



Africa
Tobacco Industry Interference
Index 2025

Third Edition
November 2025



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The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) is a non-profit, non-political Pan-African network of civil society organizations headquartered in Lome, Togo. With 131 members in 39 countries, ATCA is dedicated to promoting public health and curbing the tobacco epidemic in the continent. The alliance is an Observer to the WHO-FCTC Conference of Parties. It has a Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC, and is accredited as a regional non-state actor (NSA) not in official relations with WHO AFRO.

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Global Center for
Good Governance
in Tobacco Control

Disclaimer

This Regional Interference Index is a civil society report based on publicly available information gathered by collaborators in their respective countries. If you have information that could strengthen the report, please contact us at: research@atca-africa.org

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Countries	Collaborators
Botswana	Anti-Tobacco Network
Burkina Faso	Afrique Contre Le Tabac (ACONTA)
Cameroon	Cameroonian Coalition Against the Tabac (C3T)
Chad	Association pour la Défense des Droits des Consommateurs (ADC)
Cote d'Ivoire	Comité/Club Unesco Universitaire pour la lutte contre la drogue et autres pandémies (CLUCOD)
Democratic Republic of Congo	Alliance Congolaise Contre le Tabac (ACCT)
Ethiopia	Health Development & Anti Malaria Association (HDAMA)
Gabon	Mouvement Populaire pour la Santé au Gabon (MPS GABON)
Ghana	Vision for Accelerated Sustainable Development (VASD)
Kenya	Consumer Information Network (CIN)
Madagascar	NY SAHY
Mauritius	Marie France Chan Sun, University of Mauritius

Malawi	Drug Fight Malawi
Mozambique	Associação Moçambicana de Saúde Pública (AMOSAPU)
Nigeria	Corporate Accountability and Public Participation for Africa (CAPPA)
Senegal	Ligue Senegalaise Contre Le Tabac (LISTAB)
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Zambia	Tobacco-Free Association of Zambia (TOFAZA)

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ABBREVIATIONS

BATNF	British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation
CGECI	Confederation of Côte d'Ivoire Companies
COP	Conference of the Parties
COSOTA	Copyright Society of Tanzania
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTI	Confederation of Tanzania Industries
ECLT	Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing (Foundation)
EFDA	Ethiopian Food and Drug Administration
ENDS/ENNDIS	Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems/ Electronic Non-Nicotine Delivery Systems
FCTC	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
FDA	Food and Drug Authority
IPPA	Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement
JTI	Japan Tobacco International
KCB	Kenya Commercial Bank
KPC	Kenya Pipeline Company
LAS	Lemang Agricultural Services
LMICs	Low-Middle-Income Countries
LSADA	Lagos State Agricultural Development Authority
MABUCIG	Manufacture Burkinabè de Cigarettes
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPL	Minimum Price Level
NDoh	National Department of Health
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NTE	National Tobacco Enterprise
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps

PPA	Public Procurement Authority
PPB	Pharmacy and Poisons Board
PWDs	People with disabilities
RGT	Régie Gabonaise de Tabacs
SAED	Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development Programme
SAPS	South African Police Services
SATTA	South Africa Tobacco Transformation Alliance
SON	Standards Organisation of Nigeria
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
TCC	Tanzania Cigarette Company
TCR	Tobacco Control Regulations
TI	Tobacco industry
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZDA	Zambia Development Agency

COUNTRY ABBREVIATIONS

	Country	Abbreviation
	Burkina Faso	BFA
	Botswana	BWA
	Cote d'Ivoire	CIV
	Cameroon	CMR
	Democratic Republic of Congo	COD
	Ethiopia	ETH
	Gabon	GAB
	Ghana	GHA
	Kenya	KEN
	Mozambique	MOZ
	Madagascar	MDG
	Malawi	MWI
	Mauritius	MUS
	Nigeria	NGA
	Senegal	SEN
	Chad	TCD
	Tanzania	TZA
	Uganda	UGA
	South Africa	ZAF
	Zambia	ZMB

KEY FINDINGS



Three countries (**Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique**) have the highest scores for tobacco industry interference from 2020 to 2025. **Zambia** and **Côte d'Ivoire** reported a marked deterioration of industry interference scores from their 2023 rankings.



Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ghana showed marked improvement in 2025 compared to their scores in 2023, whilst **Ethiopia** and **Senegal** showed only marginal improvement.



Uganda, Gabon, and Ethiopia have taken strong legal steps through legislation to protect public health policy from tobacco industry interference.



Malawi recorded the highest scores for unnecessary interactions between the government and the tobacco industry in this period, and is the only country whose delegation to the tenth session of the Conference of Parties (COP10) included officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Trade that aligned with protecting tobacco's economic role.



The Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Mauritius have no or minimal unnecessary interaction with the tobacco industry.



The FCTC-compliant tobacco control law has been stalled in **Tanzania** and **Mozambique** for many years. The Tobacco Control Bill in **Zambia**, due for tabling in parliament in March 2025, was postponed for further discussions.



Sustained advocacy, awareness-raising, and the dissemination of the 2021 and 2023 Tobacco Industry Interference Indexes of **Burkina Faso** have prevented tobacco industry interference in policy development.



The political involvement of government ministers and politicians in tobacco farming in **Malawi** is a key conflict of interest.



Uganda and **Ethiopia** recorded no instances of a conflict of interest of any senior government official joining the tobacco industry during this reporting period.



Burkina Faso, **Côte d'Ivoire**, and **Chad** did not support any industry-related corporate social responsibility activity in this period.



Government ministries and officials in **Nigeria** have openly endorsed industry-led CSR initiatives, allowing the tobacco industry to continue promoting its public image, expanding its political influence, and generating goodwill.



Industry-affiliated groups in **Ghana** actively promoted harm reduction narratives, particularly e-cigarettes and vapes, for their inclusion in the 2023 Excise Tax Bill.



The tobacco industry in **Cameroon**, **the Democratic Republic of Congo**, **Ghana**, **Mozambique**, **Senegal**, **Tanzania**, **South Africa**, and **Uganda** benefited from tax breaks and exemptions.



Globally,
the use of Tobacco
is responsible for
7 million deaths

INTRODUCTION

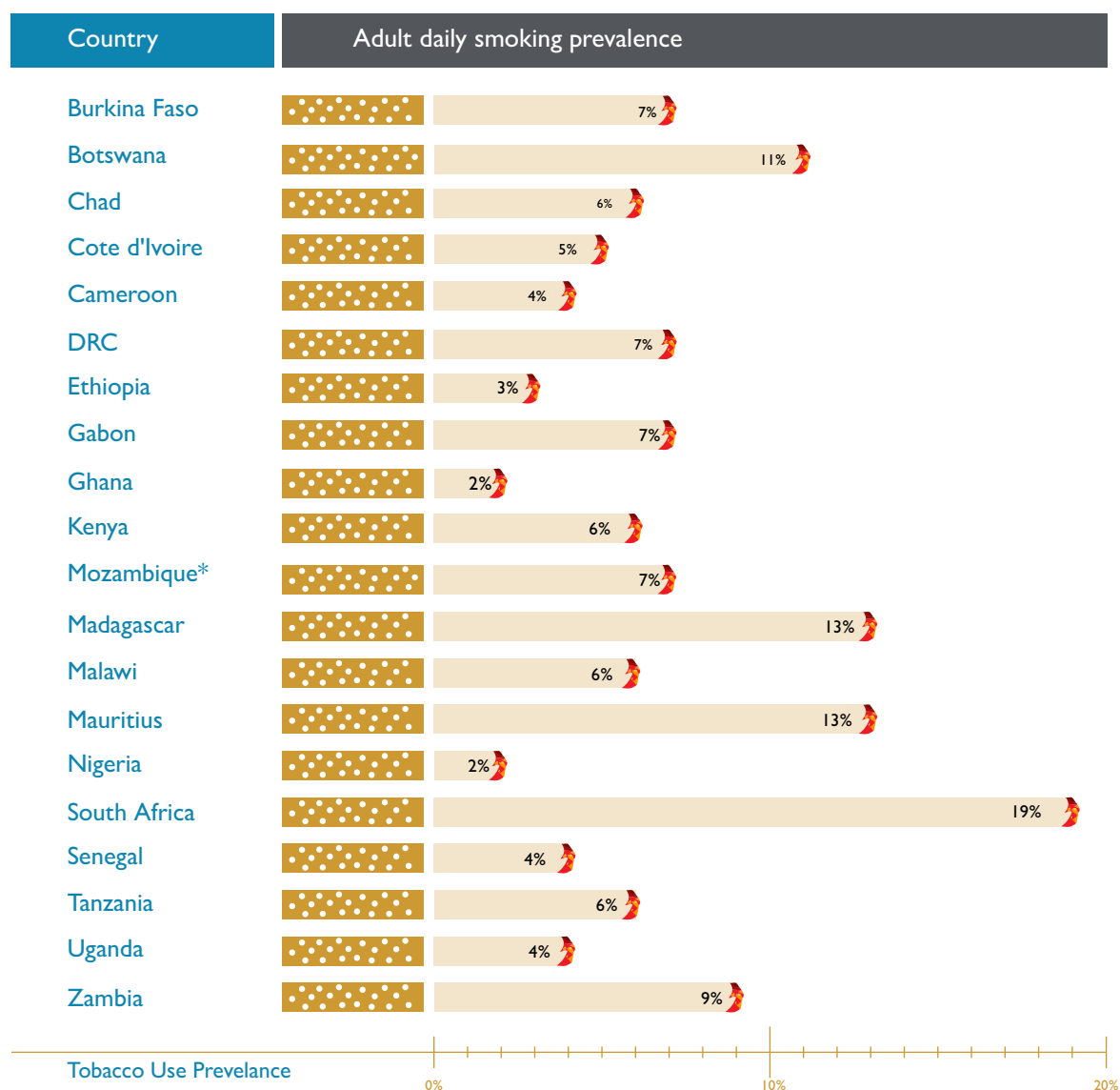
Tobacco use remains a significant global health challenge, responsible for over 7 million deaths annually, as well as disability and long-term suffering from tobacco-related diseases ¹. The spread of the tobacco epidemic is facilitated through a variety of complex factors with cross-border effects, including trade liberalization and direct foreign investment, global marketing, and transnational tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, among others. In response to the globalisation of the tobacco epidemic, the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was developed, as a legally binding package of evidence-based measures proven to reduce harms due to tobacco¹. The WHO FCTC is the first-ever public health treaty with 183 Parties to the Convention covering 90% of the global population.

