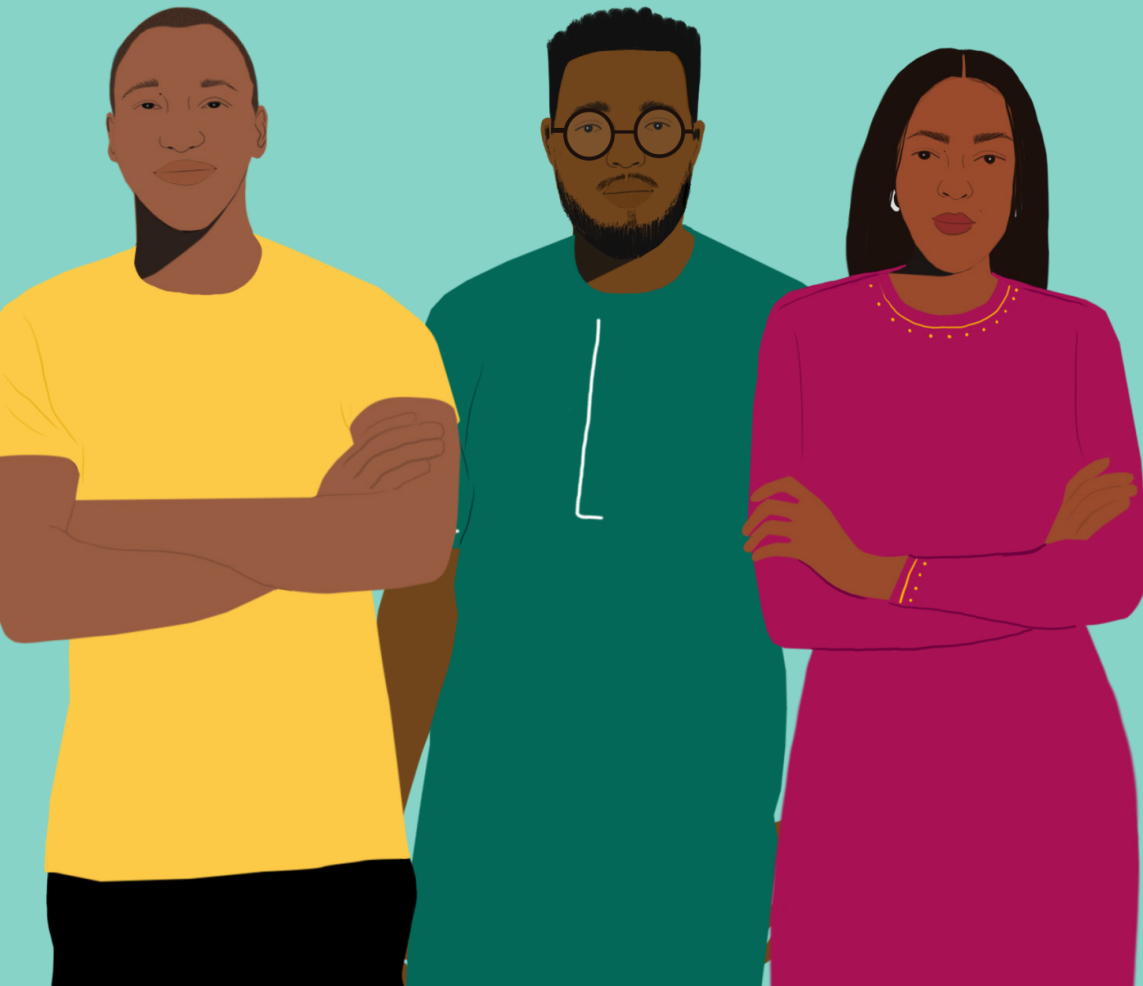
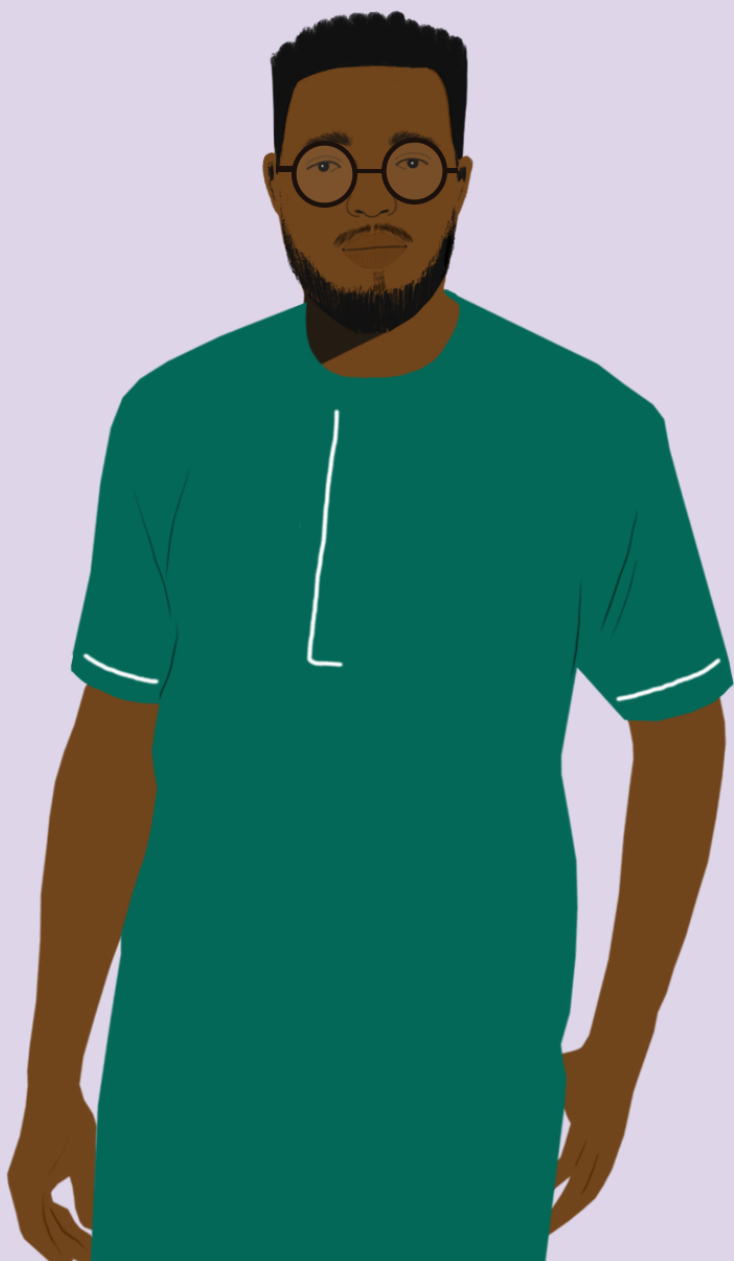


