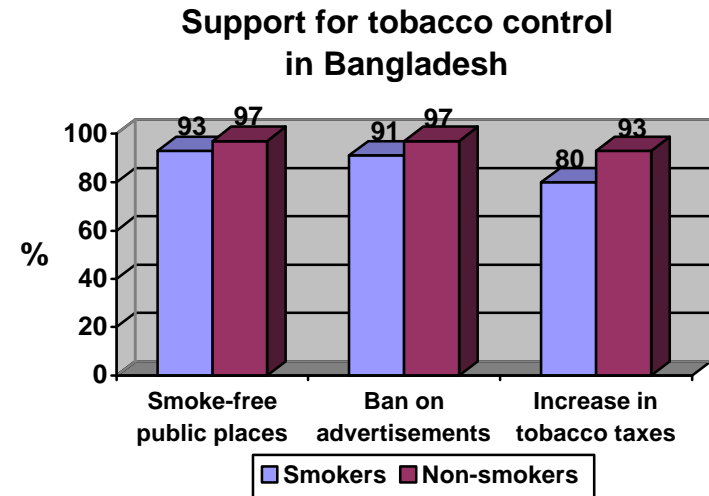
## 1. Promoting tobacco control laws/policies in general (see also point 6)

### *Support for smoke-free areas and other tobacco control policies*

Public opinion polls can demonstrate to the government that tobacco control laws will be well accepted, among both smokers and non-smokers. This can ease concerns about the unpopularity of such actions, and thus greatly increase the chances that politicians will support such measures. If policymakers still oppose the measures, then you can use the results to question in whose interest the government is acting: the mass people, or the tobacco industry?

Public opinion polls are also quite simple and fairly inexpensive to conduct. It may be possible to get other organizations and/or volunteers to assist in the data collection and analysis, in which case the study may be basically free. This is a powerful tool, which should not be neglected in your advocacy campaign!

The Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance, for example, found a very high level of support for tobacco control policies among both smokers and non-smokers, with over 90% of both groups supporting having more areas become smoke-free and banning tobacco advertising. While 93% of non-smokers favored an increase in tobacco taxes, a surprising 80% of smokers also found that tobacco taxes should be increased. Such results are extremely useful in advocacy campaigns.



Source: Saifuddin Ahmed, "A Revealing survey in Bangladesh," in WHO SEAR's Lifeline, Vol. 8, May 2002.

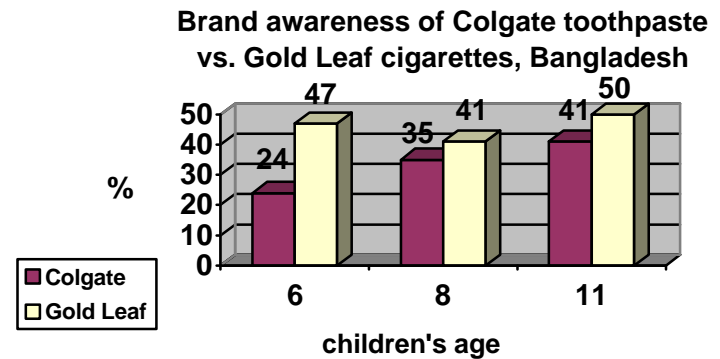
### Sample questions (see Appendix III for more ideas of questions):

- ◆ Do you think more areas should be smoke-free?
- ◆ Do you think people have the right to protection from second-hand smoke?
- ◆ Do you think all public transport should be smoke-free?
- ◆ Do you think taxes on tobacco products should be increased?
- ◆ Do you think tobacco advertising should be banned?

If tobacco advertising is still allowed in your country, it is safe to assume that children are highly aware of the ads. First, test this premise among some children—your own, your neighbors’, or within a school. Ask children to name different cigarette brands, and to describe tobacco ads (if your country still allows tobacco advertising on TV, you may find that even small children can describe the ads in great detail, and sing the songs). Then ask a few questions about other products that are also commonly advertised, such as toothpaste, and integral parts of your country’s culture, history, etc., or aspects of popular culture that are almost universally known among adults.

For example, Work for a Better Bangladesh wanted to show the importance of banning tobacco advertising completely, and was fairly sure that children are often exposed to cigarette advertising. They conducted a survey among children throughout Bangladesh to test their theory that children are highly aware of cigarette ads.

They found that children are more aware of tobacco ads than national holidays, and know more cigarette than toothpaste brands. For instance, among 6-year-olds, twice as many children knew that Gold Leaf is a cigarette (47%) than that Colgate is a toothpaste (24%).



Source: Work for a Better Bangladesh, *Tobacco Control Law: The People’s Demand*, August 2002 (report available in Bengali only).

After talking to several children, you are ready to draft your pre-test. Draw up several questions. You may wish to prepare two different versions of the survey, one for very young children (pre-school), and the other for slightly older children (e.g. aged 8-11). With pre-school children, you may wish to ask them for recognition of brand names (what is Marlboro, what is Colgate), while with older children, you can ask somewhat more sophisticated questions (how many cigarette brands can you name, how many world leaders can you name, etc.).