Despite the significant progress since the WHO FCTC came into force 20 years ago, the degree of progress varies greatly across the treaty articles and across countries ². One of the single greatest barriers to FCTC implementation has been the tobacco industry (TI), which poses a serious threat to the acceleration of FCTC policy implementation and declines in global cigarette sales and tobacco use prevalence ³. Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC necessitates governments to take measures to protect health policy from the commercial and other vested interests of the TI while the Guidelines for Implementation of Article 5.3 aim at assisting Parties in meeting their legal obligations under this article ⁴.

The TI continues to employ various strategies aimed at maintaining a favorable operating environment and expanding its customer base in low- and middle-income countries, including the African region, where the absolute numbers of tobacco users are growing^{5,6}. Within the region, the highest smoking prevalence in the region is in South Africa (19%), followed by Mauritius and Madagascar (13%), and Botswana (11%),

with the majority of other countries falling between 5–10%⁷. Again, according to a recent review of the Global Youth Tobacco Surveys (GYTS) from 53 African countries (2003–2020), the overall prevalence of tobacco use among adolescents was 14.3%, highest in Southern Africa and lowest in East Africa, except for shisha, where it was highest in North Africa and lowest in Central Africa.⁸

Figure 1: Smoking prevalence in selected African countries (Source: Global Tobacco Epidemic Report 2025)



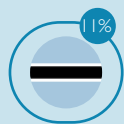
In Africa,



South Africa
has the highest smoking prevalence



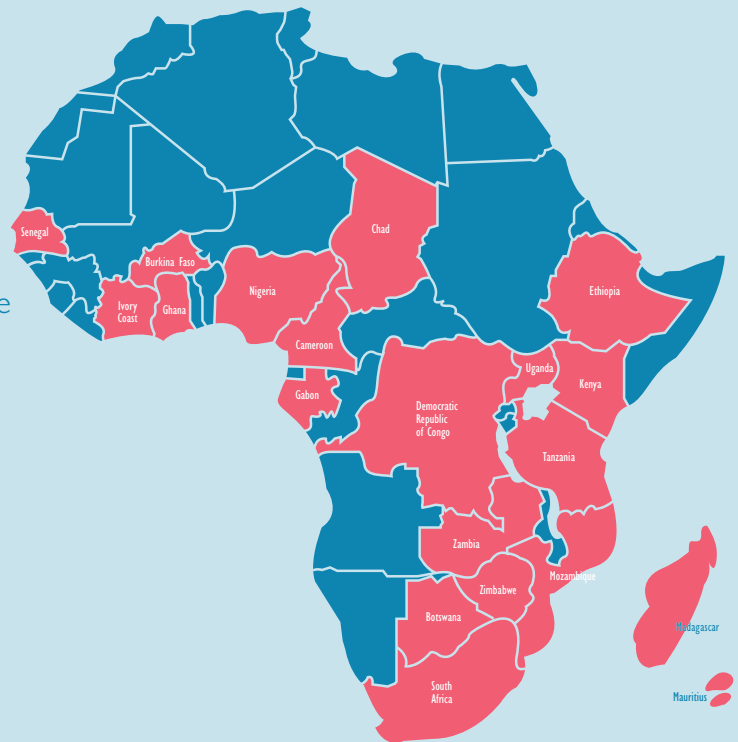
followed by
Mauritius and Madagascar,



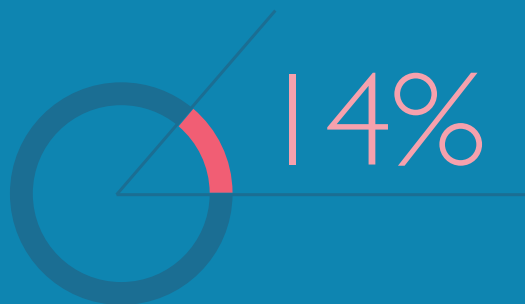
and Botswana



with the majority of other countries falling between 5-10%



In 53 countries,
the overall prevalence of tobacco use among adolescents was



highest in Southern Africa
and lowest in East Africa, except for shisha,
where it was highest in North Africa
and lowest in Central



Comprehensive implementation of the WHO FCTC, including Article 5.3, in the African region is particularly urgent, as the region remains of high interest to the TI due to its youthful population, economic promise, expected population growth, and weak legal climate of tobacco control measures in many countries. This is also evident with the presence of the big multinational tobacco companies in the region; British American Tobacco (BAT) has the largest market share in two-thirds of countries in Africa, mainly **Kenya**, **Nigeria**, **South Africa**, and **Zimbabwe**, while Philip Morris (PMI) is present in **Algeria**, **Senegal**, and **South Africa**. Japan Tobacco International (JTI), on the other hand, is present in **Ethiopia**, **Malawi**, **Nigeria**, **South Africa**, **Tanzania**, and **Zambia**. These companies continue to exert influence through lobbying, litigation, endorsements, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and other means⁹. Some of the influences of the TI can be seen in, for instance, endorsements of tobacco by political leaders in the region that obscure the enormous burden of tobacco-related illnesses and justify continued government cooperation, as seen in **Malawi** and **Zimbabwe**; BAT's successful lobbying of the **Kenyan** government to dilute nicotine health warnings¹⁰; BAT in **Zambia**, promoting itself through programs focused on environmental projects and road safety; and TI representatives in **Nigeria** reportedly involved in policymaking on tobacco control. These unnecessary interactions between African governments and the TI clearly undermine health policy and prolong the tobacco epidemic.

Unnecessary interactions between governments and the TI in Africa pose a serious threat to effective tobacco control.

Unnecessary interactions between governments and the TI in Africa pose a serious threat to effective tobacco control. Breaking these ties is essential for advancing public health, reducing non-communicable diseases, and preventing the continent from becoming the next epicentre of the global tobacco epidemic. The African Tobacco Industry Interference Index is a civil society report based on publicly available information on how countries are implementing the WHO FCTC Article 5.3 guidelines and their respective governments' responses to industry interference. Scores are applied to the countries according to the level of tobacco industry interference experienced in the country. The higher the score, the worse the interference.



Tobacco industry interference cases in the report are categorised according to the seven indicators, namely

- TI Participation in Policy Development
- TI CSR activities
- Benefits to the TI
- Unnecessary interactions with the TI
- Lack of transparency
- Conflict of Interest
- Preventive Measures.

During this reporting period, twenty (20) African countries participated in the survey (Figure 2); eighteen updated their previous reports from April 2023 to March 2025, and **Malawi** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo** provided interference and responses for the

first time from March 2023 to March 2025. For this period, **Zambia, Malawi, and Tanzania** had the highest TI interference scores, and **Botswana, Ethiopia, and Burkina Faso** had the lowest (Figure 2).

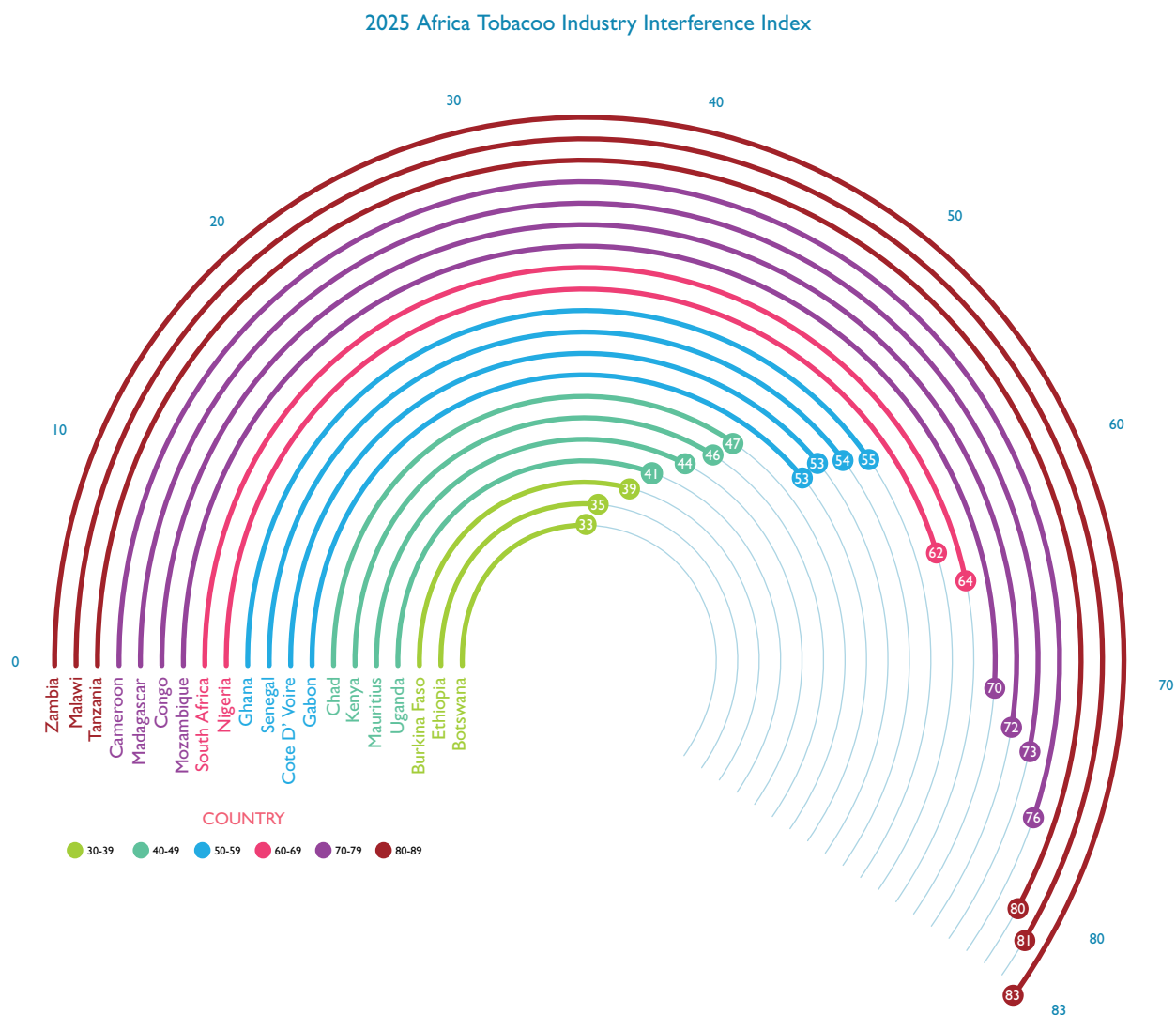


Figure 2: Ranking of African Countries on Tobacco Interference Index Scores (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

A summary of scores from 2020 to 2025 indicates that **Zambia**, **Tanzania**, and **Mozambique** consistently experience a high degree of interference from the TI (Figure 3). **Cameroon** and **Madagascar** also report high interference scores, as in the 2023 report. Whilst the

two new countries, **Malawi** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, recorded high scores, **Burkina Faso**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, and **Ghana** show moderate improvement over the past years.

