International Development Research Centre

Research for International Tobacco Control (RITC)

Setting Tobacco Control Research Priorities for Latin America & the Caribbean: Past, Present and Future

Presented by:
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RITC: Past Action

• 1995 Bellagio Statement
  – Stimulate research into causes/consequences of tobacco use
  – Mobilize funding & resources to respond to development implications of tobacco epidemic
  – Facilitate interaction and information exchange
  – Build capacity for tobacco control research, particularly in low and middle-income countries.
RITC: Past Action

• Since 1995:
  – 1998-1999: Formulation of 3 regional tobacco control research agendas: South and Southeast Asia; East, Central and Southern Africa; and Latin America and the Caribbean
  – 1999: Global Agenda for Tobacco Control Research
  – 2002: Bridging the Research Gaps in Global Tobacco Control
  – 2005: SWOT Analysis – LAC region
1998 Rio de Janeiro:
Regional Meeting for LAC

• General Objective:
  – Draft a multidisciplinary regional research agenda for tobacco control to foster strong and effective public policies in the Latin American and Caribbean region.
1998 Rio de Janeiro Meeting

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate creation of a network
2. Promote TCR strategies & capacity-building
3. Promote partnerships
4. Prepare research agenda
5. Promote multi-country & comparative research
6. Facilitate info dissemination & policy development
1998 Rio de Janeiro Meeting: Expected Outcome

An Articulated Regional TC Research Agenda that:

- reflects regional & national realities and concerns
- specifies clearly defined research priorities
- entails multidisciplinary methodology that is both:
  - cross-cutting
  - policy-oriented
- addresses policy-relevant research gaps & gaps in research capacity
- identify constraints & opportunities in:
  - dissemination
  - uptake of results
1998 Rio de Janeiro Meeting

• Participating countries
  – Argentina
  – Brazil
  – Colombia
  – Uruguay
  – Venezuela

• Observers:
  – Canada
  – Thailand
  – USA
Tobacco Control Research Agenda

Main thematic issues
- Supply side & its determinants
  - tobacco production
  - crop diversification & substitution
  - ecosystem
- Demand side & its determinants
  - epidemiology
  - behavioral aspects
  - advertising & promotion
  - smuggling
- Economics of supply & demand
  - Taxes & Prices
  - Income/affordability

Policy-oriented issues
- Tobacco control programs
- Tobacco control policies
- Emerging research questions

Cross-cutting issues
- Gender
  - Capacity building for TC research
- Advocacy & dissemination
- North-South & South-South collaboration
- Bridging gap between research & policymaking

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- Bridging gap between research & policymaking
Main Thematic Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

Supply side & its determinants

Problems
1. lack of knowledge about tobacco production chain
2. lack of info on social impact of production chain & potential for tobacco replacement
3. lack of knowledge about ecosystem damage & health risks of the tobacco production chain

Research needs/ objectives
1. to gather baseline info & develop historical analyses
2. need to understand socio-economic impact on farmers, families & communities
3. to investigate ecosystem & health damages, including gender determinants

Research questions
1. How is the country/ region involved in or dependent on the tobacco production chain?
2. What is economic & social impact of diversification/ substitution?
3. What is the extent of ecosystem damage & health risks of tobacco production chain?

Expected policy implications
1. agricultural & economic based TC interventions with country & reg'l perspectives
2. proposals on tobacco production replacement & socio-economic determinants
3. environmental & human protection policies
Main Thematic Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

1. lack of information on smoking prevalence, its determinants & burden of tobacco-related disease by country
2. lack of knowledge about smoking behavior & addiction in different population groups

Problems

1. to document & monitor the extent of tobacco use, its determinants & health impacts
2. to understand the determinants of tobacco initiation, use & cessation processes

Research needs/ objectives

1. What is the situation of tobacco use in different population groups & natl burden of tobacco-related diseases?
2. How can smoking be prevented & what is role of advertising & socio-cultural determinants?

