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Maldives

**TOBACCO  
INDUSTRY  
INTERFERENCE  
INDEX  
2023**

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## Background and Introduction

The Republic of Maldives became a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on February 27, 2005. In its 2020 report to the Conference of Parties (CoP), the government of Maldives stated that tobacco industry interference continues to be a challenge for the implementation of national tobacco control programs and a major constraint in implementing the obligations to the WHO FCTC.<sup>1</sup>

The Maldives strictly prohibits the cultivation of tobacco or engagement in tobacco's main processing. However, while it is not producing tobacco and there are no tobacco corporations operating in the country, the tobacco industry is actively pursuing its interests through tobacco importers, wholesalers, and retailers. About 462 million cigarette sticks are mainly imported into the Maldives each year.<sup>2</sup> The Health Protection Agency estimates that the Maldives spends MVR1.6 billion on tobacco annually.<sup>3</sup>

Some of the most well-known cigarette brands in the country, including Camel, Marlboro, Dunhill, American Legend, and Benson & Hedges, are net imported by the country. The main distributors<sup>4</sup> of tobacco products in Maldives are: (1) CGT Pvt Lt, which distributes JTI brands and Cubatabaco cigars, and (2) Blenx Pvt Ltd, which is the sole distributor for Phillip Morris tobacco products. Other tobacco importers are: Lotus Fihaara, OCC2 Pvt Ltd (agents for Benson & Hedges and related brands of Ceylon Tobacco Company; Grape Expectations Pvt Ltd (for various shisha tobacco brands); Maldives Airports Company Limited (imports various brands and products for airport duty free); and NAMCO Pvt Ltd (importers of Akij Biri, commonly used by Bangladeshi expatriate workers). Price of most sold cigarette brand (pack of 20 cigarettes) is around 68 MVR or 4.41 USD while taxes on most sold brand (% of retail price) is around 69%<sup>5</sup>

According to the latest STEPS survey in Maldives revealed that 35.6% of males and 7.6% of females smoke tobacco in the country. Additionally, 11% of Maldivians often start smoking earlier than the average person in the world between ages 13-17 in another study.<sup>6</sup> As an approach to developing its National Cancer Control Plan (NCCP), the Ministry of Health committed itself to non-communicable diseases control through the adoption of the MPOWER policy measures, under the WHO FCTC, among others.<sup>7</sup> The NCCP is the first specialized cancer prevention plan for the country that concentrates on key cancer prevention areas such as tobacco smoking, unhealthy eating behaviour, sedentary lifestyle through timely diagnosis and early prevention.

The Tobacco Control Act (Act No. 15/2010), which was passed in 2010, remains to be the main piece of legislation controlling tobacco control in the Maldives. This law *“prohibits growing tobacco and advertising tobacco products, to regulate import and export, sale*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://untobaccocontrol.org/impldb/maldives/>

<sup>2</sup> Fathmath SHaahunaz. 81 percent deaths in Maldives caused by smoking: Health Minister. The Edition. May 31, 2017. <https://edition.mv/business/3348>

<sup>3</sup> Raif Amyl Jalyl. Maldives spends MVR 1.6 bln yearly on tobacco products: HPA. The Edition. May 31, 2019. [Edition.mv/smoking/10816](https://edition.mv/smoking/10816)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.tobaccounmaskedouth.asia/Tobacco\\_Industry\\_Country\\_Profile\\_-\\_Maldives#cite\\_note-CustomsStatistics-8](https://www.tobaccounmaskedouth.asia/Tobacco_Industry_Country_Profile_-_Maldives#cite_note-CustomsStatistics-8)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.tobaccocontrollaws.org/legislation/factsheet/policy\\_status/maldives](https://www.tobaccocontrollaws.org/legislation/factsheet/policy_status/maldives)

<sup>6</sup> <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/survey-prevalence-of-non-communicable-disease-step-survey-2020-2021>

<sup>7</sup> <https://health.gov.mv/storage/uploads/nxqmZAoy/vwudakjt.pdf>

by wholesale and retail, and packaging and labelling of tobacco products, and to set up a regulatory framework for taxation of tobacco products, protection of non-tobacco users from environmental tobacco smoke, provision of requisite information and training to remain free from the hazards of tobacco, and the treatment of persons addicted to tobacco use, for the control of smoking in the Maldives.’<sup>8</sup>