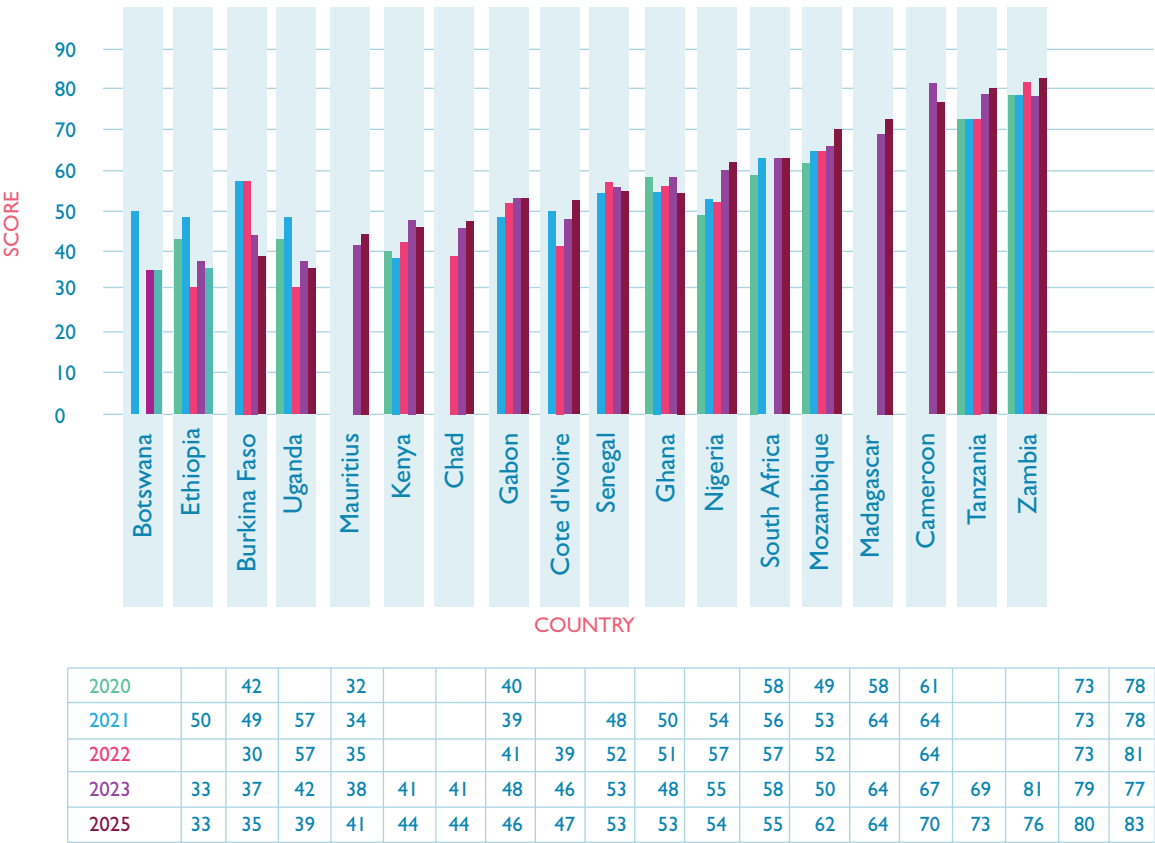


Figure 3: Tobacco industry interference scores (2020-2025)



Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique consistently experience a high degree of interference between 2020 to 2025

01

Tobacco Industry Participation In Policy Development



One of the most direct forms of interference is TI's involvement in policy formulation. In many countries, tobacco companies are invited to consultations or technical committees during the drafting of legislation. The 2025 index shows a high level of industry interference in policy development in several countries, specifically the **Republic of Congo, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zambia** (Figure 4). The lowest levels of industry participation in policy development were seen in **Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Chad, Senegal, and Mauritius** (Figure 4).

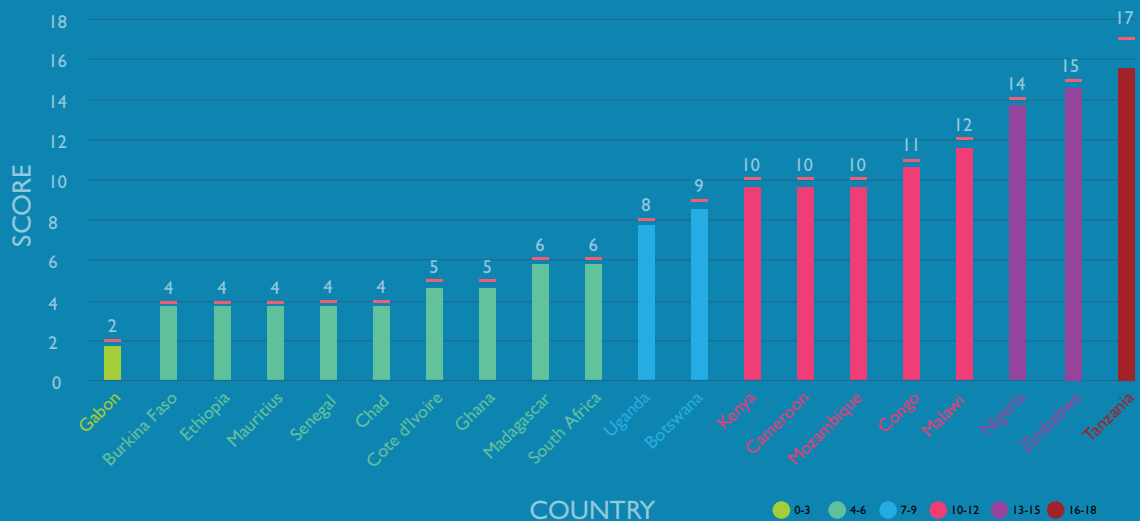


Figure 4: Country scores for level of industry interference in policy development (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

Tobacco Industry interference delays tobacco control laws

 In **Nigeria**, the government's policy vulnerability to TI influence remains considerable. For instance, in 2024, during the legislative hearings on proposed amendments to the National Tobacco Control Act (NTCA), 2015, BAT **Nigeria** and affiliated front groups actively participated in the public debate, advocating for weaker provisions under the guise of reform¹¹.

 A similar situation was observed in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, where evidence suggests a collusion between certain state officials and the TI to influence tobacco control policy¹².

 In **Malawi**, unlike many other countries, its delegation to the Conference of Parties (COP) 10 included officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Trade aligned with protecting tobacco's economic role¹³.

 In some countries, such as **Tanzania**, TI interference has worsened in several areas since 2023; the Tobacco Products (Regulations) Act 2003 and Tobacco Products Regulations 2014 are non-FCTC compliant, and efforts to enact a new law in recent years have been stalled due to the influence of the TI.

 Similarly, in **Zambia**, the Tobacco Control Bill, which was to be tabled, reviewed and agreed upon in parliament in March 2025, has been halted for further discussions.

 In **Cameroon**, the implementation of the graphic health warning has been stalled by the TI¹⁴.

However, **Senegal**, **Botswana**, and **Ethiopia** clearly prohibit any interference by the TI in national health policies.

The tobacco industry influences the scope of tobacco control laws

The TI influenced the scope of the laws for emerging products, as was observed in **Kenya** and **Ghana**.

 In **Kenya**, BAT successfully lobbied the Ministry of Health to weaken health warnings on emerging products such as the nicotine pouch product, Velo, to which the government agreed¹⁵.

 Whilst in **Ghana**, industry-affiliated groups actively promoted harm reduction narratives, particularly around e-cigarettes and vapes, for their inclusion in the 2023 Excise Tax Bill¹⁶.

 In **Mauritius**, the industry, via its front groups, such as the hospitality sector, influenced policymaking. This was observed in the amendment of the law in December 2023, which exempted hotels in categories 4 and higher from bans on waterpipe smoking, and as a

result, hotels with 4 stars or higher are now permitted to have shisha lounges¹⁷.

 In **South Africa**, BAT made recommendations for a weighted average price for excise policy, minimum retail price, and so called harm reduction products¹⁸.

Although there has been no perceptible TI involvement in the development of health policies in **Gabon**, TI interference is suspected through notable changes between the Ministry of Health's original draft and the official text of the decree 001610/MCPMEPMIAGR of December 30, 2024, establishing the terms for the granting, suspending, and rescinding of licenses for the importation of tobacco products in the Republic of Gabon¹⁹.

Shielding policy from industry interference

Some countries have protective mechanisms in place against TI interference.



Côte d'Ivoire has a Technical Monitoring Committee that determines the profile of the entities that will sit on it, with no provision for a TI representative on this committee, according to Article 7 of Decree N°2022-76. Although tax authorities interact with TI during the development of fiscal measures in the interest of tax law predictability, this happens only through the umbrella business organizations such as the General Confederation of Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire (CGECI) and the Union of Large Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire (UGEI) ²⁰.



In **Burkina Faso**, political and administrative authorities actively avoid all forms of TI interference in the implementation of public health policies via adequate advocacy and awareness²¹.

In all 20 countries, there is no publicly available evidence of the government nominating or allowing representatives from the TI (including state-owned) in the delegation to the COP/MOP or subsidiary bodies of the WHO FCTC or accepting their sponsorship for delegates.



Sustained advocacy, awareness-raising, and the dissemination of the 2021, 2022, and 2023 Tobacco Industry Interference Indexes in Burkina Faso contributed to shielding policy development from tobacco industry interference.

02

Tobacco Industry CSR Activities



Some governments provided endorsement, support, and partnerships with TI in activities labelled as “corporate social responsibility (CSR).” A high level of CSR activities was reported in **Gabon, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zambia** (Figure 5).