Young People Are Tobacco Industry Targets

Evidence from investigative reports across Africa





World No Tobacco Day 2020 was commemorated with focus on protecting the youth from tobacco industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use. As part of activities to commemorate this day, ATCA supported journalists from its continental network of tobacco control media professionals to produce compelling investigative reports that expose, denounce and isolate tobacco industry tactics targeting young people.

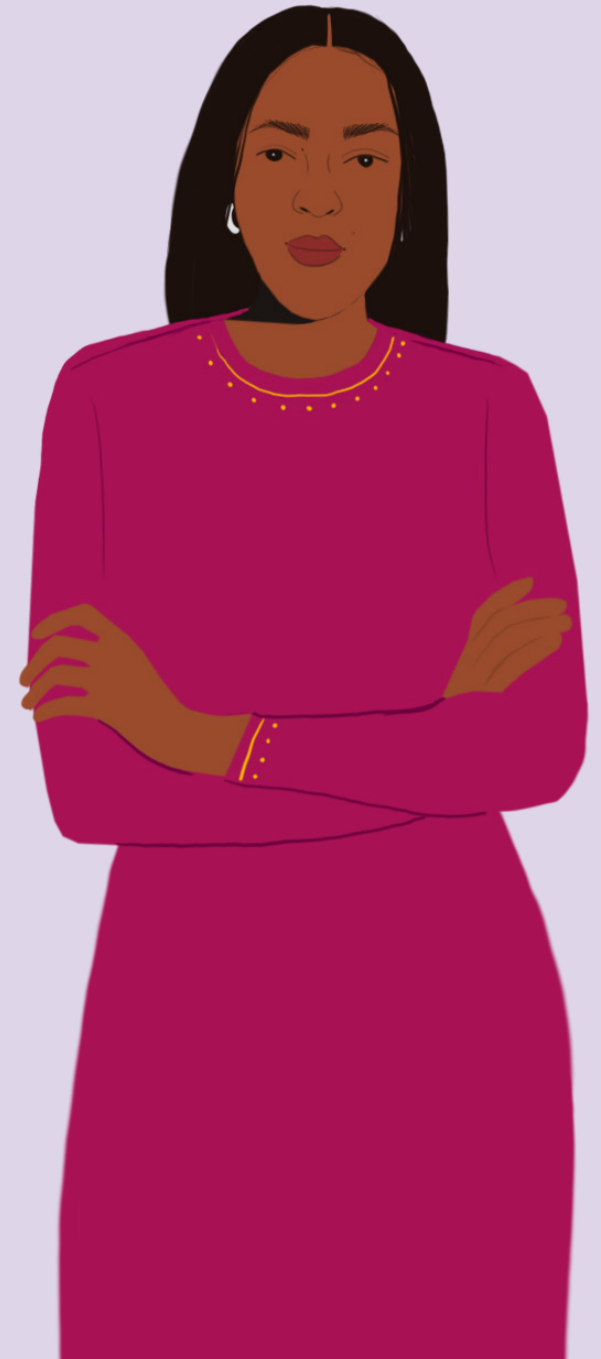
Nine (9) journalists from national and regional media organisations across the continent produced thought-provoking investigative reports exposing key tactics of tobacco multinationals aimed at undermining the implementation of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), specifically targeting youth manipulation and initiation to smoking.

