

# The Tobacco Control Chronicle

Your quarterly catch up on CTCA's tobacco control news

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New cessation trial  
Uganda tax drive  
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## CTCA embarks on phone based cessation trial in Uganda and Zambia

Can smokers living with HIV in Uganda and Zambia quit smoking if they get help at clinics and SMSes to encourage them to stop smoking? These are the questions a randomized clinical trial aims to answer after it is rolled out in Uganda and Zambia later this year. The protocol was published in January in the American Journal of Addiction Science and Clinical Practice. It is known that nicotine replacement therapy and SMS based tobacco cessation interventions can be effective in getting people to smoke less. But it still remains unknown which treatments

are best for people living with HIV in Africa. Uganda and Zambia have different tobacco use patterns, policy environments, and health care resources. In the trial, 800 people living with HIV and smoke will be recruited at HIV treatment centers where they are receiving care. There are four arms that they could be sent to: brief advice from a clinician advice to quit along with HIV education and information aimed at encouraging HIV treatment adherence (with no mention of tobacco) delivered via text messages, or this with 12 weeks of nicotine

replacement therapy, or the clinicians advice, with HIV education and 6 weeks of SMSes to get them to quit smoking or all of the above. All the participants received a cellphone and solar panel with power bank to charge the phone. The participants will undergo urine tests six months after they have enrolled to see if they were able to reduce their smoking. The study hopes to provide insights into the feasibility of sending people SMS messages to help them quit smoking along with other tobacco cessation interventions.

# Tackling tobacco tax in Uganda: one step closer to an increase



Uganda's tobacco tax coalition has taken the first steps to increase the tobacco tax in the country. On April 26, the coalition held a meeting with the Ministry of Health, Parliamentary committees on Health, Social Services, Finance and Budget at Kampala Serena Hotel. The meeting discussed the upward revision of tobacco tax. Increasing tobacco taxes is a global mechanism to reduce tobacco affordability and reduce tobacco use. The meeting resulted in a position paper that was used to petition parliament and the President of the Republic. The coalition was formed to attain an effective tobacco tax structure. The coalition members include the Centre for

Tobacco Control in Africa, the Uganda National Health Consumers Organization (UNHCO), the Uganda Alcohol Policy Alliance (UAPA), Uganda Cancer Society (UCS), Uganda Health Communications Alliance (UHCA), United Nations Association of Uganda (UNAU), and Way Forward Youth Africa Ltd Organization (WFYA).

The coalition is jointly funded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and Cancer Research UK.

The coalition's goal coalition is an FCTC compliant tobacco tax policy and structure that suitably contributes to reduction of tobacco use in Uganda.

It has several goals. It hopes to develop and provide empirical evidence relevant for tax interventions.

Secondly, it hopes to build a strong well-

coordinated coalition that promotes FCTC compliant tobacco taxation policies in Uganda.

Thirdly, it hopes to increase knowledge and awareness among tobacco key stakeholders about tobacco taxation.

It also hopes to increase and sustain political will and technical support for the adoption and implementation of FCTC compliant tobacco taxation policy.

And lastly it wants to monitor and counter tobacco industry interference and implementation of tobacco taxation policy in Uganda. Tobacco tax increases have been demonstrated as the most effective measure to reduce tobacco use.

A 10% increase in price has been established because an 8% decrease in tobacco consumption in high income countries and 4% in Sub Saharan Africa.

## What the WHO says about tobacco taxes

Evidence shows that significantly increasing tobacco excise taxes and prices is the single most effective and cost-effective measure for reducing tobacco use. It is also a measure specifically called for in Article 6 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

# CTCA gears up for the second tobacco conference in Accra

Tobacco control advocates from across the continent will gather in Accra in November this year to discuss the biggest issues in tobacco control during the second Africa Conference on Tobacco Control and Development.

Under the theme *Breaking Barriers, Building Futures: Advancing the Tobacco Control Ecosystem in Africa*, the conference aims to bring together people who make up the tobacco control universe in Africa to discuss priorities for the continent going forward.

The conference takes place from November 13 to 14 in Accra, Ghana.

It will be hosted at the Labadi Beach Hotel.

The conference is jointly organised by the Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa and the Africa Capacity Building Foundation.

The conference will discuss some of the most important issues in tobacco control. This includes tobacco usage trends, the latest research, young people and tobacco, environmental issues, new and emerging products as well as funding and sustainability.

The call for abstracts will open next month. Through this call,



researchers, advocates and tobacco control advocates have the chance to share their work and experiences. The scientific committee will determine how submissions will be presented at the conference.

The full call as well as more details of the conference can be found on the conference website available at [www.actd.africa](http://www.actd.africa)

## Africa Tobacco control research grants to be awarded

Close to 90 tobacco control researchers have applied for CTCA's grant to conduct research on tobacco control issues on the continent.

CTCA advertised the call for research proposals on 22nd May 2024. The aim of the call was to seek for researchers to delve into issues of tobacco control. Only six researchers will be awarded the USD5000

grant to implement research that aligns with the CTCA Tobacco Control Research (TCRA) Agenda. The aim of the agenda is to generate local evidence to drive tobacco control policy formulation and implementation in Africa. Of the eight thematic areas in the research agenda, the most popular were tobacco use and populations at



risk as well as the effect that tobacco use has on sustainable development. Successful researchers will be notified next quarter.