The point is to demonstrate that children are similarly or more aware of tobacco products, from the advertising, as they are of basic cultural and historical facts that one would actually *want* or *expect* and *want* children to know. Conducting a pre-test among a small sample will allow you to further modify your survey, before conducting a larger study. When you present your results, remember to highlight your policy objective: the current situation means that children are highly aware of cigarette advertising, and the only solution is a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco promotion.

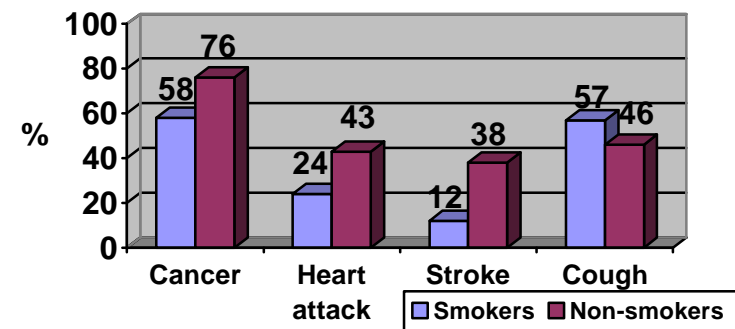
### 3. Lobbying for stronger warnings on tobacco packs

*What do people understand from the current warning? Would people prefer stronger warnings?*

In addition to opinion polls (see above), a simple study can demonstrate the need for stronger warnings on tobacco packs. If cigarette packs in your country contain only a vague sentence about the health consequences of smoking, you can measure how many people are only vaguely aware that smoking harms the health, how many people can list specific diseases, and how many are aware that smoking harms others.

Research in Bangladesh showed that non-smokers were much more aware of the problems that can result from smoking than smokers—but even they were fairly ill-informed. While 76% of non-smokers knew that smoking causes cancer, only 58% of smokers did. Figures for other problems were even lower—only 24% of smokers know that smoking can cause heart attack, and 12% that smoking can cause strokes. Among smokers, 57% knew that smoking can cause coughing—suggesting that many may assume that the harm to health from smoking is limited to minor discomforts.

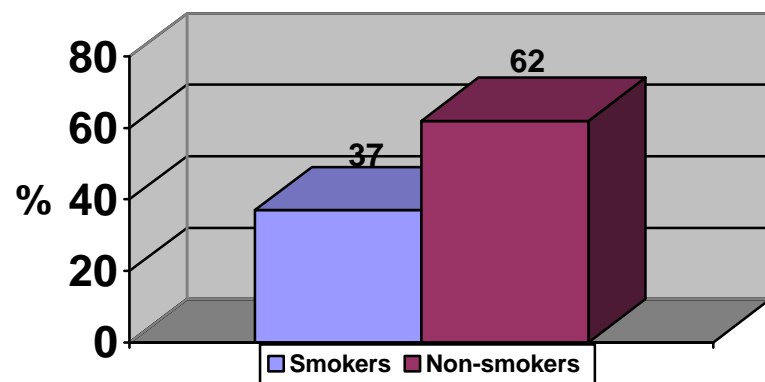
**Knowledge of specific tobacco-related diseases among Bangladeshis**



Source: Saifuddin Ahmed, "A Revealing survey in Bangladesh," in WHO SEAR's *Lifeline*, Vol. 8, May 2002.

The same survey found that only 37% of smokers, versus 62% of non-smokers, are aware that smoking is addictive. This clearly makes the case for putting information on tobacco packets about the addictive nature of tobacco.

**Knowledge of Bangladeshis that tobacco is addictive**



Source: Saifuddin Ahmed, "A Revealing survey in Bangladesh," in WHO SEAR's Lifeline, Vol. 8, May 2002.

If the level of knowledge in your country is fairly high, and/or if your packs already list specific diseases but do not go into detail, you can ask about the magnitude of risks involved in smoking. For instance: "What percentage of people who get lung cancer are cured?", "How many years on average do smokers lose as a result of smoking?", and "After quitting smoking, how long does it take before the risk of a heart attack is greatly reduced?" These sorts of questions typically show that the 'everyone knows it is risky' argument is insufficient to guarantee informed consent. Inability to answer the questions shows that packs need to display a good deal of information, such as is provided with Canadian packs, to begin to give the consumer adequate information to make an "informed choice".

Sample questions:

- ◆ Is tobacco harmful to the health?
- ◆ What diseases does tobacco cause? (open-ended; on your questionnaire, list diseases/health problems that you can tick off, but do not mention them when you ask the question, as you want to know what diseases people can spontaneously list)
- ◆ Is smoking addictive?
- ◆ Does exposure to tobacco smoke cause disease in non-smokers?
- ◆ Do you think that cigarette packs/other tobacco products should contain strong, clear warnings about the health problems caused by the use of the product? Or Do you think that cigarette packs/other tobacco products should carry specific messages about diseases caused by smoking, such as "Tobacco causes lung cancer" and "Tobacco causes
- ◆ Do you think that tobacco products should have pictures included in the warnings, so that even the illiterate have an idea of what may happen to them if they use the products?
- ◆ Do you think that tobacco users have a right to know what dangerous chemicals are contained in the products that they buy, and that those chemicals should be listed right on the pack, the way ingredients are listed on foods?