This handbook, which highlights those reports, is designed to inform the public on multiple initiatives undertaken by the tobacco industry to contravene conventional tobacco control policies and get young people addicted to tobacco products.

"They got lips? We want them." RJ Reynolds - 1990

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Ethiopia

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Big Tobacco in Ethiopia attempts to further their own agenda under the guise of corporate social responsibility.

At a glance

- ▶▶ 70% of Ethiopia's 105 million population is under the age of 29.
- ▶▶ Japan Tobacco International (JTI) purchased a minority share of 40% from Ethiopia's National Tobacco Enterprise for half a billion US dollars, thereafter increasing its share to 70%.
- ▶▶ Local anti-tobacco advocates are troubled by Big Tobacco's compelling marketing strategies to capture the attention of Ethiopia's young people.
- ▶▶ Tobacco products are controlled under the Food and Medicine Administration Proclamation No. 1112/2019 which was adopted in 2019.

Upping the ante against the silent killer

by Samuel Getachew

"A 17-year-old chain smoker (Dawit) is to the tobacco industry a "good reminder" why it was worth investing more than half a billion US dollars in a nation whose per capita is still less than 1,000 Birr or 26 US dollars a year."

Ethiopia is a youthful country, with more than 70% of the 105-million strong population under the age of twenty-nine. With an eye on the potential spending power that these numbers signify, Big Tobacco companies are moving fast to grasp opportunities to drive deeper market penetration.

This is evidenced in the case of Japan Tobacco International (JTI) which successfully acquired a majority stake in Ethiopia's National Tobacco Enterprise (NTE) at significant expense.

Local tobacco control advocates have long been troubled by the highly compelling and manipulative marketing strategies devised by Big Tobacco, which are successfully capturing the attention of Ethiopia's young people and fuelling their tobacco use, to the detriment of their health.

Now, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, crafty new marketing techniques are positioning Big Tobacco as the saviour that helps communities stem the spread of the virus, through the provision of free hand sanitisers. These opportunistic strategies have been

condemned as an underhand means to improve the image of tobacco companies under the guise of corporate social responsibility.

Ethiopia has one of the strongest tobacco control legislative environments in Africa, and activities such as

this are expressly prohibited under the Food and Medicine Administration Proclamation No. 1112 /2019 which was adopted in 2019.

However, it is clear that the tobacco industry will relentlessly engage in activities that push their agenda. It is imperative that Ethiopia's government steps up its efforts to ensure the full implementation of the Proclamation in order to protect the health of the country's youth.

NTE is using the current COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to regain its image and acceptability among the government and the general public. It has produced hand sanitisers and distributed them to economically disadvantaged groups in the community for free

Tizita Wondwossen
Project Officer, Ye Ethiopia
Cancer Society

[Read the full article](#)



Nigeria

Failure to implement Nigeria's "track and trace" tobacco control system results in the country's youth accessing cheap, illegal and hazardous tobacco products.

At a glance

- ▶ There are 13 million smokers in Nigeria, according to the World Health Organisation, and tobacco use accounts for about 16,000 deaths each year.
- ▶ Nigeria ratified the global Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (ITP) in 2019.
- ▶ A key component of the Protocol is a track and trace system, but despite guidance from Kenya, Nigeria's system has not been implemented.
- ▶ The UN Illicit Trade Protocol states that tracking and tracing should not be done by the tobacco industry, but multinational tobacco companies continue to pressure developing country governments to take up their own systems.

More Nigerian youth at risk as government fails to tackle illicit tobacco trade

by Ben Ezeamalu

One of the ways tobacco multinationals have made inroads in governments is by forming a partnership with key government agencies while surreptitiously pushing for the adoption of the tobacco industry-sanctioned track and trace system, Codentify.

There are thirteen million smokers in Nigeria, according to the World Health Organisation, and tobacco use accounts for about 16,000 deaths in the country each year. Particularly at risk are Nigeria's youth who are accessing illegal and unregulated tobacco products that are smuggled across Nigeria's "porous" borders.