Research questions

1. country-level info to mobilize govt to prioritize TC & provide info to implement/evaluate TC programs
2. identification of groups at risk of becoming smokers and potential quitters, & evaluate impact of tobacco control strategies

Expected policy implications

Demand side & its determinants
Main Thematic Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

Economics of Supply & Demand

Problems
1. poor understanding of the distribution impact of different tax policy regimes
2. lack of knowledge of economic relationships in tobacco chain & trends in tobacco production & trade

Research needs/objectives
1. to collect economic info on incidence, impact & distribution of different taxes
2. to document baseline info on economic trends in exports/imports, balance of payments, etc

Research questions
1. How do cigarette prices respond to changes in taxes & what is the extent of tax distribution in tobacco chain?
2. Who loses & benefits in the tobacco production chain & how important is tobacco in the balance of payments?

Expected policy implications
1. provide the basis for changes in taxation, raising revenues & reducing consumption
2. determination of short/long term economic losses & gains to develop policies to address both
Policy Oriented Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

Tobacco Control Programs

Problems

1. lack of info about TC programs and their evaluation
2. lack of info about programs for school-age children/adolescents & potential impact
3. lack of info about programs for health professionals & interventions in healthcare facilities
4. lack of knowledge about women & tobacco-related issues

Research needs/ objectives

1. to understand determinants of TC policy development from different perspectives
2. to study tobacco use by children/adolescents/teachers & programs and policy determinants
3. to determine potential influence of health services policies on TC
4. to understand determinants of tobacco use by women in all age groups & during pregnancy/nursing

Research questions

1. What is the impact & cost-effectiveness of different approaches to TC programs?
2. How to control tobacco use by children/adolescents through effective school-based interventions/strategies?
3. How to reach healthcare professionals & assess impact of TC programs in healthcare facilities?
4. How to reach women in different tobacco control contexts?

Expected policy implications

1. identification of better TC strategies, taking account of limited human/economic resources and countries’ health policies
2. identification of better TC strategies among children & adolescents through continuous programs
3. identification of strategies targeting HC professionals & HC facilities as participants in continuous TC programs
4. provide the basis for TC programs that target women
Policy Oriented Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

1. lack of info about TC legislation
2. lack of info about economic-oriented programs
3. lack of info about tobacco agriculture & environmental policies
4. lack of info about nat'l & trans-natl tobacco industry strategies

1. to update & study tobacco legislation, its role in consumption & its implementation/enforcement
2. to update & study economic policies in countries' political & legislative context
3. to document & study agriculture-oriented programs/strategies to raise farmers' awareness of healthy lifestyle/environment
4. to gather baseline info on TTI strategies for action with country/multi-country perspectives & determinants

1. What works in terms of legislation and what are the determinants?
2. How to implement economic-oriented programs in a country/multi-country perspective?
3. How do agricultural policies affect tobacco production & farmers & their impact on the environment?
4. How does the tobacco industry react to different political, social & economic scenarios?

1. provide the basis for further implementation of legislation & for introduction of new legislation
2. provide a basis to evaluate previous economic-oriented programs & establish new TC strategies
3. provide the basis for alternative crop incentives, ecosystem preservation & healthier lifestyles for farmers
4. provide the basis to counteract TTI strategies & reorient TC programs & strategies
Policy Oriented Issues

Synopsis of the main research questions

Emerging Research Questions

Problems
1. lack of harmonization between prices & taxes in LAC countries
2. lack of a reg'l surveillance system with a systematic approach to data collection

Research needs/ objectives
1. to assess the reasons for the lack of harmonization & document trends & dynamics
2. to provide activists, policymakers & researchers with reliable up-to-date trend information

Research questions
1. How to achieve harmonization between tobacco product prices and taxes in the region?
2. What are the reg'l trends in tobacco use & policies & what are tobacco research activities in the region?