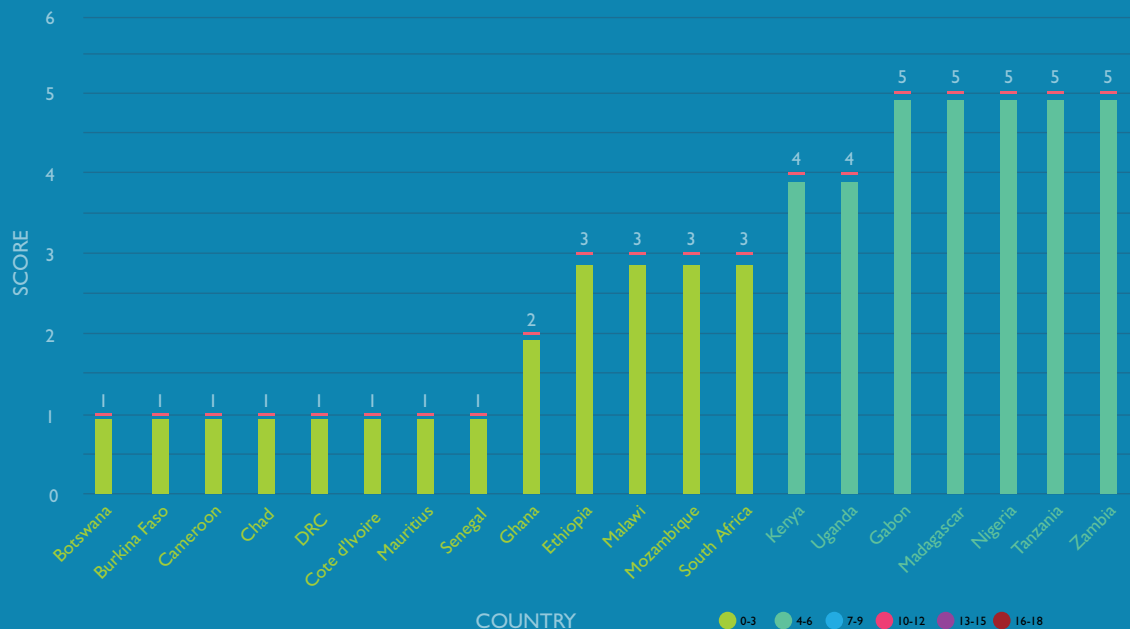


Figure 5: Country scores for the level of CSR activity of the tobacco industry (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

Governments endorsed, supported, partnered and participated in TI-CSR

 In **Nigeria**, government officials consistently promoted CSR activities by TI, rather than rejecting them, reflecting a disregard for WHO FCTC Article 5.3 guidelines (recommendations 6.2 and 6.4). For example, state governors and public institutions supported and collaborated with BAT Nigeria Foundation's charity on fish farming and borehole installations in Lagos^{22,23}. Across different states, government ministries and officials openly praised these CSR initiatives, enabling the TI to further whitewash its public image, expand its political access, and generate goodwill, especially among vulnerable populations (Figure 6)



Figure 6: BAT Nigeria Foundation's water project in Enugu State

 In **Gabon**, the government endorsed several CSR-related activities by Ceca-Gadis (a tobacco industry entity); the Minister of Trade visited the Ceca-Gadis logistics base in Owendo to evaluate the strategies put in place to support initiatives following the suspension of rail traffic²⁴ and the Minister of Employment, Public Service, and Labor and the Deputy Director of Labor attended an event by Ceca-Gadis²⁵.

 In **Zambia**, several instances of government-endorsed CSR activities were also noted. The Western Province Minister and Nkeyema District Education Board Secretary participated in the JTI handing-over ceremony of a classroom block, 90 desks and executive chairs to Kalale Secondary School in Nkeyema District of Western Province (Figure 7)²⁶.



Figure 7: Government officials' participation in JTI ceremony in Zambia

Again, the Tobacco Board of Zambia (TBZ), a government agency whose mandate is to provide for the promotion, regulation, and monitoring of the production, marketing, and packing of tobacco in the country, has been working as a close ally to the TI and is actively involved in promoting the TI-related CSR agenda²⁶. Other government officials, such as the Chilanga Area Member of Parliament, the Western Province Minister, and the Eastern Province Permanent Secretary, have also endorsed and supported the JTI's CSR activities²⁷.



In **Tanzania**, tobacco-related CSR activities are not banned and have increased exponentially, endorsed by top government officials and other leaders participating in these activities and commending the industry for its 'continued economic and social contribution to the country,' reinventing its public image^{28,29}.



Nevertheless, in **Ethiopia**, the Hawassa City Fara Kebele Administration closed a meeting hall built by JTI and National Tobacco Enterprise (NTE) in the Sidama region after receiving complaints and issued the company a warning³⁰.

The government supports various CSR activities across ministries and sectors

Several ministries and government agencies collaborated with the industry on several CSR activities across multiple sectors, supporting initiatives involving children, schools, youth training in agriculture and entrepreneurship, poverty reduction, water and sanitation, and environmental conservation.



Tanzania had two examples of such instances of government endorsements of CSR activities: first, the Japanese Embassy coordinated and facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government and Japan Tobacco to support the community on health, education, and water in areas where they purchased tobacco leaves in 2024 (Figure 8)³¹, and second, the mayor of Temeke Municipal Council in Tanzania endorsed Tanzania Cigarette Public Limited Company's gift of gas cylinders to Temeke women entrepreneurs³².



In **Madagascar**, the government participated in various projects on sustainable development for rural communities^{33,34}. Beyond communities, TI-related CSR activities also transcend into educational spaces through partnerships with universities.



For instance, in **Nigeria**, in March 2024, BAT Nigeria Foundation (BATNF) entered into a formal partnership with the University of Ilorin to support agricultural graduates, an arrangement endorsed by the institution's leadership^{8,35} suggesting an intentional strategy by BATNF to influence not only government development programs but also academic institutions through their vice chancellors and management structures, building goodwill and legitimacy among young people and educational leaders.

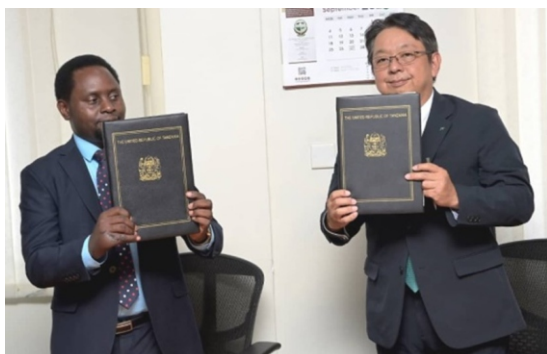


Figure 8: Deputy Minister of State with the President and CEO of Japan Tobacco



In March 2024, the University of Ilorin entered into a formal partnership with BAT Nigeria Foundation to support agricultural graduates, an arrangement endorsed by the institution's leadership.



Similarly, in **Mauritius**, the APTIS Group, which owns TNS Tobacco and the main distributor of BAT's cigarettes in Mauritius, provided opportunities for internships to recent graduates and university students³⁶.



In **Botswana**, the government accepted several donations from Business Botswana (a private sector organization that works closely with BAT Botswana) through a proxy for its members for flood relief efforts in 2025^{10,15}.



In **Malawi**, several government departments, such as Health, Education, and Environment, have accepted and/or endorsed industry-led CSR initiatives. A clear example is the Alliance One Tobacco Malawi, which invested approximately MWK 442 million (USD 384,721) to renovate and construct classroom blocks in over 22 primary schools across different districts, which was applauded by local officials³⁷.



In **Uganda**, the Revenue Authorities accepted a cigarette destruction machine from BAT to support the national fight against the illicit cigarette trade³⁸, and local officials in Hoima City accepted a donation of 400 water purification devices worth KRWI 10 million (\$81,406) to 94 primary schools located in Uganda's tobacco-growing area from the Korean tobacco company, KT&G³⁹.

Nevertheless, **Burkina Faso**, **Côte d'Ivoire**, and **Chad** reported no support from the government for industry-related CSR activities.

03

Benefits to the Tobacco Industry



The TI in Africa continues to be valued for its perceived contribution to economic growth, which secures government incentives and benefits. As a result, governments often grant the industry's requests for extended timelines to implement tobacco control measures. Common benefits to the TI include tax exemptions, limited or no tax increases, and extended deadlines for health warning implementation. These dynamics reflect persistent government accommodation of TI interests over public health priorities. Figure 9 shows countries in Africa that provided benefits or promoted the TI during the reporting period.

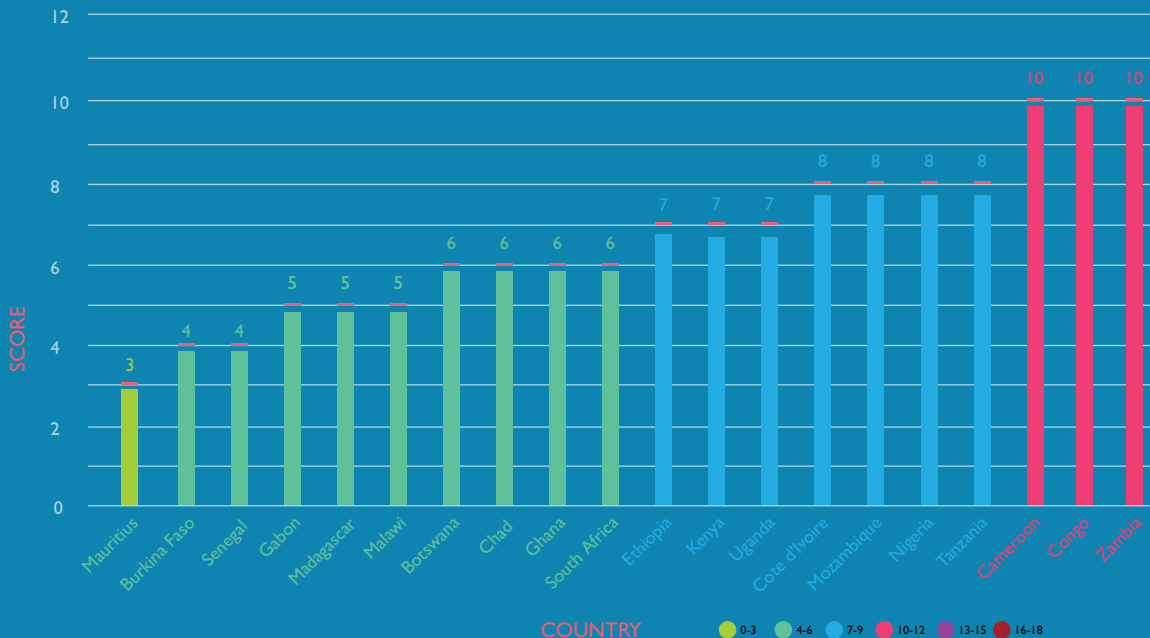


Figure 9: Benefits given to the tobacco industry (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

Governments delay tobacco control measures and favor the industry.

Several tobacco control measures, such as the passage of a tobacco control act, ratifying the illicit trade protocol, implementation of pictorial warnings on cigarette packs, and regulation of electronic nicotine delivery systems and electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENDS/ENNDS), have either been delayed or are not implemented or enforced adequately in many African countries. This delay undermines the credibility of the regulations and weakens efforts to reduce tobacco's public health impact. It also reflects typical TI tactics aimed at postponing effective control measures.



The government of the **Democratic Republic of Congo** granted considerable advantages to the TI, notably through lax enforcement of fiscal laws. In 2024, despite a massive increase in taxes, the use of shell companies allowed the industry to circumvent regulations. As an example, in May 2022, the TI, through the Federation of Enterprises of the Congo, demanded the withdrawal of the Minister of Finance's decree implementing the Excise Duty Traceability System, which requires tax stamps to mark locally manufactured products, imported cigarettes, and other tobacco products⁴⁰.