Hilda Ochefu, the sub-regional coordinator of West Africa for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, warns of the dire effects of the illicit tobacco trade on Nigeria's youth. These products often contain higher chemical levels than those found in regulated tobacco products, as well as having manipulated or higher nicotine values which make them more addictive.

In 2019, Nigeria ratified the global Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (ITP), a key component of which is the establishment of an effective track and trace system to provide critical information to government.

This includes (amongst others), the movement and origin of each tobacco product. Nigeria takes its lead from Kenya, one of the countries to successfully implement a track and trace system.

Although ITP states that tracking and tracing should not be done by the tobacco industry, multinational tobacco companies continue to encourage governments' take up of their own systems. Philip Morris International's proprietary system, Codentify, has been pushed in developing countries and often through third parties when their primary efforts are blocked.

Nigeria is no exception, with information that dates back to 2007 pointing to comfortable alliances between tobacco multinationals and the Nigerian Customs Service.

A year on from its ratification, Nigeria's Protocol has been poorly enforced, with the track and trace system not yet implemented. The failure of the Nigerian government to clamp down on illicit tobacco trade is further exposing its young citizens to serious health hazards.

A major push by our government is necessary to check the [illegal tobacco] products from coming into our country and stopping them from getting to our open markets where they can be bought by our youth

Philip Jakpor
Network for Accountability of
Tobacco Transnationals

[Read the full article](#)

Nigeria

In a bid to tempt Nigeria's youth into becoming next-generation smokers, Big Tobacco manipulates the agricultural sector, while exploiting youth-focused sponsorship and competition initiatives.

At a glance

- Single cigarette sticks in Nigeria are cheaper than most children's sweets or biscuits, making for easy purchases by the youth and children.
- In 2019, the British American Tobacco Nigeria (BATN) Foundation sought to target over 5 million young Nigerians via social media in an agribusiness campaign that offered cash prizes valued at around USD 20,000.
- Philip Morris International (PMI)'s Foundation for a Smoke-free World is partnering with the University of Nigeria Nsukka to sponsor agricultural research and provide annual scholarships for students towards foreign studies.
- World No Tobacco Day 2020 has provided a counter marketing campaign to empower young people to engage in the fight against Big Tobacco. It is hoped that these concerted efforts will compel the Nigerian government to effectively implement the tobacco control regulations that were approved in 2019.

Saving the youth from the tobacco industry

by Nkoli Omhoudu

Although youth are no longer exposed to tobacco advertisement on television and outdoor bill boards as these have been banned by tobacco control laws in many countries in line with the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, youths are still exposed to sleek packaging and design marketing strategies such as cigarettes shaped deceptively like candy sticks or USB cords, and positioning of cigarettes near sweets and snacks at retail outlets frequented by children.

There is a misapprehension among Nigeria's young people that Shisha is not harmful to their health. It seems that the misleading marketing messages of tobacco companies, which state that flavoured tobacco is a less harmful or "cleaner" product compared to traditional cigarettes, have met their mark. Dr Kemi Odukoya, Head of the Non-communicable Disease Research Group at the University of Lagos' College of Medicine, cautions that the risks associated with smoking (lung disease and cancers) hold true for both Shisha and electronic cigarette smoking, with additional studies having discovered the presence of other dangerous additives in these products.

"When they [the youth] are smoking [Shisha] they don't feel like they are smoking something that's dangerous. They tend to smoke for longer periods of time exposing the human body to the dangers of tobacco over prolonged periods of time", Dr Kemi Odukoya, Head, Non-communicable Disease Research Group, College of Medicine, University of Lagos.

Both Leonce Sessou of the African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) and Professor Hadi Mohammed Mamudu at the College of Public Health at East Tennessee State University in the United States,

highlight some concerning marketing tactics used by tobacco companies. These include the consistent placement of tobacco products near youth-centred locations, and sophisticated social media campaigns that deliberately appeal to young people.

They [multinational tobacco companies] don't want to be seen as the bad guys. They need to create a good image for themselves ... They are targeting youth and women, the two critical population groups that they need to sustain their market

Professor Hadi Mohammed Mamudu
College of Public Health, East
Tennessee State University

In addition to these strategies, multinational tobacco companies are investing in sponsorship programmes and youth-focused competitions that tap into the next generation of tobacco users. In 2019, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation (BATN) sought to target over five million young Nigerians via social media for an agribusiness campaign that offered lucrative cash prizes. Foundation for a Smoke-free World, funded by Philip Morris International (PMI) has partnered with the University of Nigeria Nsukka to sponsor agricultural research and to provide annual scholarships for students towards foreign studies.