Expected policy implications
1. prevention of contraband & effectively control consumption
2. stimulate TC research & capacity-building programs & provide cross-country comparable baseline data

Research questions
1. prevention of contraband & effectively control consumption
2. stimulation of TC research & capacity-building programs & provide cross-country comparable baseline data
Cross-cutting issues

**Gender**
1. include gender issues in all research
2. study gender-oriented programs, especially those focused on children & adolescents
3. study gender-related determinants of tobacco use
4. include issues related to women in all age groups (i.e., not only in women of reproductive age)

**Capacity-building for tobacco control research**
1. document the professional profile of the region
2. identify needs of tobacco control advocates in the region
3. identify partners to stimulate TC policymakers & advocates to obtain funds for research
4. outline basic training content in a TC capacity-building agenda
5. identify ways to stimulate researchers to choose/include TC issues in their research
6. identify ways to stimulate research funding institutions to prioritize TC
7. identify best, most cost-effective policies to build capacities in TC research

**Dissemination of research results & advocacy**
1. develop or use existing guidelines on how to conduct a survey, collect economic data, etc.
2. develop specific materials for academic/activist communities focused on policy-oriented research
3. stimulate publication of papers in main scientific publications (not just in English language)
4. participate in multidisciplinary professional conferences & meetings
5. promote specific training workshops and meetings

**North-South and South-South collaboration**
1. ask for collaboration on issues where the North has more experience
2. evaluate the feasibility & reliability of research & policy instruments for different cultural contexts
3. South-South collaboration should provide an "economy of scale" with several res centers working together

**Research and policymaking: bridging the gap**
1. encourage multidisciplinary professional meetings
2. increase cross-country participation through: fellowships, sub-reg'l & reg'l meetings
3. increase nat'l and cross-country research institution exchange of information
4. disseminate info within the region through policy briefs, factsheets, etc.
5. create a reg'l database
6. establish a reg'l TC research network
7. stimulate research funding agencies to ensure priority of funding to policy-oriented TC research
1998 Proposed Research Agenda for LAC

1. Baseline information
   - ETS, consumption, prevalence, # of farmers, economic & political determinants, promotion and marketing

2. Policy determinants
   - What are the pressures – social, cultural, political, economic and legislative – playing a role in policy development?
   - What is the role of the tobacco industry and what are its strategies for the region?

3. Intervention evaluation
   - Impact of crop diversification on farmers, economy etc
   - Impact of school-based interventions etc

4. Regional differences
   - Collaborative studies/comparable information
   - Address common areas of interest etc
2005: SWOT Analysis of LAC region

**Strengths**
1. Dedication of tobacco control advocates
2. The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
3. A strong research base
4. Extensive research undertaken by industrialized nations on tobacco-related illnesses
5. Language barriers in educating the public and in publishing articles in credible journals
6. Insufficient implementation of FCTC in many LAC countries
7. Regional weaknesses such as geographic distribution, large size, different languages, multi-ethnic population
8. TC lacks infrastructure, public sector activity, finances, organizational structure

**Weaknesses**
1. Lack of sufficient regional research to explain the tobacco epidemic in LAC
2. Lack of sufficient research on attitudes toward tobacco use in the region
3. Research quality is a problem – not appealing to media
4. Difficult to disseminate information to technical groups such as specialized lawyers
5. Many LAC countries currently discussing TC issues – presents an opening for a network for exchange of information
2. Favorable regional/global context: countries have ratified FCTC; increasing democracy in region; gov'ts more informed on issues
3. The right timing: political crises in the region can bring focus to new and important issues

**Opportunities**
1. High poverty levels in the region
2. Political threats such as corruption, instability, lack of enforcement
3. Economic threat of the tobacco industry and associated lobby groups, such as the advertising industry
4. Social threats, including lack of free press and censorship; regional fragmentation

**Threats**
1. More research on youth and tobacco use
2. Develop a regional network to set regional standards to measure quality/usefulness of research
3. Promote a multidisciplinary approach
4. Disseminate the research and publish (in English). A network could facilitate peer review and help overcome isolation

**Research priorities**
Present

- Where are we now on the research agenda?
- What progress have we made?
- Bloomberg and other initiatives?
Future

- What more do we need to do and how?