In **Kenya**, the prolonged delay in passing Kenya's Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill 2024, which aims to establish regulations for smokeless nicotine products, benefits the TI, thus allowing it to continue operating without clear rules on products like vapes and nicotine pouches⁴¹.



Similarly, in **Zambia**, a persistent delay in the tabling of the Tobacco Control Bill in parliament benefits the industry, as there is no ban on tobacco advertisement and sponsorship, cigarettes remain affordable due to low tobacco tax, and ineffective health warnings persist on cigarette packs.



In **Nigeria**, a delay in implementing new health warnings was noted, where the 150-day transition period (Part VIII of the National Tobacco Control Act 2015) has been violated. The transition to larger pictorial health warnings as mandated in the National Tobacco Control Regulations of 2019 has been delayed, with no publicly documented punitive enforcement after granting a 4-year transition period for companies to move 50% PHW coverage to 60% by June 2024⁴².



Similarly, in **Tanzania**, the government supports the TI in many of its activities; for instance, the delay of more than 14 years (since 2009) to table the FCTC-compliant tobacco control law in parliament remains favourable to the TI. The country's tobacco production has increased from 50,000 tonnes to 122,858 tonnes in 2023/2024, and the export value was 316 million USD by December 2024, towards the goal of reaching 400 million USD⁴³. Table I shows a summary of the benefits to the TI via delays in implementing tobacco control laws.



Tobacco production in Tanzania has increased from 50,000 tonnes to 122,858 tonnes between 2023 to 2024

Table 1: Benefits to the tobacco industry through delays in implementing regulations

Cameroon	Hindrance in the implementation of the Joint Order from MINSANTE/MINCOMMERCE (January 3, 2018), on the packaging and labeling of tobacco products
Cote d'Ivoire	Delay in compliance with health warnings and traceability within six months and plain packaging within twelve months of their issuance after >180 days of passing
Ethiopia	Delay in the implementation of graphic health warnings for one month, based on a request from the EFDA.
Gabon	Implementation of an effective tax of 300 CFA francs per pack of cigarettes sold in Gabon has been postponed for an additional six years, after a four-year delay.
Madagascar	- Tariff reductions on cigars (including cut-tipped cigars), cigarillos, and cigarettes from 1,470 ariary/pack of 20 to 1,440 ariary in 2024. - Tax exemptions on “homogenized” or “reconstituted” tobacco 2% tax reduction for cigarettes made with 70% or more locally produced tobacco.
Mozambique	Taxes remain low
South Africa	- Delay in the ratification of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products - The Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Control Bill [B33-2022], introduced in 2018, remains blocked by widespread industry opposition.

Tax exemptions, subsidies, financial incentives, or tobacco industry benefits

Tax breaks and exemptions on tobacco products occur when governments reduce or remove taxes that tobacco companies are required to pay. These can include lower excise duties, import tariff waivers, or complete tax holidays. Tax breaks and exemptions on tobacco products support the growth of the TI, harming public health and reducing national income. In most countries in Africa, the TI continues to benefit from tax breaks and exemptions.



For instance, in **Cameroon**, the local industry often benefits from certain tax exemptions, resulting in a differentiation in the taxation of locally produced tobacco products versus imported ones¹⁴. The specific import tax of 5,000 CFA francs per 1,000 cigarette sticks does not apply to the local industry, despite importing some tobacco products.



In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, very high volumes of tobacco imports under a "duty-free" regime have been reported to exacerbate fiscal losses⁴⁴.



The TI in **Mozambique** benefits from several incentives, including corporate tax credits, investment tax credits, and exemptions from taxation, and also pays low prices for tobacco leaves.



Likewise, in **Tanzania**, the 20% increase in tobacco taxes is still considerably below the WHO-recommended 75%^{19,45}.



In **Uganda**, the bound tariff to import tobacco is 16.6%, and De Minimis, an individual, is allowed to purchase USD 50 of tobacco online a day without duty²⁵.



In **South Africa**, a mixed excise tax system is used on tobacco products, combining both *specific* and *ad valorem* taxes. The total tax burden (including excise tax, value-added tax, and other applicable taxes) on the most sold brand of cigarettes is between 50% and 55% of the average retail price of the most sold legal brands, falling short of the WHO's recommended 75% threshold⁴⁶. This relatively lower tax burden keeps cigarettes more affordable, sustaining consumer demand and benefiting the TI. Adjustments to excise duties took effect from 1 April 2025, as shown in Table 2. Government partnerships with organizations that have links with the TI, such as BUSA and NBI, may provide indirect benefits, such as business networking opportunities, access to policy discussions, and potential economic incentives.

Product	Product Current Excise Duty Rate	Product Current Excise Duty Rate	Percentage Change (Nominal)
Cigarettes	R21.77 / 20 cigarettes	R22.81 / 20 cigarettes	4.75
HTPs sticks	R16.33 / 20 sticks	R17.10 / 20 sticks	4.75
Cigarette tobacco	R24.47 / 50g	R25.63 / 50g	4.75
Pipe tobacco	R7.53 / 25g	R8.03 / 25g	6.75
Cigars	R125.91 / 23g	R134.40 / 23g	6.75
ENDS/ENND	R3.04/ml	R3.18 / ml	4.75

Table 2: Excise duty adjustments in South Africa

Duty-free allowances for international travelers into most countries in Africa are also rampant, some of which are outlined in Table 3. However, in countries like Côte d'Ivoire, article 13 of the law on tobacco control stipulates that duty-free sales do not apply to tobacco and tobacco products in free-trade zones; thus, incoming tobacco and tobacco products are subject to taxation in accordance with current legislation.

Table 3: Duty-free status of tobacco products

	Cigarette sticks	Cigars (sticks)	Weight (gms)
Nigeria	200	50	200
Cameroon	400	125	500
¹ Madagascar	200	50	250
Mozambique	400	50	250
Zambia	400	500g	500g
² Others	200	50	250
³ Others	200	+	250

¹includes 1 electronic cigarette and 1 bottle of e-liquid

²Others include Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mauritius, Tanzania and Uganda

³Others include Botswana and South Africa

04

Unnecessary Interactions with the Tobacco Industry



One of the most effective strategies to safeguard decision-making processes from undue influence is to ban unnecessary interactions between the tobacco industry and government officials. According to Article 5.3 guidelines, unnecessary interaction with the TI occurs when government officials attend social events sponsored by the tobacco sector or when the government forms partnerships with them. Nonetheless, many governments establish alliances with the TI, or top-level government officials engage with the sector at local or national levels (Figure 10).



Figure 10: Types of unnecessary interactions with tobacco companies

Government officials of past and present ruling parties continue to engage with the TI for various unnecessary reasons. Whilst the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, **Kenya**, and **Mauritius** recorded no or minimal interactions between the government and the TI, **Malawi**, **Zambia**, and **Madagascar** recorded the highest scores for such interactions (Figure 11).

✓ **Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Mauritius** recorded no or minimal interactions between the government and the TI

⚠ **Malawi, Zambia, and Madagascar** recorded the highest scores for such interactions

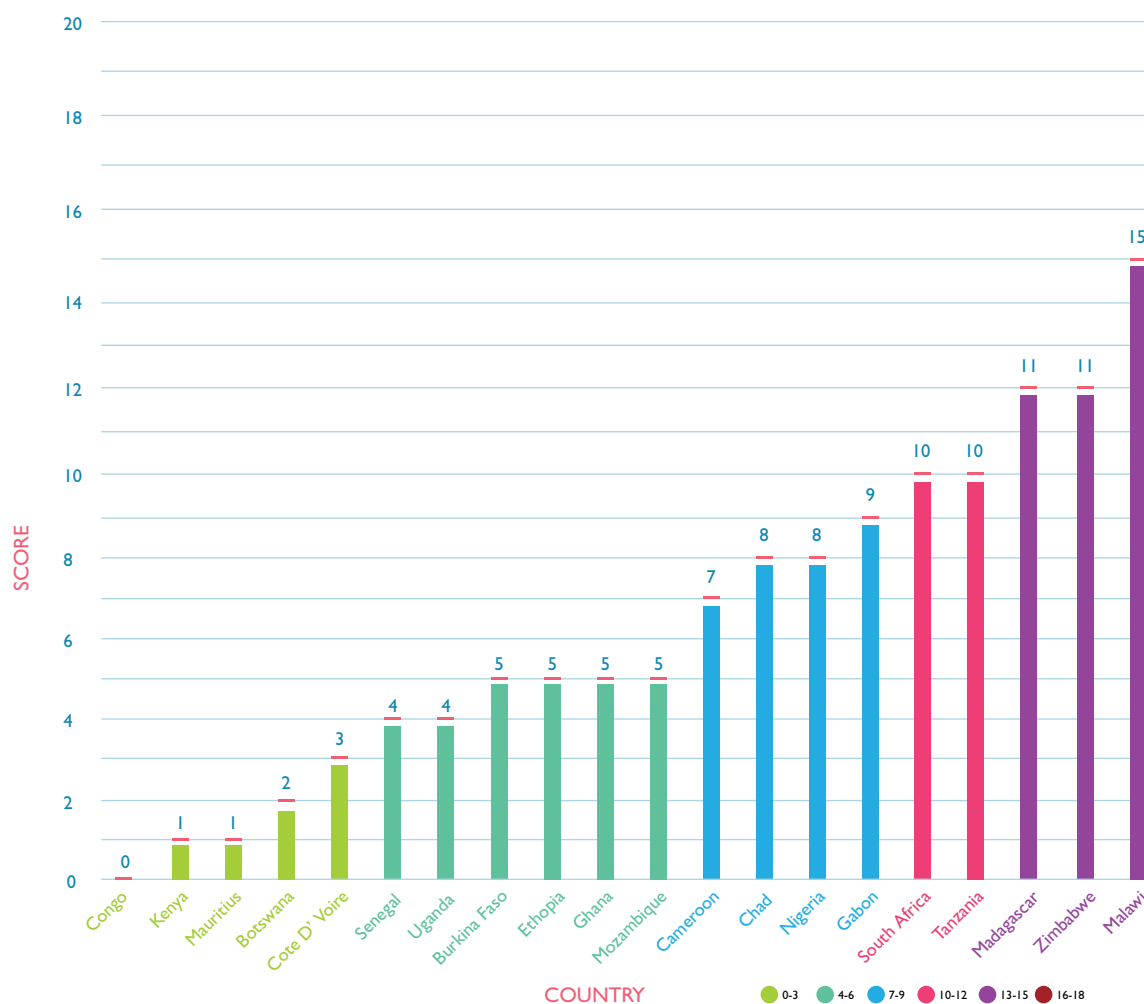


Figure 11: Country scores for unnecessary interaction with the tobacco industry (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

Close ties with the tobacco industry

The governments of several countries, including **Gabon**, **Malawi**, **South Africa** and **Zambia**, maintain a close relationship with the TI.