#### 4. Support for tax increases

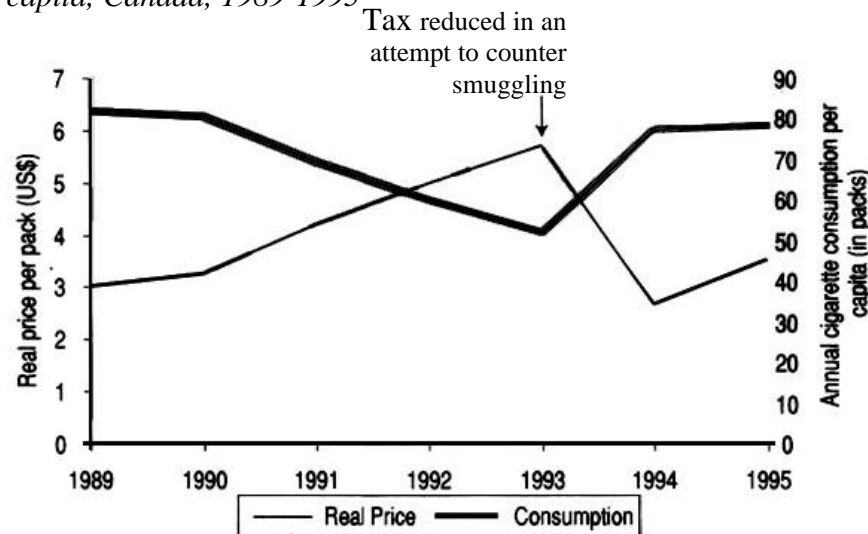
##### *A popular tax?*

People usually object to tax increases, so it is great news to governments to hear that a certain tax will be popular, even among the users of that product. In Thailand, the government was so pleased with the revenue it gained from raising taxes on cigarettes, it has continued raising the taxes repeatedly, of its own initiative.

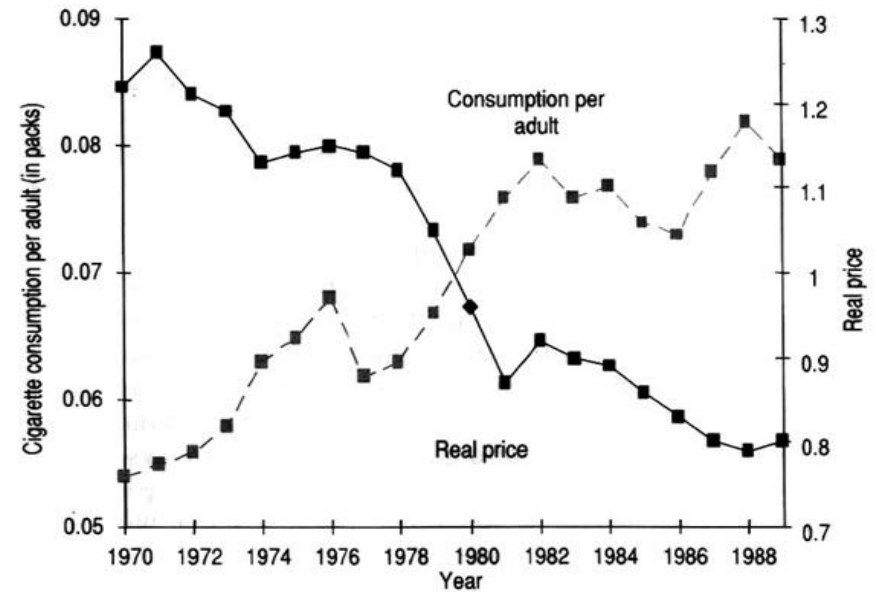
Highlighting the fact that governments gain revenue, as well as contribute to public health, by raising tobacco taxes—using the experience of other countries, or of your own if available—can help encourage your government to take this important move for public health. The experience of Canada and South Africa show that consumption decreases as price increases—and vice versa. Given the price elasticity of tobacco, governments can continue to raise prices quite high and continue to gain revenue.

#### Cigarette Price and Consumption Go in Opposite Trends

*Real price of cigarettes and annual cigarette consumption per capita, Canada, 1989-1995*



Real price of cigarettes and annual cigarette consumption per adult (15 years of age and above). South Africa, 1970-1989



Source: World Bank. 1999. *Curbing the epidemic: Governments and the economics of tobacco control*. [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

A study in Massachusetts, USA showed that most people would support an increase in the cigarette tax *if* the money were to go for tobacco control or health programs, but *not* if it were to go for general government purposes.<sup>10</sup> If this is the case in your locality, you have a stronger argument for convincing the government to use a portion of the tax to support tobacco control, programs for the poor, or health programs!

