

Burkina Faso

57

Summary of Findings

1. Industry participation in policy development

In defining and implementing public health policies on tobacco control, the government of Burkina Faso does not collaborate with tobacco industry representatives, according to existing evidence. The laws and regulations governing the implementation of tobacco control policies are developed by the technical services of the Ministries of Health and Trade under the supervision of the National Tobacco Control Committee and civil society represented by tobacco control organizations.

Regarding the participation of the official Burkina delegation to the Conference of the Parties (COP) and Meeting of the Parties (MOP), no tobacco industry representatives are included in the delegation.

Contrary to the spirit of the World Health Organization (WHO) Protocol on the Elimination of Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, the tobacco industry's blatant interference was noted through the adoption of the Joint order n°2015-0356/MICA/MEF of December 28, 2015, on the institution of a system of authentication, track and trace, and fiscal verification of tobacco products manufactured or imported into Burkina Faso based on Codentify standards. This was possible thanks to the financial support provided by the tobacco industry to two (02) ministries, namely the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Trade, which collaborated to facilitate the adoption of this order favorable to the tobacco industry. It should be noted that the Ministry of Health is not a signatory of this order.

2. Industry CSR activities

Since the beginning of the implementation of tobacco control laws in Burkina Faso, the tobacco industry has been engaging in so-called corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions to improve its image in the eyes of the population. Thus, at the event called "Night of Sponsors," the governor of the region of the center Sibiri d'Issa Ouédraogo has addressed his thanks to companies and their representatives, including tobacco industry officials. The latter were honored during the event of the 2nd edition of the 96 hours of the Central region.

In addition, on March 22, 2014, the Altadis Foundation and the Manufacture Burkinabè de Cigarettes (MABUCIG) made a donation of drilling, estimated at more than ten (10) million CFA francs, to the people of Banfora in the Cascades region in the west of the country. A handover ceremony was organized and presided over by the Minister of Communication, spokesperson for the government.

The Mutual Society of MABUCIG workers (MUTRAM), a social purpose grouping of men and women working at MABUCIG, has offered lots of school materials and sports items worth an estimated 850,000 CFA francs to students of the elementary school of Mangodara, also in the Cascades region in the west of the country.

In the second city of Burkina Faso, Bobo Dioulasso, where the MABUCIG headquarters is located, the inauguration of simplified drinking water supply works offered by MABUCIG to the staff of the Kuinima camp took place on January 7, 2021. This ceremony was attended by the commander of the second region of the gendarmerie.

3. Benefits to the industry

In general, the industry does not benefit from any policies of the government which is in accordance with Article 30 of Law 040-2010 AN of November 25, 2010, on tobacco control in Burkina Faso. However, as part of the implementation of Decree No. 2011-1051/PRES/PM/MS/MEF of December 30, 2011, on the packaging and labeling of tobacco products in Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Trade has granted an extension to tobacco manufacturers to proceed with the affixing of graphic health warnings on tobacco packaging.

4. Unnecessary interaction

Senior government officials participated in social activities and events sponsored or organized by MABUCIG. This was the case during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of MABUCIG where the Minister of Trade was represented by his Director of Cabinet.

As mentioned in the first point, the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Finance have accepted the help of the tobacco industry in the adoption of a decree on the track and trace system for tobacco products based on Codentify standards.

Since the ratification of the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) by Burkina Faso, no formal partnership has existed between the public authorities and the tobacco industry.

Moreover, the Minister of Trade and Industry, in his regalian role of coordinating national policy on trade and industrialization, sometimes interacts with the tobacco industry. This cannot be directly equated with a government partnership with the tobacco industry.

5. Transparency

In Burkina Faso, an effort is being made by the authorities to publish meetings with the tobacco industry. For example, a meeting on the enforcement of tobacco control laws was held in 2017 in the Ministry of Health's conference hall and spearheaded by the Ministry of Health, where the WHO representative, civil society actors and the press were present. This meeting was an opportunity for the Minister of Health and his collaborators to appeal to the tobacco industry to comply with the regulations.

Moreover, there is no government regulation in Burkina Faso requiring the tobacco industry to communicate information, the names of individuals, entities, organizations and lobby groups with which they are affiliated.

6. Conflict of interest

In Burkina Faso, there is no evidence that the industry is involved in funding political parties and their candidates during election campaigns. Nor is there any evidence that retired government officials are hired by the tobacco industry. Finally, it is difficult to state with certainty that the tobacco industry in Burkina Faso employs current officials.

7. Preventive measures

In Burkina Faso, there is no document disclosure procedure or code of conduct prescribing measures to be taken by civil servants in their relationship with the tobacco industry. Nevertheless, the recent adoption of Order No. 2021-029/MFPTPS/CAB on the adoption of the public service quality charter of the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Protection is noteworthy. However, this decree does not address the collaboration between civil servants and the tobacco industry. Rather, it is the law N°040-2010/AN of November 25, 2010, on tobacco control in Burkina Faso that is very explicit about the information to be provided by the tobacco industry to public authorities. Indeed, Article 29, paragraph 1 of this law states: "The tobacco industry is required to provide the competent administration with all information relating to its activities, including those relating to production, distribution and promotion."

The strategic plan 2016-2020 in its strategic objective 2 deals with communication actions for behavior change and advocacy towards the government for more protection of young people against tobacco use.



There is no government regulation in Burkina Faso requiring the tobacco industry to provide information, the names of individuals, entities, organizations and lobby groups with which they are affiliated.



Recommendations

1. The government must cancel the joint decree N°2015-0356-MICA/MEF on the institution of a system of authentication, monitoring, traceability and fiscal verification of tobacco products manufactured or imported into Burkina Faso based on Codentify standards.
2. Adopt a code of conduct on interaction between members of the government and public administration and the tobacco industry.
3. Adopt regulations to prohibit so-called socially responsible activities of the tobacco industry.
4. Evaluate and review the 2016-2020 strategic plan and revise the different strategies to counter the actions and maneuvers of the tobacco industry on the ground.
5. Finalize and adopt the national tobacco control program.
6. Advocate to the government for the application of article 29, paragraph 1 of the law N°040-2010/AN of November 25, 2010, on tobacco control in Burkina Faso which states: "The tobacco industry is required to provide the competent administration with all information related to its activities, particularly those related to production, distribution and promotion,"