 In **Malawi**, where tobacco leaf is a major export, government leaders have praised the TI for its economic contributions. Such endorsements normalise government–industry cooperation, despite the heavy health and economic burden caused by tobacco-related diseases (Figure 12).



Figure 12: President of Malawi (left) and tobacco buyers at Kamuzu Palace on the 3rd April, 2024

However, restrictions on interactions between the TI and the government exist in several countries, including **Senegal**, **Botswana**, and **Ethiopia**.

 In **Ethiopia**, the TI was not allowed to take part in the city building project spearheaded by the prime minister because of laws that prohibit it from impacting public health. Additionally, the Ethiopian Food and Drugs Administration (EFDA) has made great efforts to prevent any current or future collaborations between government entities and the TI, in compliance with Proclamation No. 1112/2019, which firmly prohibits the government from engaging in any partnerships or agreements with the TI.

Restrictions on collaborations, partnerships, gifts, and non-binding agreements (Sections 58-59) and declaration of essential engagements (Section 57) are part of **Botswana's** Tobacco Control Act, which severely restricts contacts with the TI. There was also no indication that the TI and state officials in Senegal and Uganda engaged in any unnecessary engagement.

 In **Côte d'Ivoire**, during the drafting of the tax annex, Société Ivoirienne de Tabac (SITAB) proposed a tax rate to the Minister of Budget, which was subsequently turned down and later followed by an increased rate from 49% to 70%¹⁴.

Table 4 provides examples of country-specific interactions between governments and the TI in the region.



The Ethiopian Food and Drugs Administration (EFDA) has made great efforts to prevent any current or future collaborations between government entities and the TI

Table 4: Examples of unnecessary interactions between the government and the tobacco industry

Country	Examples of interactions between industry and government officials
South Africa	The Minister of Public Health granted an audience to representatives of the cigarette importing company SEGUM. The purpose of the meeting request was related to the proliferation of illicit cigarettes in the markets, creating competition between legal and illegal importers. The meeting was held behind closed doors without a process of transparency.
Gabon	The Gabonese Tobacco Board (Régie Gabonaise de Tabacs), a government body responsible for regulating the marketing of tobacco products, is still led by the Compagnie d'Exploitations Commerciales Africaines – Société Gabonaise de Distribution (CECA GADIS), which represents the interests of the tobacco industry.
Madagascar	A partnership agreement was signed between the Ministry of National Education (MEN) and the Akbaraly Foundation (linked to TI), and President of the NGO La Vita per Te. The agreement supports actions against malnutrition, pediatric orthopaedic surgery, and cancer/STI screening for students aged 15 to 18⁴⁷.
Malawi	- The president publicly supported the industry in his 2024 meeting at Kamuzu Palace⁴⁸. - Ministers of Agriculture and other government bodies have also actively engaged in industry events, such as the 2023 Tobacco Leaf Integrity Conference⁴⁹.
South Africa	The South African Revenue Authority website states that it is “working with tobacco industry experts to develop a way of detecting illicit cigarettes.”⁵⁰ This suggests a form of engagement with the industry on enforcement-related matters with no publicly available information.
Zambia	- Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) organized a workshop in collaboration with the tobacco industry to build capacity for the media. - The Minister of Agriculture officially opened the 2024 meeting of the International Tobacco Growers Association.⁵¹ - In October 2024, JTI invited a team of officials from the Ministry of Labour to check on the ARISE project of JTI in Chipata, Eastern Province.⁵²

Governments seek assistance and foster relations with the tobacco industry for tobacco control

While [Ethiopia](#), [Gabon](#), and [Uganda](#) have taken strong legislative steps to protect public health policy from TI interference, many others remain vulnerable. Ongoing government interactions, weak transparency practices, and effective pro-industry strategies (such as aggressive lobbying and CSR) continue to undermine tobacco control.



For instance, in [Malawi](#), the law enforcement agency collaborates with the industry in anti-smuggling operations, showing state resources being used to support tobacco interests. In 2024, the president met with officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Tobacco Processors Association at Kamuzu Palace in Lilongwe⁵³.



Again, in [South Africa](#), the government signed a memorandum of understanding with the TI (BAT, PMI, JTI, and Imperial Brands) through law enforcement and customs agencies to address illicit trade⁵⁴. These agreements lack public transparency and oversight, potentially allowing the TI to influence enforcement-related policy without public scrutiny.

05

Lack of Transparency



Transparency in the disclosure of meetings and minutes between government officials and the tobacco industry, along with information regarding TI lobbying activities, enhances government accountability, facilitates comprehension of decision-making processes, and alleviates concerns regarding potential TI influence. It provides essential information to the public as recommended under Article 5.3 Guidelines.

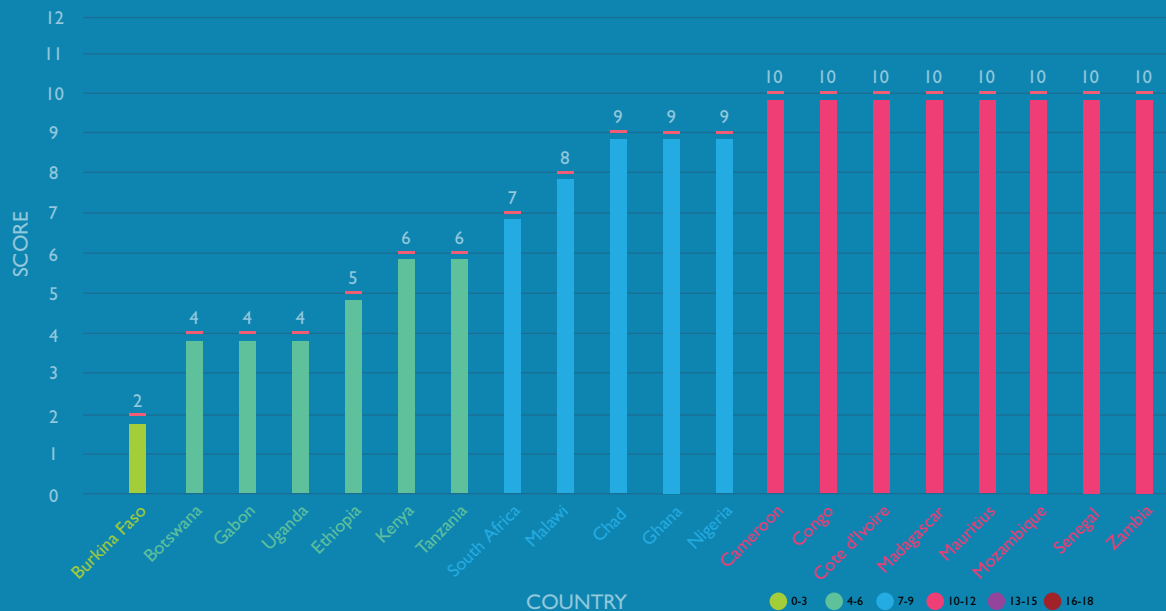


Figure 13: Country scores for transparency (the lower the score, the better the ranking)



Just as in the 2023 report⁵⁵, the worst-performing countries are **Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Senegal, and Zambia**.



The **Zambian** government has no procedure in place for its senior officials to reveal their interactions or meetings with the TI. It also does not require rules for the disclosure or registration of TI entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf, including lobbyists. The same situation is reflected in **Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Senegal**.

Table 5: Country-specific disclosure of interactions and laws applied to the tobacco industry

Country	Disclosure of interactions with the tobacco industry (examples)	Laws/rules for disclosure by governments
Gabon	Most meetings with the tobacco industry are disclosed with civil society presence.	Provisions of Decree No. 0286/PR/MSPSSN of May 17, 2016, on the prevention of tobacco industry interference in health policies in the Republic of Gabon, Article 5.
Gabon	The Minister of Commerce met with the Director General of Manufacture des Cigarettes du Tchad without any disclosure.	Article 16 of Decree No. 1523
Nigeria	Despite the provision of laws on disclosure, enforcement remains limited to only registering and licensing manufacturers, importers and distributors since February 2023.	Nigeria's tobacco control laws require disclosure of government interactions with the tobacco industry.
Malawi	Government interactions with TI occur mainly through formal channels, particularly via the Tobacco Commission under the Tobacco Industry Act of 2019.	No formal policy requiring the disclosure of all engagements with the industry, and the Act does not mandate public access to meeting records.

Ghana	There is no public disclosure by the Government of Ghana of meetings or interactions with the tobacco industry, even in instances where such engagements are for regulatory purposes	Tobacco Control Regulation, 2016 (LI. 2247), requires the registration of only the tobacco industry and products. This requirement is not extended to affiliated organizations or individuals acting on the industry's behalf, including lobbyists.
Tanzania	There is no recorded incidence of the government meeting with the tobacco industry.	Neither the Tanzania Medicines and Drugs Authority Regulations, nor the Tobacco Industry Act, or Tanzania Tobacco Board requires registry for tobacco industry affiliated organizations and individuals acting on their behalf, such as lobbyists.
Uganda		The disclosure of meetings is provided for in the Tobacco Control Act 2015.
South Africa	The government is not obligated to disclose or report interactions with the tobacco industry	No publicly available register or database documenting these submissions, nor is there evidence of systematic oversight or transparency in the implementation of this requirement
Botswana	Botswana's government is legally required to publicly disclose meetings/interactions with the TI.	Tobacco Control Act 2021
Burkina Faso	All interactions with the TI must take place in a transparent manner.	Article 30 of Law No. 040-2010/AN. A registry exists to enable their identification.
Ethiopia	All interactions are strictly controlled	Proclamation 1112/2019, particularly under Article 51
Kenya	No consistent public disclosure of interactions	Part III, Section 13 of the Tobacco Control Regulations 2014

06

Conflict of Interest



The TI has a long history of interfering in public health policy formulation. It leverages its economic power to influence legislators and regulators with the aim of weakening, delaying, or blocking policies that would reduce tobacco consumption.

Conflict of interest is evident in several key practices:

Lobbying and Political Financing

- Revolving door
- Political campaign donations
- Undermine policy integrity



Science Manipulation

- Research funding
- Downplaying scientific evidence
- Support studies with favourable outcomes
- Misleads policymakers and public



Corporate Social Responsibility

- Philanthropic activities
- Public image



Figure 14: Conflict of interest practices by the tobacco industry



A conflict of interest issue arises when an individual's or institution's vested interests create concerns about the objectivity of their actions, judgment, and/or decision-making.