<sup>10</sup> Abt Associates Inc., *Independent Evaluation of the Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program*. Second Annual Report, January 1994 to June 1995.

-tar” (depending on what is available in your area)?

- ◆ What do you think those terms mean? (open-ended)
- ◆ Do you think “light” etc. cigarettes are less addictive? (Y/N) less likely to cause disease? (Y/N) less likely to kill the smoker? (Y/N)
- ◆ Do you smoke? (If yes: which brand; specify whether regular or light/mild)
- ◆ Do you think it is worth spending more money on light/mild cigarettes?

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, *Putting an End to Deception: Proceedings of the International Expert Panel on Cigarette Descriptors*. A report to the Canadian Minister of Health from the Ministerial Advisory Council on Tobacco Control, January 2002, and National Cancer Institute. *Risks Associated with Smoking Cigarettes with Low Machine-Measured Yields of Tar and Nicotine*. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No. 13. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, NIH Pub. No. 02-5074, October 2001.

- ◆ If someone close to you were a smoker who has been unsuccessful at quitting or reluctant to quit smoking, would you recommend that s/he switch to light/mild?
- ◆ (Final question) “Light” and “mild” cigarettes have been shown to be no less harmful than other cigarettes, but they may convince smokers to switch to them rather than quitting. Given that fact, do you think that terms such as “light” and “mild” on cigarette packs should be banned?

## 6. Showing the need for strong tobacco control laws and policies to reduce tobacco use among the poor

### *Tobacco and poverty*

In many low-income countries, a range of health and other problems compete for attention among governments and NGOs. Tobacco control can be considered a problem mainly of wealthier countries, or a luxury to be addressed in a few decades, when the burden of death from tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS is reduced.

This of course ignores WHO statistics showing that the burden of death from tobacco use will soon be mostly on low-income countries. It also ignores the fact that with economic development will come a surge in health costs, and that one must act *now* to reduce *future* health costs from treating tobacco-related disease.

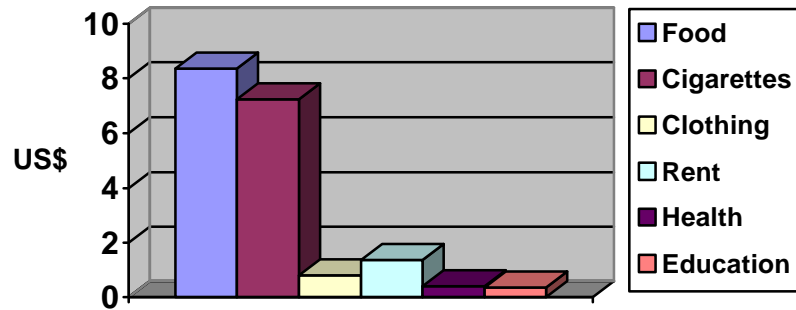
One way to gain the attention of policymakers and NGOs in low-income countries to the harm caused by tobacco is to address the effect of tobacco expenditures on the poor. When the poor spend their money on tobacco rather than on basic needs, they, and their children, suffer *now*.

One of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use, especially among youth and the poor, is by raising the price of tobacco products. While this may at first sight seem likely to harm the poor, as they will be forced to spend a higher portion of their income to maintain their addiction, this is not in fact the case. Most users will either stop using tobacco altogether, or switch to cheaper products, and fewer poor people will start, so that the *net result* will be a decrease in diversion of money from basic goods to tobacco. This is particularly true if a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco promotion, and other measures, accompanies the tax increase, so that incentives to use tobacco are also removed, at the same time that the price disincentive is established.

One fairly easy way to bring attention to the issue is to collect what statistics are available; you may be able to gain interesting information using national statistics, or perform calculations using the price of popular tobacco products, and of basic goods. You may also wish to conduct a survey among the poor, to compare their spending on food, tobacco, and other items. Depending on what is available, possible analyses/comparisons include:

- ◆ At the national level, imports versus exports of tobacco, in local currency.
- ◆ Per capita spending on tobacco versus important foods.
- ◆ Average spending on tobacco by users, versus average household spending on basic needs. In Bangladesh, the average male cigarette smoker spends almost as much per month on cigarettes as the per capita expenditure for food, and far, far more than the per capita amounts for health, education, clothing, and house rent.

**Men's monthly cigarette expenditures versus per capita monthly spending for basic needs, Bangladesh, 1997**



Source: Debra Efroymsen, Saifuddin Ahmed, Joy Townsend, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* 2001;10:212-217.