In 2019, the regulation on the packaging and labeling of tobacco products was put into effect by the Tobacco Control Board in accordance with the Tobacco Control Act 15/2010. The Ministry of Health requires that all cigarette packs carry graphic health warnings of up to 90% of the entire packaging. The Tobacco Control Board also outlawed the sale of loose cigarettes and tobacco products without graphic health warnings in the same year. According to the Tobacco Control Board, the business uses the sale of single cigarettes to entice young people to start smoking.<sup>9</sup> Youth and young adults are drawn to tobacco by the shisha market. Although the Tobacco Control Act forbids the sale of tobacco to anyone under the age of 18, restaurants and cafes that serve shisha do not conduct age checks.

Tobacco tax has been increased in recent years. In August 2020, MVR 3 per cigarette and 25 percent of the price of cigarettes were imposed.<sup>10</sup> In 2020, about 461 million sticks were imported with a value of approx. 1.6 Billion Rufiyaa.<sup>11</sup> According to the Customs Department, the import of cigarette is now declining. In 2021, the Maldives' cigarette imports declined by 31% compared to 2016 due to the increase in import duties.<sup>12</sup>

However despite the decline in cigarette imports, Customs reports e-cigarette imports have increased sevenfold in the past three years. Heated tobacco products (HTPs) such as IQOS are regulated as tobacco products (defined as any product that contains tobacco or its extracts in any form) in accordance with the Tobacco Control Act (Law 15/2010). HTPs (eg. IQOS) is promoted on social media, and is sold both in-store in Male (Figure 1) and online. Maldives will have to address addiction among young people using these new tobacco products.

**Figure 1: E-cigarettes/heated tobacco promotion via social media in Maldives**



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.tobaccocontrollaws.org/files/live/Maldives/Maldives%20-%20TC%20Act.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2019/06/03/loose-change/>

<sup>10</sup> Avas. <https://avas.mv/en/124075> 30 Oct 2022

<sup>11</sup> Sun Siyam. This is the most suitable day to cease smoking. 31 May 2020 <https://en.sun.mv/60754>

<sup>12</sup> Avas. <https://avas.mv/en/124075> 30 Oct 2022

This is the third edition of the report on tobacco industry interference for the Maldives. Below is a quick summary<sup>13</sup> of the country's performance over the past years (Table 1):

	GTI 2020	GTI 2021	GTI 2023
Global Ranking	Rank 17 from 57 Countries	Rank 17 from 80 Countries	Rank X from 90 Countries
Overall Score	48/100	48/100	49 /100
<i>Indicator 1</i>	5	5	4
<i>Indicator 2</i>	0	0	0
<i>Indicator 3</i>	8	5	5
<i>Indicator 4</i>	2	2	0
<i>Indicator 5</i>	10	10	10
<i>Indicator 6</i>	10	9	12
<i>Indicator 7</i>	13	17	18

In both 2020 and 2021 reports of the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index (GTI), the Maldives ranked 17 globally with 48 points indicating lack of transparency and preventive measures to protect public health policies from tobacco industry interference. This year, the Maldives garnered a score of 49 points indicating not much has changed. This report strongly advocates for government's positive and immediate action on the adoption of a code of conduct for officials when dealing with the tobacco industry, in accordance to the guidelines and recommendations of the WHO FCTC Article 5.3.

The report is based on a questionnaire developed by the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA). There are 20 questions based on Article 5.3 guidelines. Information used in this report is obtained from the public domain only. A scoring system is applied to make the assessment. The score ranges from 0 - 5, where 5 indicates the highest level of industry interference, and 1 is low or no interference. Hence the lower the score, the better for the country. The 0 score indicates the absence of evidence or not applicable. The report includes information on incidents from April 2021 to April 2023 but also includes incidents prior to 2021 that are still relevant.

<sup>13</sup> <https://globaltobaccoindex.org/country/MV>

# Summary Findings

## I INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The government does not accept support or endorse any offer of assistance or collaborate with the tobacco industry or through tobacco importers/distributors in the country. However, it should be noted that the distributors are also involved in other retail businesses such as food, beverages and cosmetics which provides more avenues of access to the government.