According to the WHO FCTC's Article 5.3 Guidelines, parties must eliminate conflicts of interest for all public servants and workers and adopt guidelines to guard against the TI's influence on public health policies (Figure 14).

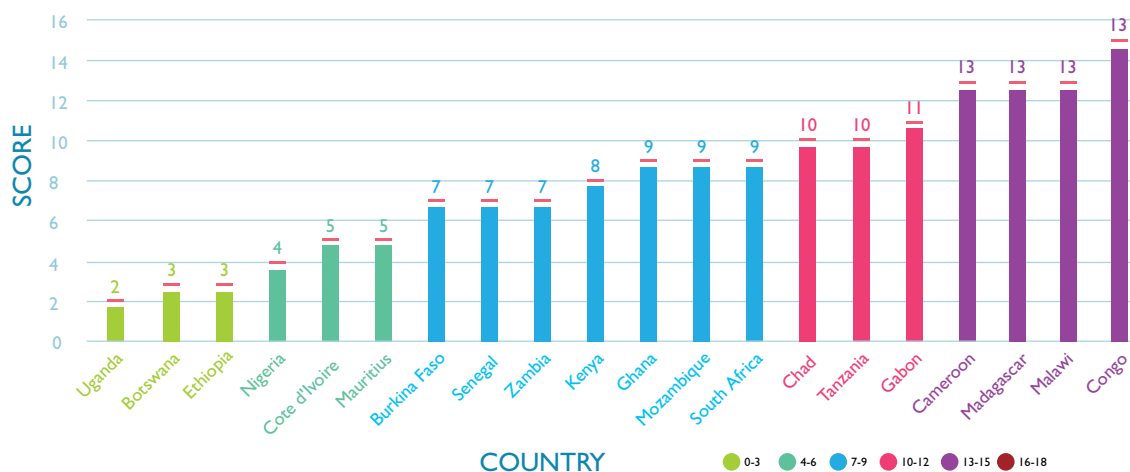


Figure 15: Conflicts of interest in African countries (the lower the score, the better the ranking)



One way government officials make themselves vulnerable to being influenced is through the revolving door, where politicians or civil servants take up TI jobs in the area of their former public service, or where TI professionals accept government positions that regulate the industry they were once a part of.



Countries such as **Uganda** and **Ethiopia** have no record of a conflict of interest of any senior government official joining the TI or vice versa during this reporting period (Figure 15). The government of **Ethiopia** has fully withdrawn from the TI through full privatization of its share to JTI from 2016 to 2017, and government officials have since then not held a place on the board or any other position.



The **Democratic Republic of Congo** presents a high instance of conflict of interest (Figure 16); firstly, a former prime minister sat on the Board of Directors of BAT⁵⁶, and second, a sitting national Member of Parliament serves as the general manager of Shenimed (affiliated with JTI), one of the main cigarette distributors in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**⁵⁷.



In **Botswana**, the 2021 Tobacco Control Act does not explicitly prohibit relatives of officials from holding roles in the TI.





Figure 16: Conflict of Interest in the Democratic Republic of Congo



In **Malawi**, the political involvement in tobacco farming, where some government ministers and politicians are tobacco farm owners or have strong financial interests in the TI, is a key conflict of interest⁵⁸. Their stakes in tobacco make it difficult for them to support policies that aim to strictly regulate the industry, as they directly benefit from its continued profitability (Figure 15).



In **Ghana**, the immediate past Deputy Minister for Energy previously worked with BAT Ghana.



In **Tanzania**, a retired Chief Justice was appointed as the Board Chairperson of Tanzania Cigarette Company effective February 2025⁵⁹. Tanzania Cigarette Company is the only cigarette producer in Tanzania, controlling more than 90% of the cigarette market share.⁵⁹



In **South Africa**, although there is no documented evidence of retired senior government officials directly joining the TI currently, former high-ranking public officials continue to engage in activities that support the interests of the TI. For instance, the former judge of the Supreme Court of South Africa has been a member of the PMI IMPACT Project Council since 2017. PMI IMPACT is an initiative funded by Philip Morris International that claims to support projects addressing illegal trade but has been widely criticized as a vehicle for the company to gain legitimacy and influence policy under the guise of public interest.⁶⁰

Another area of conflict of interest with the TI is through a patronage system—providing monetary contributions in anticipation of political leverage and support. In **Cameroon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Senegal** and **Tanzania**, there are no laws specifically prohibiting or requiring disclosure of political contributions from the TI.

¹<https://www.linkedin.com/in/herbert-krapa-b9b0a4217/details/experience/>



In **Burkina Faso**, which is currently facing a terrorism threat, the activities of political parties are suspended. However, Law No. 008-2009/AN on the financing of political parties, political organizations, and electoral campaigns, in its Article 2, provides for the establishment of an annual budget line in the state budget to finance political parties, political organizations, and electoral campaigns

⁶¹.

Botswana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Uganda have tobacco control laws that address conflicts of interest by strictly prohibiting contributions from the TI to political parties or candidates, which aligns with WHO FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines Recommendation 4.11, which urges Parties to prohibit or restrict such contributions.



In Cameroon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Senegal and Tanzania, there are no laws specifically prohibiting or requiring disclosure of political contributions from the TI.



07

Preventive Measures



Article 5.3 Guidelines outline a set of preventive measures that governments can adopt to shield tobacco control policies from being weakened by the commercial and vested interests of the TI and its allies. To achieve this, governments must maintain access to continuous, reliable information on the industry's activities and practices. This is essential for ensuring transparency, accountability, and integrity in policymaking, while minimizing the risk of undue influence on public health priorities. This report addresses the following five policies or preventive measures, among the others recommended in FCTC Article 5.3 guidelines: a procedure for disclosing the records of the interaction with the TI (recommendation 5.1), a code of conduct for public officials (recommendation 4.2), a requirement for the industry to periodically submit reports of their activities (recommendations 5.2, 5.3), a program to raise awareness on FCTC Article 5.3 and guidelines (recommendations 1.1, 1.2), and disallowing the acceptance of all forms of contribution from the TI (recommendation 3.4).

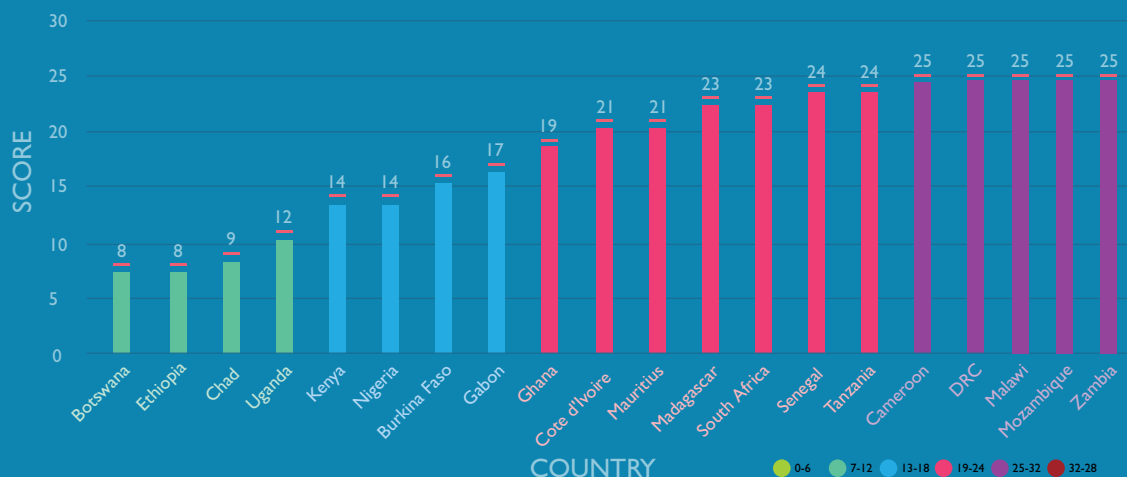


Figure 17: Preventive measures taken to protect public health by African countries (the lower the score, the better the ranking)

The presence of preventive measures in national policy

Countries like [Chad](#) and [Ethiopia](#) have all the preventive measures in place to guide officials in their interaction with the tobacco industry (Figure 17). On the other hand, countries like [Cameroon](#), [the Democratic Republic of Congo](#), [Madagascar](#), [Malawi](#), [Mozambique](#), [Senegal](#), [South Africa](#), [Tanzania](#), and [Zambia](#) have none of the 5 key preventive measures taken to protect themselves from the TI. Despite the existence of some measures, countries like [Gabon](#) and [Nigeria](#) still face challenges in the implementation of these measures.



In [Gabon](#), although some legal texts and decrees prohibit the acceptance of all forms of contributions and gifts from the TI, enforcement remains selective, if not absent. Also, the implementation of Decree No. 0286 on the prevention of TI interference, which prohibits government officials from endorsing activities related to the TI, remains unsatisfactory.



In [Nigeria](#), despite the existence of a requirement under Section 7 of the National Tobacco Control Regulations 2019 for every tobacco manufacturer, importer, or distributor to submit annual reports to the Minister of Health by the end of the first quarter of the following year, no records indicate the compliance of this regulation by the TI.

Periodic submission of information on tobacco activities

As shown in Table 6, 11 out of the 19 countries, including [Chad](#), [Gabon](#), [Ghana](#), and [Madagascar](#), do not have any procedure in place for disclosing the records of their interaction with the TI. Some countries, however, have specific laws that require the TI to periodically submit information on its activities to the government.



In [Burkina Faso](#), for instance, Law No. 040-2010/AN and the Zatu No. AN IV-039/CNR/CAPRO of June 18, 1987, are two such provisions to compel the TI to make such submissions.



In [Côte d'Ivoire](#), although the government requires the TI to periodically submit information on its activities, the TI does not comply with these legal and regulatory provisions.



In [Senegal](#) and [Madagascar](#), the government requires partial information from the TI.



A program to consistently raise awareness within its departments

Few countries had a plan to raise awareness on policies relating to FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines.

In **Ethiopia**, efforts by the government to raise awareness within its departments on policies relating to FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines involve an MoU to be signed with EFDA that entreats the National Tobacco Control Steering Committee members to ensure consistent awareness-raising within their organizations (Figure 18).

