

Mozambique

64

Summary of Findings

1. Industry participation in policy development

The government does not accept, support or endorse policies or legislation drafted by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry, nor does it allow or invite the tobacco industry to sit on government inter-agencies/multi-sectoral committees/advisory group bodies that set public health policy.

2. Industry CSR activities

The tobacco industry has used strategies aimed at showing decision-makers that its industry promotes economic importance to the country by promoting tobacco farming and factory processing jobs. Mozambique, as a developing country, is still, to a certain extent, economically dependent on the tobacco industry. Scarce job opportunities, particularly for the youth, and constraints in foreign earnings leave the country with no choice other than to accept industry corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, such as constructing schools, roads, etc.

3. Benefits to the industry

The tobacco industry benefits from incentives of 5% Corporate Tax and 10% of the total investment amount and there is no tax for tobacco exports. It is worth mentioning that the tobacco industry benefits from low wages paid to the workers/farmers involved in tobacco production as well as the cheap price of tobacco.

4. Unnecessary interaction

During the last years, we can confirm that unnecessary interactions are very scarce or we did not witness any single case of involvement

of top decision-makers such as the President or Prime Minister in encounters with tobacco industry owners. It is obvious, leaders at the provincial level are reported as having contact with tobacco industry staff particularly in events organized under CSR.

5. Transparency

There is no procedure in place to guide public officials in the event they have to meet with the tobacco industry in cases when such interactions are strictly necessary. This current status of Mozambique does not enable the country to have appropriate tobacco control legislation measures; that is why there is a high level of lack of transparency of the tobacco industry in conducting its economic activities. Mozambique does not possess appropriate tools or enforcement measures to make the tobacco industry comply with its transparency requirements. Therefore, the level of tobacco interference will remain high as strategically the tobacco industry uses the economic and social constraints to launch activities involving donations and funding based on corporate social responsibility.

6. Conflict of interest

For the case of Mozambique, it is quite obvious, the lack of transparency contributes largely to conflicts of interest. The level of conflict of interest is also high. There is controversy when the tobacco industry contributes by building a school or health facilities. In these particular cases, it is clear that the main objective of reducing the amount of tobacco consumption will be diluted by this tobacco sponsorship. On one hand, the tobacco industry claims that it is contributing to

access to education or health; on the other, it is promoting tobacco to adolescents and youth, contributing to tobacco addiction and resulting in many diseases and deaths.

7. Preventive measures

The government does not have a procedure for disclosing the records of interactions (such as agendas, attendees, minutes and outcomes) with the tobacco industry and its representatives.

The tobacco industry is not required to submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues or any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy and political contributions.

According to Decree No. 11/2007: The Regulation of Consumption and Marketing of Tobacco, "It is prohibited for the tobacco industry, and the competent government authorities, to disclose all the industry's expenses related to advertising, promotion and sponsorship."

Recommendations

Mozambique has ratified most recently the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) which constitutes an important landmark for the country to launch a number of initiatives aimed at implementing successfully the FCTC provisions in the country. On the other hand, Mozambique's main objective is focused on eliminating extreme poverty, which unfortunately continues to affect large parts of its population. That is why some strategic options are not the desired ones.

On the other hand, communicable diseases are at the top of the Health Plan, allocating fewer resources to non-communicable diseases as in the cases of tobacco-related diseases control. Taking into account the current situation, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Mozambique should, as a matter of urgency, enact a national tobacco control law, which incorporates WHO FCTC provisions, and adopt a national tobacco control plan aimed at the Tobacco Control Act.
2. There is a need for provision of adequate resources for tobacco control programs.
3. Concerted efforts are needed among the government, civil society organizations including NGOs and the population at large to establish a common strategy with the aim of saving human lives.
4. Create necessary conditions for future generations to lead healthier more sustainable lives free from the harms of tobacco use.
5. There is also a need for more institutional implementation of education, communication, training and public awareness programs on tobacco use hazards to cover the most disadvantaged groups of the population, particularly in rural areas.
6. With the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, the tobacco industry has a trend of reducing its production due to a decline in the number of smokers throughout the world; therefore, this is a single opportunity to incentivize farmers to adopt alternative cash crops.