The Tobacco Control Board allocates a representation slot for the business community who may have direct connections to tobacco importers/retailers that could influence policies being made in relation to tobacco control.

## 2 INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

The government or its officials do not endorse or support forms of partnerships with or participates in so-called corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities organized by the tobacco industry. All forms of tobacco sponsorship are prohibited. Officials must sign a declaration of interest (DOI) document to ensure there is no conflict of interest. It is difficult to verify if “bribes” have been given; there are no reports of tobacco-related cases in the public domain. There may be ways to indirectly influence an official, but this cannot be verified.

## 3 BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

International passengers are eligible for import duty allowance up to a limit of 200 cigarettes or 25 cigars or 250g of tobacco.

Act No. 31/79 (Export Import Act of Maldives) requires that “200% of the cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value of tobacco products (other than cigarettes) and articles used in the consumption of tobacco products, are levied at the time of importation; further, a 6% goods and services tax (GST) is levied at the time of sale. However, gadgets used in the consumption of ENDS/ENNDS are taxed as electronic devices rather than as articles used for consumption of tobacco products.”

Bilateral free trade agreements exist between Maldives and some other countries where tax exemptions are given. This may come up to zero tax in an incremental decline on a yearly basis.

## 4 UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

No evidence from the reporting period indicates that top-level government officials meet with/ foster relations with the tobacco companies such as attending social functions and other events sponsored or organized by tobacco companies or those furthering their interests. No evidence also indicates that the government accepted,

supported, endorsed or entered into partnerships or agreements with the tobacco industry.

## **5 TRANSPARENCY**

The government does not disclose records of any meetings the government may have had with the tobacco distributors. It does not have any mechanisms to ensure that the public has access to a wide range of information on tobacco industry activities relevant to the objectives of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Rules for the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities or affiliated organizations do not exist.

## **6 CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to political parties, candidates or campaigns. However, Maldives has witnessed relatives or owners of the tobacco importers/retailers becoming government officials in the past. They occupy positions across all sectors, health or non-health, actively influencing the government's policies.

## **7 PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

The Tobacco Control Act (Articles 26 and 27) specifies information to be made public as well as the format of report in accordance with the requirements of the regulations to be submitted to the Ministry of Health. While the procedures are in place, information is not disclosed on a regular basis.

Moreover, the government of Maldives did not utilize the "Guidelines for Implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC" over the past reporting periods since 2016. Currently it still does not provide access to a wide range of information on the tobacco industry to the general public.

The Tobacco Control Act (Act No. 15/2010) requires relevant government ministries to organize and conduct sound programs and activities to create awareness and provide information to the public on the harmful effects of tobacco production and tobacco smoking on health, the economy, the environment and society.

This Act also requires government ministries to provide information and training on tobacco control to health service providers, social workers, journalists and media personnel, law enforcement officers and other relevant persons. It explicitly mentions the need to make information on tobacco businesses publicly available in accordance with the law and regulations. However, the government does not have a program to consistently implement it to raise awareness publicly or within its departments.

# Recommendations

## **RECOMMENDATION 1**

Disallow the tobacco industry from participating in the Tobacco Control Board which determines and sets policies concerning tobacco control.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

Prohibit any incentives provided to importing tobacco into the country.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

Restrict interaction with the tobacco industry to only when necessary. To facilitate this, funds/ technical assistance from entities that have ties with the tobacco industry should be rejected and all necessary interactions should be carried out in a transparent manner.

## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Hasten the draft and implementation of the code of conduct for government institutions.

## **RECOMMENDATION 5**

Implement the rules set by the Health Protection Agency for public officials and organizations in regard to use of tobacco and other unhealthy products.

## **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Monitor enforcement and ensure implementation of the existing regulations under the Tobacco Control Act.