Tobacco control advocates see these gestures as exploitation of the agricultural sector - which ultimately compromises the country's government - in the bid to capture the loyalties of Nigerian's youthful population with the purpose of cementing future lucrative markets.

[Watch the video report](#)

South Africa

In South Africa, nicotine containing e-cigarettes, found to cause alarming health issues in young people, have fallen through legislative gaps, leading to unrestrained marketing to teen vapers.

At a glance

- Originally devised as tobacco smoking cessation tools or alternatives to tobacco, e-cigarettes today are strongly marketed as leisure products and healthier alternatives to cigarette smoking.
- National surveys conducted in 2019 and 2018 in the United States and the United Kingdom point to millions of young vapers in the 11 to 18 age categories.
- In 2019 almost 3,000 hospitalisations and 68 deaths occurred predominantly amongst young Americans as the result of an emerging vaping-related illness known as EVALI.
- While e-cigarettes are not currently regulated under South Africa's Tobacco Products Control Act No. 83 of 1993, provisions for these products will be included in the proposed Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill.

SA teens totally lit in regulatory abyss

by Kerry McKay

Concerning evidence has begun to emerge in medical journals about toxins in some e-liquids that can cause lung damage, and mixtures that may damage human blood vessel cells, potentially increasing the risk for cardiovascular disease.

Originally devised as tobacco smoking cessation tools or alternatives to tobacco, e-cigarettes today are strongly marketed as leisure products and healthier alternatives to cigarette smoking. National surveys conducted in 2019 and 2018 in the United States and the United Kingdom point to millions of young e-cigarette users between eleven and eighteen years of age.

Although there are no statistics on South African young vapers, Zanele Mthembu, a public health advocate, says anecdotal evidence suggests that the country is sitting on a silent epidemic of underage users. A qualitative study by an academic at the University of Cape Town for the first time sheds some light on what young people think about vaping.

There are health concerns with vaping, evidenced in the sudden emergence of an e-cigarette, or vaping, product use-associated lung injury (EVALI) among American adolescents last year which saw almost 3,000 hospitalisations and 68 deaths.

Although Big Tobacco denies targeting young users, Philip Morris International (PMI) has come under fire for using young social media influencers to punt their IQOS heated tobacco device. Another local campaign aimed at Tinder subscribers (used predominantly by under twenty-fours) is shrugged off by a PMISA spokesperson as being aimed at adults and not youth.

In South Africa, vaping products remain unregulated, but a reworked piece of proposed legislation called the Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill will include provisions for electronic nicotine delivery systems.

Although currently before parliament, it is unclear when the Bill will be legislated, perhaps still taking a year or two. But for now, e-cigarette marketers benefit from the "free for all" market conditions to push their products with impunity to eager young vapers.

If you are vaping as an adolescent or teenager, your lungs are still growing. Maximum lung capacity is only developed at roughly 20 to 25 years of age. Young vapers may 'stunt' their lung growth and not reach their maximum peak

Professor Richard van Zyl Smit
Head, Lung Clinical Research Unit,
University of Cape Town Lung Institute

[Read the full article](#)



South Africa

In the absence of e-cigarette regulation, South Africa's youth fall prey to the aggressive marketing of e-cigarettes as cleaner alternatives to tobacco smoking.

At a glance

➤ The use of e-cigarettes, known as vaping, has grown exponentially around the world.

➤ The tobacco industry aggressively markets e-cigarettes as a safer alternative to conventional cigarette smoking despite contrary advice from the World Health Organisation and other credible public health institutions.

➤ Although tobacco cigarettes account for 94% of Philip Morris International's sales, e-cigarettes are increasingly being pushed in markets where cigarette smoking is declining.

Tobacco control advocates believe that South Africa's proposed Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill (which includes electronic nicotine delivery devices) will result in reductions in smoking-related deaths as well as positively contributing to better socio-economic conditions in the country.

The e-cigarette dilemma in South Africa

by Lorde Owakhe

The tobacco industry aggressively markets e-cigarettes as a safer alternative to conventional cigarettes despite advice from the WHO and other credible public health institutions that they are not.

The use of e-cigarettes, known as vaping, has grown exponentially around the world. In Johannesburg, South Africa, young people share their stories about what made them take up vaping, what they think of vaping as a practice, and whether they believe that vaping might be bad for their health. Some say they were drawn to the taste and smell of e-cigarettes; another by the large volumes of smoke that can be blown out.

The World Health Organisation has recommended that e-cigarettes are regulated in the same way as ordinary cigarettes; no sales to children, no vaping in public places, no advertising of vaping products. A young user recalls that the first time he became aware of e-cigarettes was when seeing stands (branded kiosks) prominently displayed in shopping malls. Here the products were marketed as a cleaner way to smoke, or an easier way to stop smoking.

