Policy-relevant research needs and gaps for WHO FCTC implementation

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“Health, not economic arguments, are the reasons for controlling tobacco, but economic arguments are raised as an obstacle to tobacco control policies”

Dr Gro Harlem Bruntland
Pre- WHO FCTC

- Research areas and needs
  - Taken stock of existing evidence on the health consequences of tobacco use,
  - Tried to respond the governments concern surrounding economic consequences of tobacco control
Research priority was given to effective measures to reduce demand

- Higher cigarette taxes
- **Non-price measures**: consumer information, research, cigarette advertising and promotion bans, warning labels and restrictions on public smoking
- Increased access to cessation therapies
- illicit & counterfeit trade
Less attention was given to ineffective measures at reducing consumption

- Prohibition
- Youth access restrictions
- Crop substitution
- Trade restrictions
Capacity Building & Country-Level Policy Relevant Research

World Bank
RITC
ITEN
JHBSPH
WHO
NGOs

Funds & Training

Researchers
Govt. technocrats
NGOs

Dissemination
Public Seminars
Round-table meetings
Publications

County-level
Regional
WHO FCTC Ratification & Commitment

- Governments show their commitment by ratifying WHO FCTC
  - BUT

- The existing arguments & concerns are still valid
  - Vast interest groups still exist and they still have:
    - Direct economic benefits from tobacco consumption, production, manufacturing and trade;
    - Power on decision making on TC & influence on decision makers
  - &

- We have not overcome political hurdles & completed our task to fill the gap on research evidence for the implementation of WHO FCTC
What type of research is needed?
Policy relevant comprehensive research

Identify & assess
Current Status of Countries
Readiness for TC
Existing policies, gaps and strengths
Tobacco Growing
Manufacturing
Trading and Consuming

TO
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
The economy
Health care sector
Society
Growers
Smokers & families

Evidence
Economic, Health & Social
Consequences of Tobacco & TC
Priorities for Research that

- Identifies effective TC measures based on needs in the country
- Examines the impact of these measures on the country as a whole, and
- Provides guidance on how to tailor measures to the country and how to strike a balance in the consequences of TC measures for public health and on interested parties (growers, media, etc)
Research Priorities

- Economic and health care costs of tobacco use, production, and growing to development process
- Effective TC programs & and their impact on:
  - Vulnerable populations
  - Reducing poverty
  - Alternative policies to reduce the burden of higher taxes on poor smokers
- Economic and health care costs and benefits of smoke-free environment
- Cost-effective, affordable and accessible cessation methods, especially for the poor
- Trade restrictions and their impact on TC
- Illicit and counterfeit cigarette trade
Research Priorities

Research on (Cont)

- **Tobacco growers:**
  - The impact of TC measures on well-being of tobacco farmers
  - Health risks of growing tobacco for tobacco growers and their families
  - Economic costs and risks faced by tobacco growers
  - Child labor and its impact on child education
  - Changing international market conditions and its impact on tobacco farmers
  - Availability and current market conditions for alternative crop production and the help needed by farmers to replace tobacco production

- **Political conditions & Market Structure; and their impact on TC activities**