## Maldives

# Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023

## Results and Findings

	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>INDICATOR 1: Level of Industry Participation in Policy-Development</b>						
1. The government <sup>14</sup> accepts, supports or endorses any offer for assistance by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry or any entity or person working to further its interests. <sup>15</sup> in setting or implementing public health policies in relation to tobacco control <sup>16</sup> (Rec 3.4)		1				
<p>Maldives is not a tobacco producing country. There is no direct presence of tobacco companies in the country. The industry is represented through tobacco distributors. The government does not accept support or endorse any offer for assistance or collaborate with the tobacco industry or through tobacco importers/ distributors in the country. However, it should be noted that the distributors are also involved in other retail businesses such as food, beverages and cosmetics which provide avenues of access to the government.</p>						
2. The government accepts, supports or endorses <u>policies or legislation drafted</u> by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry. (Rec 3.4)		1				
<p>The government does not accept, support, or endorses policies or legislation drafted by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry.</p>						
3. The government allows/invites the tobacco industry to sit in government interagency/ multi-sectoral committee/ advisory group body that sets public health policy. (Rec 4.8)		1				
<p>The Tobacco Control Board allocates a representation slot for the business community who may have direct connection to tobacco importer/retailer that could influence policies being made in relation to tobacco control. Every member pledge that there will be no conflict of interest. There is also vetting process outlined by a constitution document of the Tobacco Control Board which also governs the conduct and the board and its members.</p>						
4. The government nominates or allows representatives from the tobacco industry (including State-owned) in the delegation to the COP or other subsidiary bodies or accepts their sponsorship for delegates. (i.e. COP 4 & 5, INB 4 5, WG) <sup>17</sup> (Rec 4.9 & 8.3) For non-COP year, follow the previous score of COP year.		1				

<sup>14</sup> The term "government" refers to any public official whether or not acting within the scope of authority as long as cloaked with such authority or holding out to another as having such authority

<sup>15</sup> The term, "tobacco industry" includes those representing its interests or working to further its interests, including the State-owned tobacco industry.

<sup>16</sup> "Offer of assistance" may include draft legislation, technical input, recommendations, oversees study tour

<sup>17</sup> Please annex a list since 2009 so that the respondent can quantify the frequency, <http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/en/>

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Government does not nominate persons representing the tobacco industry to be part of its CoP/MoP delegation. CoP9 (2021) delegation <sup>18</sup> included: Mr M. Hassan (Deputy Director), Ms H.R. Hawwa Shama'A (Senior Public Health Program Office) and Ms W. Aishath Najuja (Public Health Program Officer).						
<b>INDICATOR 2: Industry CSR activities</b>						
5. A. Government agencies or their officials endorse, support, form partnerships with or participates in activities of the tobacco industry described as socially responsible. For example, environmental programs. (Rec 6.2)						
B. The government (its agencies and officials) receives CSR contributions <sup>19</sup> (monetary or otherwise, including CSR contributions) from the tobacco industry or those working to further its interests during the pandemic. (Rec 6.4)	0					
NOTE: exclude enforcement activities as this is covered in another question						
The government or its officials do not endorse or support forms of partnerships with or participates in so-called CSR activities sponsored by the tobacco industry. All forms of tobacco sponsorship are prohibited. Officials must sign a declaration of interest to ensure there is no conflict of interest. There may be ways to indirectly influence public officials however, this cannot be verified.						
<b>INDICATOR 3: Benefits to the Tobacco Industry</b>						
6. The government accommodates requests from the tobacco industry for a longer time frame for implementation or postponement of tobacco control law. (e.g. 180 days is common for PHW, Tax increase can be implemented within 1 month) (Rec 7.1)		1				
In 2019, the Tobacco Control Board formulated the Regulation on Packaging and Labeling Tobacco Products pursuant to the Tobacco Control Act 15/2010. This regulation aims to: “(1) Obligate concerned authorities to inform smokers, potential smokers, especially to youth, of the risks of smoking and to take appropriate measures for their protection in the sale and purchase of tobacco; (2) Determine procedures for printing warning messages with pictures and photographs on the packages and cartons of products containing tobacco to illustrate the real dangers of tobacco use; (3) Endeavor to reduce the number of new smokers; and (4) Prohibit the sale of single cigarettes.” <sup>20</sup>						
In accordance with the Tobacco Control Act, tobacco products that have never been sold in the Maldives or that are new to the local market must secure approval from the Ministry of Health. According to regulations set by the Ministry of Health, all tobacco products must bear a health warning label.						
7. The government gives privileges, incentives, tax exemptions or benefits to the tobacco industry (Rec 7.3)					4	

<sup>18</sup> <https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/mop2-div-1-list-of-participants>

