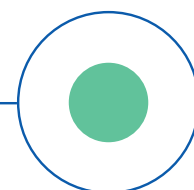


Mauritius



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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Industry Participation in Policy Development

The tobacco industry (TI) has not been directly involved in multi-stakeholder processes for the development of tobacco control policies. Nevertheless, it is perceived to exert influence indirectly, including through front groups such as the hospitality sector. An example of this influence was the amendment to the law in December 2023, which introduced an exemption permitting waterpipe smoking in hotels rated four stars and above. As a result, shisha lounges are permitted in these establishments.

2. Industry CSR Activities

Mauritius has implemented a comprehensive ban on corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, and there is no evidence of tobacco-related CSR activities endorsed by government officials. However, the main distributor of cigarettes in Mauritius offers internships to recent graduates and university students.

3. Benefits to the Industry

The TI has long benefited from the continued duty-free sales of cigarette packs and their display at airports in Mauritius and Rodrigues. There is no evidence that the government received requests from the TI to delay or seek exemptions from tobacco control laws.

4. Unnecessary Interaction

There is no evidence of unnecessary interaction between the government and the TI. The tobacco control regulations of 2022 also do not prohibit public officials from maintaining relations with TI representatives by attending social functions or other events.

5. Transparency

The government is not legally required to disclose information on meetings with the TI, and there are no rules for disclosing or registering TI entities, affiliated organizations, or lobbyists.

6. Conflict of Interest

There is no regulation prohibiting contributions from the TI to political parties, candidates, or campaigns. No retired or current government officials hold positions in tobacco companies.

7. Preventive Measures

There is no code of conduct for public officials when interacting with the TI, even when such meetings are strictly necessary. The government does not have a program to consistently raise awareness within its departments on policies relating to Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC. The government does not require the TI to periodically submit information about its market share, revenue, lobbying, or political contributions. At the same time, it does not accept contributions, gifts, or assistance from the TI.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Formulate a code of conduct for public officials, prescribing standards for their interactions with the TI.
2. Establish rules for the disclosure and registration of TI entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf, including lobbyists. Require the TI to provide information on market share, revenue, marketing expenditures, incentives to retailers, and lobbying or political contributions.
3. Halt benefits such as the display of tobacco products on shelves and tax exemptions granted to the TI.
4. Raise awareness of Article 5.3 and its guidelines among government officials, especially in key sectors such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, and Customs, to prevent unnecessary interaction with the TI and its interference in policymaking and implementation.
5. Review the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations 2022 to require the TI to disclose comprehensive information on its activities, in line with Article 5.3 guidelines. Ensure this information is made publicly available through an online repository.