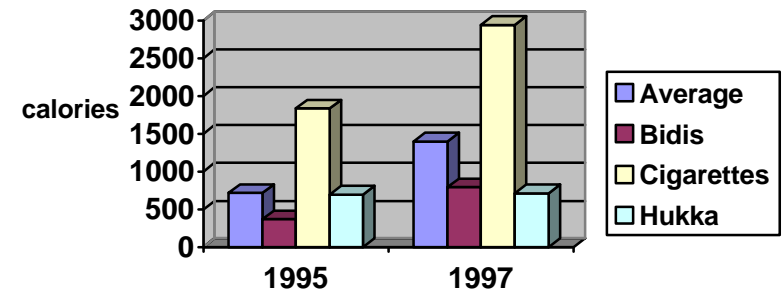
- ◆ Potential increase in consumption of a high-nutrient food, if tobacco were not purchased and the money went to the food instead. If you know roughly how much tobacco is consumed in one year, you can calculate the average price of tobacco, then use that sum of money to calculate how much of another food could be purchased.
- ◆ Number of eggs (or quantity of other high-nutrient food) that could be purchased with one tobacco company's advertising budget, or with what people in the country spend on tobacco in a year (or whatever other relevant number is available): what that then translates into in terms of the number of poor children in your country who would have access to that food.

*"BAT Bangladesh's gross turnover in cigarettes in 1998 was over \$293 million. That figure could have purchased over 4.7 billion eggs, enough to feed almost 13 million children an egg*

*a day. Meanwhile, egg consumption in 1996 (latest year in which statistics are available) averaged one egg per person per month."*<sup>12</sup>

- ◆ Changes over time in consumption of food and of tobacco. In some cases, increases in income bring little change in consumption of basic foods, but an increase in the consumption of tobacco. You can also compare the amount of food that could be purchased with average tobacco expenditures, over time. For example, in Bangladesh, men's *tobacco (average over all types)* expenditure could have purchased 721 calories of rice each day in 1995, and 1,402 in 1997; men's average *cigarette* expenditure could have purchased 1,837 rice calories in 1995, and 2,942 in 1997.

**Equivalent in rice calories of Bangladeshi men's daily tobacco expenditures**



Source: Debra Efroymsen and Saifuddin Ahmed, *Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh*. PATH Canada, Dhaka: July 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Debra Efroymsen, Saifuddin Ahmed, Joy Townsend, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* 2001;10:212-217.

- ◆ How much food a smoker of a pack a day of a popular brand could buy, by day, week, month, or year. For instance, showing that the average smoker spends enough on cigarettes in a year to buy enough of the staple grain to feed a person for that year; or that a poor user of cheap tobacco products could supplement his/her child's diet with various important food items.
- ◆ Comparison of food and of tobacco prices; for instance, a chart comparing the price of various popular brands of cigarettes with eggs, milk, and other food.

**Food that could be bought for one pack of Marlboro, Bangladesh, 2000**

<i>Marlboro regular</i> <i>(\$1.34/pack)</i>	<i>Marlboro light</i> <i>(\$1.72/pack)</i>	<i>Marlboro menthol</i> <i>(\$1.91/pack)</i>
23 eggs	30 eggs	33 eggs
9 kg potatoes	11 kg potatoes	13 kg potatoes
3 liters milk	4 liters milk	5 liters milk
2 kg lentils	3 kg lentils	3 kg lentils
1 kg beef	1 kg beef	1 kg beef
4 kg bananas	5 kg bananas	6 kg bananas
10 kg spinach	13 kg spinach	14 kg spinach
2 liters soybean oil	3 liters soybean oil	3 liters soybean oil
5 kg rice	6 kg rice	7 kg rice

Source: Debra Efroymsen and Saifuddin Ahmed, *Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh*. PATH Canada, Dhaka: July 2000.

- ◆ Comparison of prices of tobacco and other goods, such as school fees, a visit to a health clinic, a pair of shoes, school notebooks, etc.

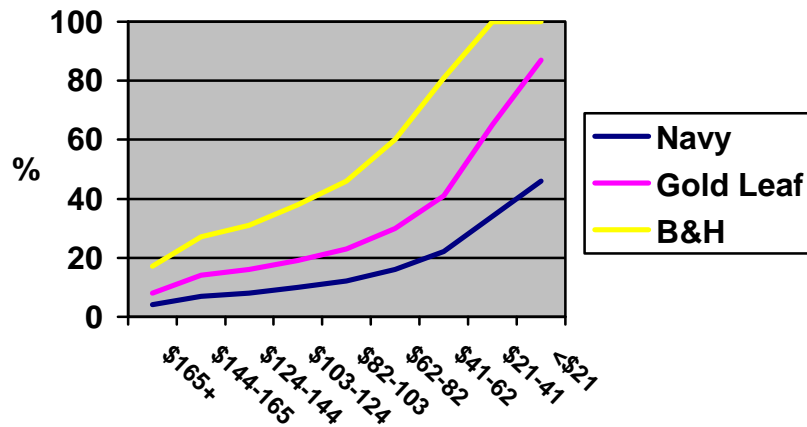
*The price of a pack of Marlboros would pay for 5 kg of rice in China, 24 eggs in Pakistan, 20 eggs in Russia and France, 1 kg of fish in Moldova, Ghana, and France, 12 kg of apples in Moldova, and 0.5 kg of meat or 6 kg of maize in Ghana.*<sup>13</sup>

- ◆ Percentage of total income spent on tobacco, and ratio of expenditures on tobacco/health and tobacco/education by income level. That is, what percent of the income of the poorest, middle class, and higher class goes to tobacco vs. health and education. For example, in Bangladesh, across income levels, people tend to spend similar percentages of total income on tobacco and on health; the poorest spend almost 10 times as much for tobacco as for education.<sup>14</sup> Even for the richest Bangladeshis, a pack a day of commonly-advertised cigarettes would consume 4% to 17% of household income; for the poorest, it would require 46% to well over 100%.