<sup>19</sup> political, social financial, educations, community, technical expertise or training to counter smuggling or any other forms of contributions

<sup>20</sup> <https://untobaccocontrol.org/impldb/maldives-new-labeling-regulations-enforced/>

Act No. 31/79 (Export Import Act of Maldives) requires that “200% of the cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value of tobacco products (other than cigarettes) and articles used in the consumption of tobacco products, are levied at the time of importation; further, a 6% goods and services tax (GST) is levied at the time of sale. However, gadgets used in the consumption of ENDS/ENNDS are taxed as electronic devices rather than as articles used for consumption of tobacco products.”<sup>21</sup>

Bilateral free trade agreements between Maldives and some other countries where tax exemptions are given. This may come up to zero tax in an incremental decline on yearly basis.

All international travelers aged over 16 years are eligible for import duty allowance up to 200 cigarettes or 25 cigars or 250g of tobacco.<sup>22</sup>

#### INDICATOR 4: Forms of Unnecessary Interaction

8. Top level government officials (such as President/ Prime Minister or Minister <sup>23</sup> ) meet with/ foster relations with the tobacco companies such as attending social functions and other events sponsored or organized by the tobacco companies or those furthering its interests. (Rec 2.1)	0					
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No evidence from the reporting period indicates top-level government officials meet with/ foster relations with the tobacco companies such as attending social functions and other events sponsored or organized by the tobacco companies or those furthering its interests.

9. The government accepts assistance/ offers of assistance from the tobacco industry on enforcement such as conducting raids on tobacco smuggling or enforcing smoke free policies or no sales to minors. (including monetary contribution for these activities) (Rec 4.3)	0					
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No evidence from the reporting period that government officials accepted assistance or offered of assistance from the tobacco industry on enforcement such as conducting raids on tobacco smuggling or enforcing smoke free policies or no sales to minors.

10. The government accepts, supports, endorses, or enters into partnerships or non-binding agreements with the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests. (Rec 3.1) NOTE: This must <u>not</u> involve CSR, enforcement activity, or tobacco control policy development since these are already covered in the previous questions.	0					
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No evidence from the reporting period indicates that the government accepted, supported, endorsed, or entered into partnerships or agreements with the tobacco industry.

<sup>21</sup> [https://globaltobaccocontrol.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/htp\\_v3\\_clean.pdf](https://globaltobaccocontrol.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/htp_v3_clean.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/MV-Maldives-customs-currency-airport-tax-regulations-details.htm#Import%20regulations>

<sup>23</sup> Includes immediate members of the families of the high-level officials

	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>INDICATOR 5: Transparency</b>						
11. The government does not publicly disclose meetings/ interactions with the tobacco industry in cases where such interactions are strictly necessary for regulation. (Rec 2.2)						5
The government does not disclose records of any meetings the government may have had with the tobacco distributors. It does not have any mechanisms to ensure that the public has access to a wide range of information on tobacco industry activities relevant to the objectives of the WHO FCTC.						
12. The government requires rules for the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf including lobbyists (Rec 5.3)						5
Rules for the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations do not exist in the country.						
<b>INDICATOR 6: Conflict of Interest</b>						
13. The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to political parties, candidates, or campaigns or to require full disclosure of such contributions. (Rec 4.11) / Never 5 Yes						5
The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to political parties, candidates, or campaigns.						
14. Retired senior government officials form part of the tobacco industry (former Prime Minister, Minister, Attorney General) (Rec 4.4)			3			
No evidence from the reporting period indicates that retired senior government officials formed part of the tobacco industry. However, it was reported previously that a former senior official a tobacco importer/ retailer was in a government position (2008 - 2012). Another former high-level government official's firm represented a tobacco company; he served in a senior position of government, 2013 -2018.  There has been no procedure put in place to prevent this from happening again.						
15. <u>Current government officials</u> and relatives hold positions in the tobacco business including consultancy positions. (Rec 4.5, 4.8, 4.10)					4	
Government officials have occasionally been related to or owned by tobacco importers or merchants in the Maldives. They hold positions in both the health and non-health industries, actively influencing governmental decisions. There is no system in place to prevents this from occurring again.						
<b>INDICATOR 7: Preventive Measures</b>						
16. The government has put in place a procedure for disclosing the records of the interaction (such as agenda, attendees, minutes and outcome) with the tobacco industry and its representatives. (Rec 5.1)					4	