"In Africa, multinational tobacco companies are only selling e-cigarettes in two markets, in South Africa and more recently in East Africa, but the rest of Africa, they're not selling it. Why? Because their future still lies in addicting young people to cigarettes. So this is about money for them; it's not about selling a less harmful product", Dr Yusuf Saloojee, Public health expert. Dr Yusuf Saloojee debunks tobacco industry claims in favour of e-cigarettes noting that these new technology tobacco products are just a ploy to keep those clients whom thanks to persistent exposure of the lethality of cigarettes by tobacco control

advocates, are reluctant to continue smoking. While South Africa has enjoyed success with the country's initial tobacco control laws, progress has since stalled. Zanele Mthembu, a public health advocate, believes that if new legislation, namely the proposed Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill (which includes electronic nicotine delivery devices) is passed, it will help close all the existing loopholes, and in doing so will improve socio-economic conditions as the health of the nation is better protected.

E-cigarettes are a very small part of their market but tobacco companies are pushing these in markets where cigarette smoking is declining. So what they're trying to say to people is you don't have to quit smoking. Just switch to vaping

Dr Yusuf Saloojee
Public health expert

Vocal pro-tobacco lobbyists state that the Bill will infringe the rights of smokers. Dr Catherine Egbe of the Medical Research Council notes that people make the mistake of thinking that because they have the right to freedom, they can smoke just anywhere.

"I have the right to breathe in fresh air. Yes, you have the right to do what you want to do, but when that right begins to harm your neighbour; when that right begins to harm your family members, then that right has to be curtailed", Dr Catherine Egbe, Specialist Scientist, South African Medical Research Council.

[Watch the video](#)

Uganda

The shrewd marketing tactics of tobacco multinationals, including tapping in to the power of digital media to drive tobacco consumption, is a source of concern for Uganda's Ministry of Health and tobacco control advocates.

At a glance

- ▶ In Uganda, 38 people die every day due to tobacco-related diseases, according to the Ministry of Health.
- ▶ Research undertaken by the tobacco industry itself acknowledges that by the age of 21, people are less likely to take up smoking.
- ▶ In 2016, a survey by the African Tobacco Control Alliance entitled "Big Tobacco, Tiny Targets: Tobacco industry targets schools in Africa" established unequivocal evidence of the tobacco industry's deliberate and systematic targeting of children in order to encourage smoking and the use of other tobacco products.
- ▶ Uganda has solid tobacco control legislation in the form of the Tobacco Control Act, 2015 and the Tobacco Control Regulations, 2019.

Exposed: Tobacco Industry Tactics in Uganda

by Cliff Abenaitwe

Government, especially the law enforcement arm must do all that is possible to implement the law. But also as citizens, we must stand out to say no to tobacco in order to save ourselves and save others. Remember tobacco kills the active users as well as the passive users. But most importantly, a tobacco-free generation is possible if we all work together.

Worldwide, tobacco is the single leading cause of preventable death, killing more people than HIV and Tuberculosis. Thirty-eight people die each day in Uganda due to tobacco-related diseases, according to the Ministry of Health.

Dr Hafsa Lukwata, the Tobacco Control Focal Person at the Ministry of Health in Uganda, says research undertaken by the tobacco industry itself recognises that by the age of twenty-one people are less inclined to start smoking. Logic suggests that Big Tobacco's key target market will be below the age of twenty-one.

A 2016 survey by the African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) entitled "Big Tobacco, Tiny Targets: Tobacco industry targets schools in Uganda" found evidence that the tobacco industry was deliberate in its targeting of young people. The survey found that in doing so, multiple strategies were utilised including marketing, advertising, product distribution near schools, and shop placement of tobacco products near sweets and chocolates.

More than this, tobacco companies are hooking in to the power of celebrity, which has tremendous sway with the younger generation. From performers and social media influencers to "slayers", musicians and comedians, these

celebrities are paid by Big Tobacco to use their products in images and video, presenting tobacco products to the youth as highly appealing.

"A lot of films, scripts by comedians, and all the other performers; a lot of presentations by the people who they call slayers, will contain a scene with the consumption of tobacco; either somebody smoking, chewing, sniffing, smoking shisha. And this is a subtle way", Baguma Richard, Coordinator, Uganda Health Communication Alliance (UHCA).

From a health perspective, Dr Hafsa Lukwata says that the tobacco industry costs the country a great deal of money: "My government colleagues must listen to this: for every one dollar that is paid in tax by the tobacco industry, we spend four dollars in treating the complications that arise from tobacco use."