<sup>13</sup> Global Partnerships for Tobacco Control, Essential Action, Dec. 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Debra Efroymsen, Saifuddin Ahmed, Joy Townsend, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* 2001;10:212-217.

**A pack a day of cigarettes as % of household income, Bangladesh, 1998**



Source: Debra Efroymsen and Saifuddin Ahmed, *Hungry for Tobacco: An analysis of the economic impact of tobacco on the poor in Bangladesh*. PATH Canada, Dhaka: July 2000.

## 7. Opposing industry-sponsored youth prevention campaigns

### *Analysis of industry-sponsored campaigns*<sup>15</sup>

If the tobacco industry in your country is running youth smoking prevention campaigns, one effective way to counter them is by publicizing research showing that the campaign is a sham. This need not involve a complicated longitudinal study to determine whether the campaign reduces youth smoking rates over time. While such a study may be useful, it will take time to complete, and it is important to act quickly. In many cases, simply publicizing the hypocrisy of the industry in taking on such a task may be sufficient. If not, a simple analysis of the campaign,

<sup>15</sup> This section is taken largely from Debra Efroymsen, Raton Deb, Aminul Islam Sujon, et al. *British American Tobacco's Youth Smoking Prevention Campaign: What are its actual objectives?* Work for a Better Bangladesh, Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance, and PATH Canada, Dhaka, August 2001.

accompanied by information (such as from the excellent report Cancer Research Campaign and Action on Smoking and Health (London), *Danger! PR in the Playground: Tobacco industry initiatives on youth smoking*, 2000. [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)) can be useful in attacking the campaign, and trying to get it stopped. An in-depth analysis should include both quantitative and qualitative research. For an example, see the website for Work for a Better Bangladesh (<http://wbb.globalink.org>).

Qualitative questions could be conducted through a focus group. Select people of the age targeted by the industry campaign, and show them both tobacco industry prevention materials and that company's cigarette advertising.

### Qualitative questions could include:

- ◆ What do you think of the ads of this company (showing them different ads)? Are they attractive? Do they appeal to you? Are the people pictured in their material well-known, attractive, interesting, fun?
- ◆ What are the messages in their prevention material (showing them the material)? Are the people pictured in their material well-known, attractive, interesting, fun? What is the content of the message—does it say anything about the harm of tobacco? If so, what? Do you think these messages would be convincing to people your age? Why?
- ◆ Which do you find more attractive—the ads, or the youth prevention material?
- ◆ What do you think about a tobacco company telling youth not to smoke?

Philip Morris in Australia argued persistently that its small, inexpensive packs of 15 cigarettes were not marketed with children in mind, despite an overtly teenage-oriented advertising campaign. A quick survey comparing school children and adults from the same area showed otherwise: 57% of smoking children had bought a pack of 15s in the past month compared to only 8% of adult smokers. As a result, Philip Morris' argument was quickly diffused and the small packs banned in South Australia, causing a domino effect around all the other Australian states in the following few years.<sup>16</sup>

Sample survey questions:

- ◆ Do you smoke?
- ◆ Which brand do you usually smoke?
- ◆ (if TV ads are still allowed in your country) Have you ever seen cigarette ads on TV?  
Y N (if yes, which brand?) \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Have you ever seen (mention some major, youth-oriented promotional activity of the company that is running the prevention campaign, such as a rock concert)?
- ◆ Do you think that such promotional events encourage young people to smoke? Y N
- ◆ Have you ever seen an ad for (a heavily advertised cigarette marketed by the company running the prevention campaign)?
- ◆ Where have you seen these ads?
- ◆ Poster: Y N      TV: Y N  
Newspaper: Y N      Billboard: Y N
- ◆ What do you think of these ads?
- ◆ - Like them a lot      - Like them  
- Like them a little      - Don't like them
- ◆ What would you think if a tobacco company told you not to smoke? (open-ended)

## 8. Other measures

Be creative! Small research projects can be a simple, inexpensive, and effective way to counter industry arguments. When the industry makes claims that are obviously untrue, you can counter them with information from other countries, other research projects, formerly secret industry documents, and targeted research projects.

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<sup>16</sup> Chapman S, Lupton D. *The Fight for Public Health: Principles and Practice of Media Advocacy*. London: British Medical Journal Books, 1994.