	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Tobacco Control Act (Articles 26 and 27) specifies information to be made public as well as format of report in accordance with the requirements of the regulations and to be submitted to the Ministry of Health. While the procedures are in place, information are not disclosed on a regular basis.</p> <p>Moreover, the government of Maldives did not utilize the “Guidelines for implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC” over the past reporting periods since 2016. Currently it still does not provide public access to information on the tobacco industry.</p>						
17. The government has formulated, adopted or implemented a code of conduct for public officials, prescribing the standards with which they should comply in their dealings with the tobacco industry. (Rec 4.2); <i>1 for whole of government code; 2 for Yes but partial if only MOH</i>				3		
<p>A Code of Conduct is being drafted which will be applicable to all the government institutions and officials when dealing with the private sector (i.e. tobacco industry).<sup>24</sup> A draft has yet to be released.</p>						
18. The government requires the tobacco industry to periodically submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions and all other activities. (5.2)					4	
<p>The Tobacco Control Act does not grant the authority to regulate the contents of cigarettes. The law requires that manufacturers and importers disclose to government authorities and the public information on the contents and emissions of their products.</p> <p>It requires manufacturers, sellers, and exporters of tobacco products to provide information on tar and nicotine levels, pH level of tobacco smoke, effectiveness of the filter and percentage of constituents filtered, and levels of poisonous substances in the tobacco smoke. However, it does not require manufacturers, sellers, and exporters of tobacco products periodically submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions and all other activities.</p>						
19. The government has a program / system/ plan to consistently <sup>25</sup> raise awareness within its departments on policies relating to FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines. (Rec 1.1, 1.2)				3		
<p>Chapter 12 of the Tobacco Control Act (Act No. 15/2010) requires relevant government ministries to organize and conduct sound programs and activities to create awareness and provide information to the public on the harmful effects of tobacco production and tobacco smoking on health, economy, environment, and society.</p> <p>This Act also requires government ministries to provide information and training on</p>						

<sup>24</sup> Reported by Ministry of Health official on 18 June 2021 on how the government is implementing Article 5.3 at meeting of SARC-CCT virtual meeting.

<sup>25</sup> For purposes of this question, “consistently” means: a. Each time the FCTC is discussed, 5.3 is explained. AND b. Whenever the opportunity arises such when the tobacco industry intervention is discovered or reported.

	0	1	2	3	4	5
tobacco control to health service providers, social workers, journalists and media personnel, law enforcement officers, and other relevant persons. It explicitly mentions the need to make information on tobacco business publicly available in accordance with the law and regulations. However, the government does not have a program to consistently implement it to raise awareness publicly or within its departments.						
20. The government has put in place a policy to disallow the acceptance of all forms of contributions/ gifts from the tobacco industry (monetary or otherwise) including offers of assistance, policy drafts, or study visit invitations given or offered to the government, its agencies, officials and their relatives. (3.4)					4	
Maldives has an Anti-Corruption Act but it is not specific to tobacco industry or its products. There is no written policy disallowing the acceptance of all forms of contributions/ gifts from the tobacco industry (monetary or otherwise) including offers of assistance, policy drafts, or study visit invitations given or offered to the government, its agencies, officials and their relatives.						
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>49</b>	

## Annex A: Sources of Information

	TOP LOCAL TOBACCO DISTRIBUTORS	BRANDS
1	CGT Maldives - Agents for Japan Tobacco International (JTI) brands	Camel
2	Blenx Pvt Ltd Maldives - Agent for Philip Morris International (PMI) brands of cigarettes	Marlboro
3	Lotus Fihaara - Agents for American Legend	
4	OCC Pvt Ltd - Agents for of <a href="#">Ceylon Tobacco Company (CTC)</a> related brands and various shisha tobacco and vaping products	Benson & Hedges
5	Grape Expectations Pvt Ltd - Agent for various shisha tobacco brands	
6	Maldives Airports Company Limited - Imports various brands and products for airport duty free	
7	NAMCO Pvt Ltd - Importers of Akij Biri, commonly used by Bangladeshi expatriate workers	