The Ministry of Health has provided the country with solid regulations (in the form of the Tobacco Control Act, 2015 and the Tobacco Control Regulations, 2019) but it is up to Uganda's law enforcement to do all within its power to ensure successful implementation and compliance with the law. For Uganda's citizens, they have their role to play too; to simply say no to tobacco.

By the age of 21 people are less likely to start smoking. This was a finding from research which the tobacco industry undertook themselves. They really target young people so that they can have future customers

Dr Hafsa Lukwata
Tobacco Control Focal Person,
Ministry of Health, Uganda

[Watch the video report](#)

Kenya

"Stealth" marketing that uses social media and digital channels enables big tobacco in Kenya to circumvent the tobacco laws while driving the uptake of new products.

At a glance

- ▶ In November 2019, a landmark ruling against British American Tobacco (BAT) saw Kenya's Supreme Court dismiss an appeal by the tobacco multinational that the Tobacco Control Regulations of 2014 were instituted without following due procedure.
- ▶ In February 2020, BAT announced plans to build a Sh 2.5 billion (USD 22.9 million) factory to produce nicotine pouches for the African market called Lyft.
- ▶ The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that by 2030 there will be more than 8 million annual tobacco-related deaths globally.
- ▶ Tobacco control advocates call for Kenya's government to step up its efforts to fully implement the Tobacco Control Act of 2007 and the Tobacco Control Regulations of 2014.

New tricks used by tobacco firms to evade tough advertising regulations

by Jeckonia Otieno

With traditional cigarettes increasingly being denounced, tobacco multinationals are being accused of turning to other alternatives that will ensure continuity of their booming business. The tobacco industry actually acknowledges that new technology and smokeless tobacco products present a wide range of opportunities for growth.

In 2019, Kenya's Supreme Court dismissed an appeal by British American Tobacco (BAT) in which the multinational claimed that the country's Tobacco Control Regulations of 2014 were instituted without following due procedure. Amongst others, the Regulations prohibit nearly all forms of advertising and promotion of tobacco products, as well as some restrictions on tobacco sponsorship and the publicity of such sponsorship.

As consumers grow more critical of cigarettes, tobacco companies are investing in alternatives such as e-cigarettes to sustain and grow markets.

In February 2020, BAT announced plans to build a Sh 2.5 billion (USD 22.9 million) factory to produce nicotine pouches for the African market called Lyft. Internet searches reveal various websites that push the sale of these pouches, but BAT denies any link to these nor to third party social media accounts that market its products.

Professor Peter Odhiambo, a thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon warns that there is no safe form of tobacco, including the modified

tobacco products that are being pushed on the market. The World Health Organisation has estimated that by 2030 there will be more than eight million annual tobacco-related deaths globally.

"With more than 4,000 ingredients, removing combustion to eliminate tar does not guarantee the elimination of the other harmful ingredients," says Professor Peter Odhiambo, Thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon.

On several occasions, Kenyan tobacco control advocates have called on the government step up its efforts to fully implement the Tobacco Control Act of 2007, and the Tobacco Control Regulations of 2014, in the hope of potentially saving millions of Kenyans from the devastating consequences of tobacco.

Marketing, including online marketing, open display and corporate social responsibility, [are the means through] which the industry has kept on pushing its products, regardless of Kenya having a law against some of the activities

Emma Wanyonyi,
Former Executive Director,
International Institute for
Legislative Affairs (IILA)

[Read the full article](#)

Benin

The underhand tactics of multinational tobacco companies, from exploiting child street vendors to producing a skewed research study during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicate the urgency to ramp up West African tobacco control efforts.

At a glance

- Smoking causes 10 million deaths worldwide per annum, including one million deaths from passive smoking.
- In Niger, 60% of the population is less than 30 years old which makes it a buoyant market.
- Togo activists report that the tobacco industry has manufactured convertible tobacco products, making them more addictive to young people.
- In Benin during the COVID-19 pandemic, the tobacco industry released a study finding that just 5% of the victims of the novel coronavirus were smokers; a completely false statement according to Judith Sègnon Aguèh, the Tobacco Control Focal Point at the Ministry of Health of Benin.

Tobacco Youth Pandemic in Africa: Saving Youth from the Manipulative Tactics of the Tobacco Industry

by Claire Stéphane Sacramento

As 60% of the continent's population is under the age of 24, multinational tobacco companies are devoting their efforts to youth to recruit them as new users. This is evident in several countries in West Africa.

Tobacco use causes ten million deaths around the world each year, a million of which are the result of passive smoking. Over the last few years, the tobacco industry has been turning its focus towards Africa, with multinational tobacco companies devoting significant effort to converting Africa's youth into the tobacco markets of the future.

"Multinational tobacco companies target the African youth. And today through new information technologies and social media, the tobacco industry is captivating the youth," Saouna IDI Inoussa, President, SOS Tabagisme Niger.

