

Uganda



Summary of Findings

1. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There is no record of tobacco industry (TI) involvement in policy development in this reporting period. The Tobacco Control Act prohibits the involvement of the TI in policy development.

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

Although the Tobacco Control Act (TCA) expressly prohibits tobacco-related CSR activities, Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation is a TI-linked and funded NGO that continues to be active in Uganda with endorsement from district government offices and trade unions.

BAT also donated a cigarette destruction machine to Uganda Revenue Authority to support the national fight against illicit cigarette trade.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

Any incentives to the tobacco business are prohibited by the TCA. However, there was a motion in parliament urging the government to include tobacco farmers from the West Nile sub-region and other parts of the country in the government's strategy to compensate tobacco farmers who were owed money by two tobacco companies (Nimataback Ltd and Continental Tobacco) for tobacco leaves supplied.

The Uganda Customs, Currency & Airport Tax regulations still allow international travelers to bring 200 sticks of cigarettes or 250gm of tobacco into the country duty free.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

The government has not yet put in place guidelines for disclosing records of TI interactions such as agendas, attendees, minutes and outcome with the TI and its representatives. It will be noted that there are draft guidelines to this effect pending review and adoption.

5. TRANSPARENCY

The disclosure of meetings is provided for in the TCA. There is no record of this in the current reporting period.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

During the reporting period, there is no record of any senior government official joining the TI or vice versa.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

The government has not put in place a procedure for disclosing the records, attendees, minutes and outcomes from meetings with the TI and its representatives. The TCA and other tobacco control regulations do not address this issue.



Recommendations

1. There is a need to create awareness on the provisions of the TCA and ensure all relevant line ministries, departments and authorities are aware of the limits when interacting with the TI- keeping these engagements to a strictly necessary basis. This calls for the existing draft tobacco control communication plan to be finalized and implemented.
2. The Uganda Customs, Currency & Airport Tax regulation should be amended to halt the duty-free importation of 250g of tobacco products as this constitutes an incentive to the TI. Duty free sale of cigarettes/cigars/tobacco for international travelers should be halted.
3. Penalties for unnecessary interactions with the TI and its representatives should be enforced.
4. The government should finalize and enforce guidelines for disclosing the records of the interaction such as a letter requesting audience with a government ministry or agency, agenda, attendees, minutes and outcome with the TI and its representatives.
5. The Ministry of Health should exercise their authority in Sec 26 of the TCA and appoint more authorized officers for tobacco industry monitoring. Incidents like BAT donating a cigarette destruction machine to Uganda Revenue Authority to support the national fight against illicit cigarette trade should not have happened, nor should this collaboration continue.
6. The government of Uganda, tobacco control community, and other relevant stakeholders should seriously consider implementation of Article 19 of the WHO FCTC and hold the TI in Uganda accountable for its violation of the country's comprehensive TCA as established in this report.