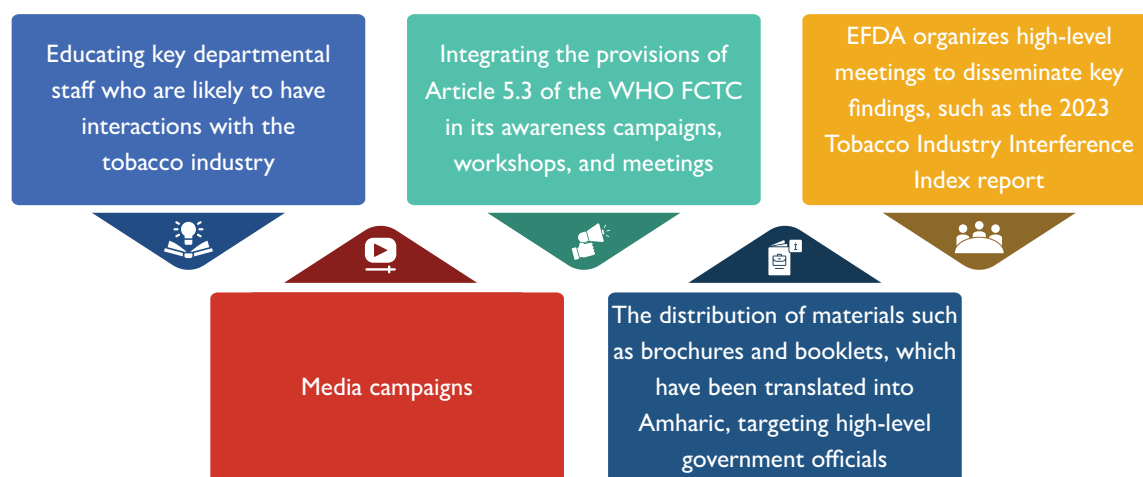


Figure 18: Key steps to raise awareness on FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines in Ethiopia

In some countries, although there are no measures in place by the government for some of the preventive measures, activities by other organizations and institutions go a long way to provide a basis for these preventive measures.



In **Ghana**, civil society organizations, in collaboration with the Food and Drugs Authority, have undertaken general awareness and educational initiatives that include elements of Article 5.3. These efforts, while valuable, do not substitute for a formal government-led strategy to institutionalize understanding and implementation of Article 5.3 across all relevant sectors.



In **Uganda**, there is no existing national enforceable plan to raise awareness on policies relating to Article 5.3 guidelines. However, there is a draft tobacco control communication plan by the Ministry of Health with support from national stakeholders to raise awareness on tobacco control issues.

Rejection of all forms of contribution from the tobacco industry

The final requirement on preventive measures is to put in place a policy to disallow the acceptance of all forms of contributions or gifts from the TI. Nine countries have these measures, although some are facing implementation challenges and have yet to implement them. In [Mauritius](#), the government does not accept any contributions, gifts, or assistance from the tobacco industry.

 In [Nigeria](#), Sections 27 and 28 of the NTCA 2015 disallow contributions and gifts from the TI to the government, its agencies, officials, and other relatives. However, activities by some state officials compromise these regulatory measures. In February 2024, during an event hosted by BAT Nigeria, the Governor of Oyo State lauded the TI and revealed that they were one of the companies that “donated generously during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020”⁶². Evidence indicates that the TI has exploited and continues to exploit public health crises and prevailing social conditions as opportunities to gain favor with governments at various levels. By presenting itself as a partner during times of crisis, the industry seeks to influence decision-making processes and weaken the implementation of effective tobacco control policies (Table 6).



*In Mauritius,
the government does not
accept any contributions,
gifts, or assistance from the
tobacco industry.*



Evidence indicates that the TI has exploited and continues to exploit public health crises and prevailing social conditions as opportunities to gain favor with governments at various levels. By presenting itself as a partner during times of crisis, the industry seeks to influence decision-making processes and weaken the implementation of effective tobacco control policies.

Table 6: Presence of preventive measures to protect public health

Country	Procedure for disclosing the records of the interaction with tobacco industry	A code of conduct for public officials.	Industry required to periodically submit reports of their activities	A program to raise awareness on FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines	Policy to disallow the acceptance of all forms of contribution from the tobacco industry
Botswana					
Burkina Faso					
Cameroon					
Chad					
Cote d'Ivoire					
Democratic Republic of Congo					
Ethiopia					
Gabon					
Ghana					
Madagascar					
Malawi					
Mauritius					
Mozambique					
Nigeria					
Senegal					
South Africa					
Tanzania					
Uganda					
Zambia					

 In place
 Not implemented

 No code of conduct, but progress made through some initiatives
 No code and no efforts

Conclusion and Recommendations



In comparison
with their 2023 scores...



*Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ghana,
showed marked improvement.*



*Zambia and Cote d'Ivoire
showed marked deterioration.*

In comparison with their 2023 scores, three (3) countries, **Burkina Faso**, **Cameroon**, and **Ghana**, showed marked improvement, whilst three (3) countries marginally improved (**Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, and **Senegal**), and three (3) remained unchanged (**Botswana**, **Gabon**, and

South Africa). Whilst **Zambia** and **Cote d'Ivoire** showed marked deterioration from their 2023 rankings, **Madagascar**, **Mozambique**, and **Uganda** showed some deterioration (Figure I9)⁵⁵.

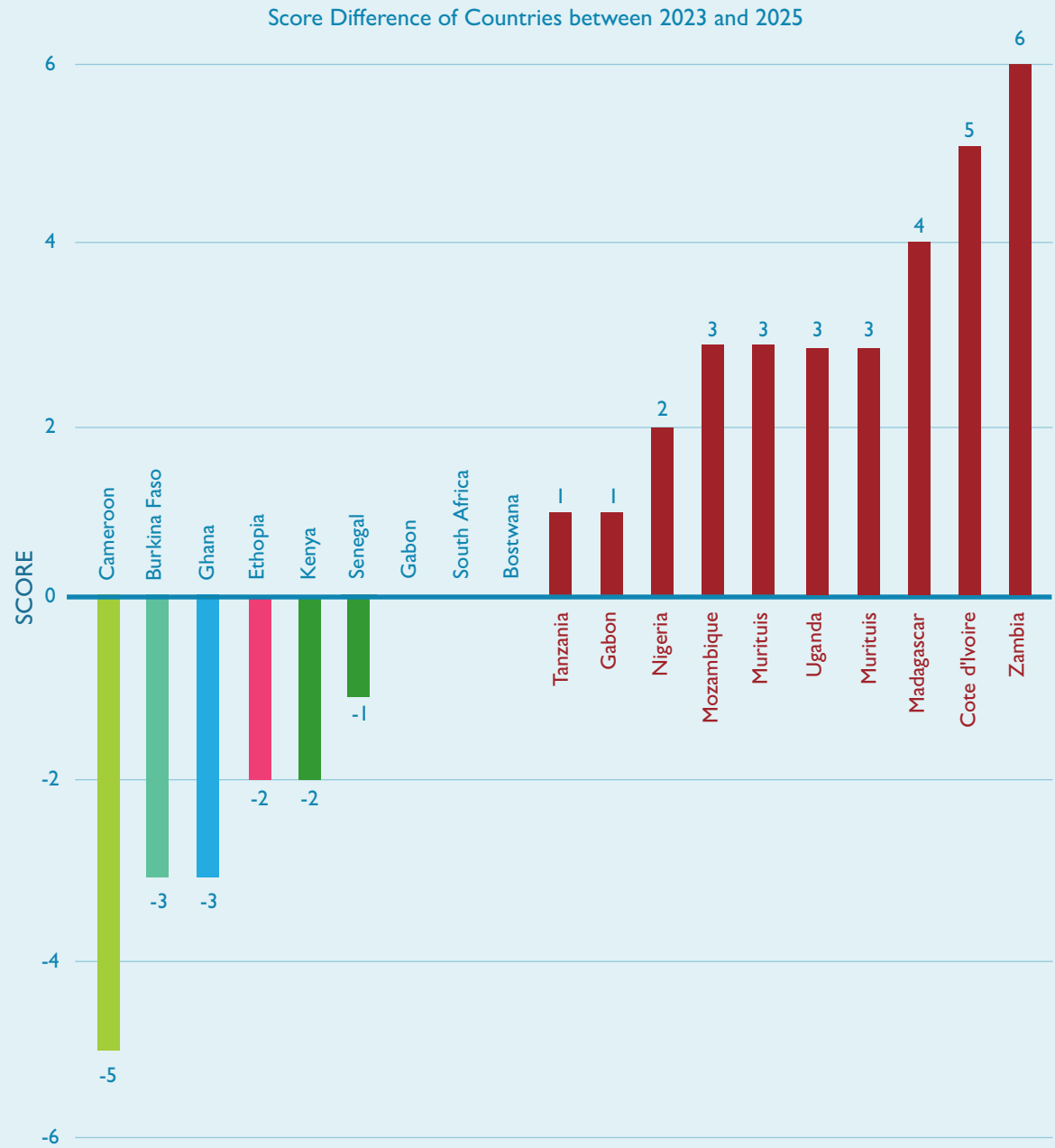


Figure 19: Progress in Countering Tobacco Industry Interference between 2023 and 2025 (negative values indicate improvement and positive values indicate deterioration)

Preventing the influence of the TI requires a multifaceted approach that includes adopting strict policies, holding the industry financially accountable, and protecting public health policy formulation processes. Governments must act decisively and commit to ensuring that TI interests do not compromise best practice policies that protect the health and well-being of current and future generations.

Recommendations emerging from the report include:

- ✓ **Protection of public health policies:**
Countries must implement Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, which urges governments to protect public health policies from the commercial and other vested interests of the TI.
- ✓ **Denormalizing and banning tobacco-related 'socially responsible' activities:**
The TI should be excluded and not be given credit as a stakeholder at any level or stage of health or emergency preparedness.
- ✓ **Greater transparency is needed for increased accountability.**
Transparency when dealing with the TI will reduce instances of interference and will help hold government officials and the industry accountable. All interactions with the TI must be recorded and made publicly available. The TI must be required to disclose information, including marketing and lobbying activities.
- ✓ **Implement a code of conduct to provide a firewall**
African governments must adopt a code of conduct with clear guidance to limit interactions with the TI to only when strictly necessary for regulation, avoid conflicts of interest, and strengthen the transparency and accountability of any interactions.
- ✓ **Fast-track the passing of pending tobacco control laws:**
Countries such as Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania should expedite the passage of their tobacco control bill to fulfill their obligations under the WHO FCTC.
- ✓ **To stop giving any form of incentives to the TI**
The TI should not be granted incentives or any preferential treatment to run its businesses, which conflict directly with tobacco control policy.



Capacity-building support:

Government officials, journalists, and CSO advocates should be trained and educated on TI monitoring and strategies for countering TI interference through courses available at, for instance, the Africa Centre for Tobacco Industry Monitoring and Policy Research (ATIM) and the University of Bath course on industry monitoring.



Build strong local and global partnerships

Partnerships across government and with non-governmental organizations and academia help to strengthen and magnify the efforts of all.

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