

# Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

## Essential Facts

### Advertising affects Tobacco Use

The tobacco industry spends billions of dollars each year to market its products.<sup>2</sup> The industry uses a mix of advertising, promotion and sponsorship tactics to directly affect tobacco use and attitudes related to tobacco. Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship:

- Promote tobacco use as customary and glamorous.
- Are deceptive and misleading.
- Weaken public health campaigns.
- Target specific populations such as women, youth, and minority groups.
- Increase tobacco consumption by:<sup>3,4,5</sup>
  - Attracting new tobacco users.
  - Increasing the amount of consumption among current smokers.
  - Reducing a smoker's willingness to quit.
  - Encouraging former smokers to start smoking again.

Through advertising of its products, the tobacco industry tries to create an environment in which tobacco use is familiar and socially acceptable, and the warnings about its health consequences are undermined.<sup>6</sup>

### Comprehensive bans reduce Tobacco Use

Comprehensive bans, which prohibit the use of all marketing strategies by the tobacco industry, reduce tobacco use among people of all income and educational levels.<sup>7</sup> Partial advertising bans are less effective, in part, because the tobacco industry switches its marketing efforts to unrestricted outlets when bans are not comprehensive.

- A study of 22 developed countries found that comprehensive bans reduced tobacco consumption by 6.3%.<sup>8</sup>
- A study of 102 countries showed that in countries with partial bans consumption only decreased by 1% compared with almost 9% in countries with comprehensive bans.<sup>9</sup>
- A study of 30 developing countries found partial bans were associated with a 13.6% reduction in per capita consumption, compared to 23.5% in countries with comprehensive bans.<sup>10</sup>

**“To sell a product that kills up to half of all its users requires extraordinary marketing savvy. Tobacco manufacturers are some of the best marketers in the world — and increasingly aggressive at circumventing prohibitions on advertising, promotion and sponsorship that are designed to curb tobacco use”**

—World Health Organization  
MPOWER Report, 2008.<sup>1</sup>



Walking cigarette box ad, Moldova



Tobacco billboard, India

### The World Health Organization (WHO) Framework convention on Tobacco control (FCTC) requires comprehensive bans<sup>11</sup>

The FCTC, the world's first global public health treaty, establishes a policy framework aimed to reduce the devastating health, economic, and social impacts of tobacco.<sup>12</sup> Article 13 of the FCTC requires Parties to implement and enforce a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship within five years of ratifying the FCTC.<sup>13</sup>

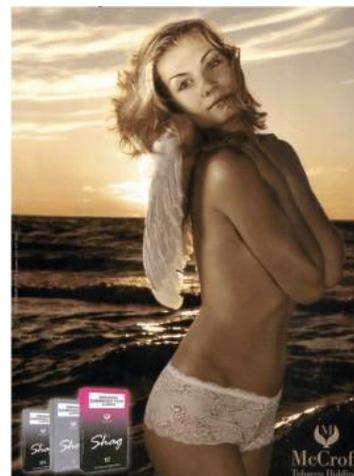
**Tobacco advertising and promotion** is defined in the FCTC as “any form of commercial communication, recommendation or action with the aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product either directly or indirectly.<sup>14</sup> Examples include:

- Broadcast, print and outdoor advertising.
- Point of sale advertising.
- Various sales and /or distribution arrangements with retailers for product placement, sales promotions and discounts.
- Product packaging.
- Advertising on the Internet.
- Use of tobacco brand names, logos, or visual brand identities on non-tobacco products, activities, or events.
- Placement of tobacco products or tobacco use in the entertainment media.

**Sponsorship** is defined in the FCTC, as “any form of contribution to any event, activity or individual with aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product or tobacco use either directly or indirectly.”<sup>15</sup>

Examples include:

- Sports.
- Cultural events.
- Concerts.
- School programs.
- Corporate social responsibility activities such as youth prevention initiatives and charitable contributions to public and private organizations.



Shag cigarettes ad, South Africa



Winston in Concert, Philippines



Basketball sponsorship, Indonesia

### Components of a comprehensive ban

Legislation for a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship must:

- Be complete and apply to all direct and indirect marketing and promotional strategies.<sup>16,17,18</sup> In countries with constitutional limits that prevent the adoption of comprehensive bans, policies, at a minimum, should require health warnings on all forms of advertising, promotion and sponsorships, and ban all forms of false, misleading or deceptive advertising.<sup>19</sup>
- Be broadly written to cover all forms of advertising, promotion and sponsorship.<sup>20</sup> If examples are included in the legislation, it should be clear that they are provided for illustrative purposes only and are not meant to limit the comprehensive ban in any way.
- Undergo periodic review and amendment to address new marketing tactics developed by the industry.<sup>21</sup>
- Cover all entities that engage or participate in tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship activities, such as media outlets and advertising firms.
- Cover cross-border advertising, promotion and sponsorship originating within a nation's territory.<sup>22</sup>
- Include clear enforcement mechanisms to ensure the laws are effectively implemented.<sup>23</sup>



*Motocross sponsorship, Argentina*



*Music concert billboard, Indonesia*

### Global progress on comprehensive bans

Countries have the right to restrict the marketing of harmful products to protect the public's health.<sup>24,25</sup> Countries which ban or restrict tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, include:

- All European Union countries<sup>26</sup>
- Australia<sup>27</sup>
- New Zealand<sup>28</sup>
- South Africa<sup>29</sup>
- Thailand<sup>30</sup>

### Key messages

- Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship encourage people, especially youth, to use tobacco, encourage tobacco users to use more, decrease users' motivation to quit, and encourage quitters to relapse.
- A comprehensive ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship reduces tobacco use; partial bans have limited or no effect on tobacco consumption.
- Parties to the FCTC are required to implement comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorships within five years of ratifying the FCTC as a part of an effective set of tobacco control policies.

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