## Appendix I. Useful Websites for Searching Tobacco Industry Documents<sup>17</sup>

Note: If you don't have much time, you can use the documents cited on these websites, which contain many useful quotes from the tobacco industry, rather than trying to conduct your own search. If you want documents specific to your country, and can't find them on these websites, then you need to invest some time to learn how to search the industry websites directly. Probably the best place to start is the ASH London website, which has a wealth of material on many aspects of tobacco control: [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

- ❑ Action on Smoking and Health (London). June 1998. 'Tobacco Explained: the truth about the tobacco industry in its own words'. [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)
- ❑ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and ASH (London). 2000. 'Trust Us, We're the Tobacco Industry'. [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk) and [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org)
- ❑ Committee of Experts on Tobacco Industry Documents. July 2000. 'Tobacco Company Strategies to Undermine Tobacco Control Activities at the World Health Organization'. [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)
- ❑ ASH (London), Cancer Research Campaign, 2000, 'Danger! PR in the playground: tobacco industry initiatives on youth smoking'. [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk) and [www.crc.org.uk](http://www.crc.org.uk)

More useful websites on the tobacco industry documents:

- ❑ ASH (London) and The Center for Public Integrity (USA) include material on BAT's involvement in global cigarette smuggling, together with links to the relevant internal tobacco industry documents, on their websites at [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk) and [www.publicintegrity.org](http://www.publicintegrity.org) respectively.
- ❑ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the USA have a very comprehensive site with access to many of the thousands of internal tobacco industry documents now available on the web, at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/industrydocs/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/industrydocs/)
- ❑ Glantz, S et al. University of California Press. 1996. 'The Cigarette Papers'. [www.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco/cigpapers](http://www.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco/cigpapers) Stan Glantz also has a new site on restaurants and the industry: <http://www.tobaccoscam.ucsf.edu/>
- ❑ The Tobacco Documents Online site, which enables you to search through a large number of documents, is at [www.tobaccodocuments.org/](http://www.tobaccodocuments.org/)
- ❑ Tobacco Free Asia has a Useful Links page at <http://www.info@tobaccofreeasia.net/Menu/Index6.htm> Click on Industry Documents.
- ❑ Legacy: [HTTP://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/](http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/)
- ❑ Tobacco Control also has a lot of document-based articles and papers. If you are in a low-income country, you can log on without a subscription: [www.tobaccocontrol.com](http://www.tobaccocontrol.com)

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<sup>17</sup> Adapted from Debra Efroymson, Emma Must, and Flora Tanudyaya. A Burning Issue: Tobacco Control and Development; A manual for non-governmental organizations. PATH Canada, October 2001.

For tips on how to search for industry documents and where to find further information see:

- 11<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Tobacco or Health. 2000. 'Tobacco Fact Sheet – Searching Tobacco Industry Documents: Basic Information, Steps and Hints'. [www.tobaccofreekids.org/campaign/global/docs/searching.pdf](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/campaign/global/docs/searching.pdf)

## Appendix II. Pictorial warnings on cigarette packs

*Example: Opinion poll on Canadian cigarette pack warnings*

TORONTO, April 1 /CNW/ - Three out of four Canadians, including a majority of smokers, support the new picture-based warnings on cigarette packages in Canada, according to a new survey released today by the Canadian Cancer Society.

In a survey of 2,014 Canadians conducted in March 2002, 76 per cent of Canadians said they support the precedent setting picture-based health warnings that were launched a year ago in Canada. Among smokers, 59 per cent expressed support. Eighty-three per cent of Canadians and 72 per cent of smokers also supported the detailed health information, including tips on quitting, that is found on the inside of cigarette packages. The survey was conducted by Environics Research Group on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society.

“Earlier studies have shown that the warnings have been effective at discouraging smoking,” says Ken Kyle, Director, Public Issues, Canadian Cancer Society. “Now we know that smokers themselves support the warnings as a way to reduce tobacco use.”

The survey builds on a study released by the Canadian Cancer Society in January 2002 showing that 43 per cent of smokers were more concerned about the health effects of smoking because of the new warnings. Forty-four per cent of smokers in the study also said the new warnings increased their motivation to quit smoking.

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The survey is available on the Canadian Cancer Society's website: [www.cancer.ca/english/MC\\_MR\\_R\\_ccse.asp](http://www.cancer.ca/english/MC_MR_R_ccse.asp)

Photos of new and old warnings on Canadian cigarette packages can be downloaded from:

[www.ontario.cancer.ca/siteboth/english/cigarette\\_package\\_warnings.asp](http://www.ontario.cancer.ca/siteboth/english/cigarette_package_warnings.asp)

The January 2002 study - Evaluation of New Warnings on Cigarette Packages - is also available at:

[www.ontario.cancer.ca/siteboth/english/cigarette\\_package\\_warnings.asp](http://www.ontario.cancer.ca/siteboth/english/cigarette_package_warnings.asp)

“As in Canada, here in Brazil this measure produced a very positive impact on population. Besides the information we have had from sellers about smokers’ refusals of the packs with images showing the ill baby, the woman with lung cancer and the image that illustrates the risk of sexual impotence, recently it was made an opinion survey by Datafolha Institute (linked to a very important newspaper in Brazil). This survey involved 2,216 people above 18 years of age and showed that 76% of them supported this measure. Considering only the smokers, the approval was still high: 73%. And more, 67% of the smokers said they felt desire to quit smoking after seeing those images.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> E-mail communication, 10 June 2002, from Tania Cavalcante, National Tobacco Control Program Manager, National Cancer Institute/Health Ministry of Brazil.