The tobacco industry supports street vendors aged between 13 and 20 years. In doing so, it tries to gain some legitimacy, claiming that it provides employment for young people, but it is nothing but mere manipulation

El Hadj Daouda ADAM
SG, Association for the Defence of
Consumers' Rights in Chad

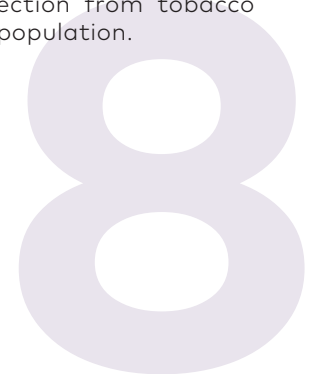
Interviews with tobacco control experts drawn from the public sector, civil society and rights-based associations in Benin, Niger, Chad and Togo, highlight the marketing tactics used by multinational tobacco companies in manipulating the behaviours of young people.

In Chad, the tobacco industry claims to be providing employment for thirteen to twenty-year-old street vendors, ostensibly offering them employment but ultimately drawing them into tobacco distribution. In Togo, innovative products such as convertible tobacco have made their way into the markets. For example, there are those that contain menthol capsules embedded in the cigarette filter which release a minty flavour into the cigarette, making them more addictive to young people.

Furthermore, the tobacco industry has reacted opportunistically – and in a bid to safeguard their own interests – during the COVID-19 pandemic, by undertaking a study on coronavirus-related deaths. The study claimed that just 5% of these deaths were of smokers, sending a dangerous "green light" message to the population.

While each of the countries highlighted in this report is engaged at its own level in tobacco control efforts, civil society actors perceive that there is still a long way to go in order to make sure that adequate protection from tobacco use is accorded the youth population.

[Watch the video report](#)



Senegal

Despite the special protections afforded Senegal's youth within the country's pioneering tobacco control laws, further refinements are necessary to plug legislative gaps and encourage compliance.

At a glance

- Statistics from 2013 on the prevalence of tobacco use among Senegalese young people aged between 13 and 15 indicate increased smoking (18.5% of boys and 11.5% of girls).
- The provisions of Article 17 of the 2014 Tobacco Control Law ban the sale or offering of tobacco or any tobacco product to, or by, minors.
- Instances of non-compliance with the 2014 Tobacco Control Law have been noted specifically regarding the provisions of Article 16, including a prohibition on the sale of cigarettes within 200 metres of schools and Articles 18 and 19, prohibiting the distribution of Shisha (Hookah) tobacco in public places.
- There are notable limitations in Senegal's Tobacco Control Law such as the authorisation of the sale of cigarettes in sticks, the authorisation of tobacco industry corporate social responsibility initiatives, and the sale of cigarettes in shops.

Are Senegalese youth adequately protected from the tobacco industry's tactics and manipulations?

by Baba Gallé Diallo

Through corporate social responsibility activities, the tobacco industry aims, on the one hand, to salve its conscience and on the other hand, to recast its public image.

Smoking amongst Senegal's young people is on the increase. In response, the government of Senegal made clear its intention to control the sale, distribution and use of tobacco through the enactment of a tobacco control legislation. But as the tobacco industry and other invested parties artfully exploit opportunities to push back against such legislation, there is mounting pressure for the government to fill the remaining legislative gaps, and to ensure adequate enforcement of the tobacco control law.

The adoption of this very important decree will position Senegal as a pioneer in West Africa, and will completely overturn all historical codes of tobacco distribution in Senegal, and thus lead to a new culture of formalised tobacco trade

El Hadj Daouda ADAM
SG, Association for the Defence of
Consumers' Rights in Chad

Senegal's 2014 Tobacco Control Law and additional articles (clauses) later developed, specifically contain measures to protect the youth. This includes comprehensive restrictions on tobacco advertising; on the distribution, sale and use of tobacco products (including flavoured tobacco products and Shisha); and on the distribution and sale of tobacco products to minors and by minors.

However, infringements and non-compliance of these provisions have been noted on several occasions. Tobacco companies have also sought to develop a cosy relationship with the Customs Authority through financial donations. Crucially, tobacco companies are using corporate social responsibility opportunities to polish their brand images.

A decree regulating the sale of tobacco under licence, which is deemed by the tobacco control community as critical for youth protection from tobacco, remains delayed.

The President of the Senegalese Tobacco Control League (LISTAB) has stressed the importance of the Head of State approval of this decree, which has the potential to neutralise tobacco industry influence on the tobacco distribution chain in Senegal.

[Read the full article](#)



The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) extends heartfelt appreciation to Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) for its support for this initiative.