### Appendix III. No-smoking sections in restaurants

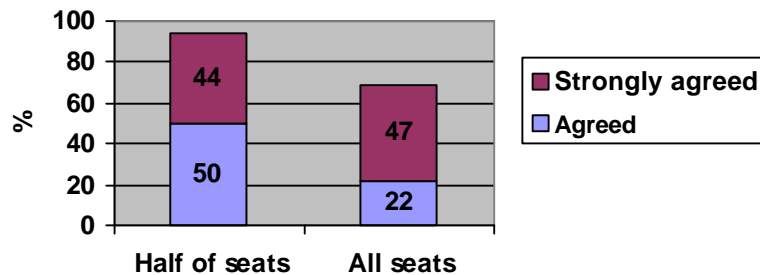
*Excerpted from:* TH Lam, B Chan, SY Ho, “A second report on exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) in restaurants and the demand for smoke-free eating places in Hong Kong.” Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH), Public Opinion on Smoke Free Restaurants in 2000, Report No. 6, March 2000.

A survey of 1,078 people in Hong Kong revealed high support for smoke-free areas in restaurants, or restaurants becoming entirely smoke-free. Highlights of the study include:

- Almost all respondents (98%) agreed that either half or all seats in restaurants should be smoke-free. 69% felt that *all* seats in all restaurants should be smoke-free.
- 76% thought that current legislation designating at least one-third of seats as non-smoking in restaurants with more than 200 seats, was insufficient.
- 71% said all restaurants should have non-smoking areas.
- People reported a range of problems from ETS: 83% said that “tobacco smoke smelt bad”, 63% that they “thought of finding another seat to avoid the smoke”, 61% that “tobacco smoke affected appetite and mood”, 58% said “eat fast and left that restaurant”, 51% that “tobacco odour would be left on clothes and hair”, 28% “got bad impression of that restaurant”, and 25% “thought of avoiding that restaurant in future”.
- Respondents also listed a range of health problems from ETS, including nose and throat irritation, cough, phlegm, eye irritation, breathing difficulty, headache, dizziness, and asthma/wheezing. About one-quarter often experienced at least one of those problems, and 47% often or sometimes experienced those problems.

- If all restaurants became smoke-free, 20% would go out more often, 77% would not be affected, and only 3% would go out less.
- Over half (52%) of respondents had left a restaurant because of too much tobacco smoke, while only 4% said they had left a restaurant because smoking was not allowed.

**EXAMPLE: Percent of respondents supporting half or all seats in restaurants being non-smoking, Hong Kong**



Other questions covered support for different types of legislation, knowledge of current legislation, exposure to ETS (often, sometimes, seldom, or never exposed), whether they would go to a smoke-free restaurant (in general, and if accompanied by children), whether they would sit in a non-smoking area if available, and knowledge of diseases caused by active and passive smoking.

The results presented a strong case for advocating the government to strengthen the legislation on smoke-free areas in restaurants, and for persuading businesses that they would not lose money if the no-smoking areas in restaurants were increased.

## Appendix IV. Smoking among youth

Surveys among youth can be used to campaign for a ban on tobacco promotion, and to show the need for strong tobacco control laws in general; note the strong association between advertising and brand choice.

Excerpted from: Asociación Salvadoreña de la Juventud, Youth Smoking Survey Results, May 2001.

In January of 2001, Mission Housing Development Corporation (in San Francisco, California, USA) and Asociación Salvadoreña de la Juventud (in El Salvador), agreed to collaborate on a joint project to determine the smoking rates of youth and young adults in San Salvador and neighboring cities. The intent of the survey was to utilize data collected to advocate for non-smoking legislation and policies in San Salvador such as smoke free public places. The work uses the PAR (participatory action research) model, wherein local advocates design, implement and analyze their own action research so that it will be relevant to them and their needs.

In May of 2001, staff of San Francisco Tobacco Free Project and Polaris Research and Development received a total of 384 surveys from the Asociación Salvadoreña de la Juventud. The data was entered and then analyzed using a statistical data analysis program (SPSS 10.0).

Study highlights:

- ❑ 45.8% of the respondents were 14-18 years of age.
- ❑ 38.0% of the respondents indicated smoking Marlboro, which was also the brand they saw advertised the most on TV and on billboards.
- ❑ 44.4% of the respondents saw or heard the brand they smoke advertised on the radio.
- ❑ 56.6% of the respondents saw or heard the brand they smoke advertised on TV.
- ❑ 58.1% of the respondents indicated they smoke because they are addicted.
- ❑ 95.8% of the respondents support prohibiting smoking in public places.
- ❑ 97.4% of the respondents think advertising contributes a lot to smoking.
- ❑ 93.3% of the respondents see or hear tobacco advertising more than once a day.
- ❑ Respondents preferred brands by how often they saw/heard brand advertised; the Marlboro brand was seen more than once a day by more than a quarter (39.8%) of the respondents.