



Supporting Enactment and Implementation of Comprehensive Tobacco Control Legislation in Jamaica

The Heart Foundation of Jamaica (HFJ)/Jamaica Coalition for Tobacco Control (JCTC) has received a grant from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids as part of the Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use. The grant will support the enactment and implementation of comprehensive tobacco control legislation and monitoring and enforcement of existing smoke-free regulations in Jamaica, aligned with the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The HFJ/JCTC project will support government and civil society actions to enact, implement, and monitor comprehensive tobacco control legislation in Jamaica, a draft of which is in an advanced state. The project will benefit from committed collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness, NGOs, civil society groups, medical organisations, JCTC members, local educational institutions, and the media.

The project is supported by technical expertise from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the Healthy Caribbean Coalition, and the InterAmerican Heart Foundation and is spearheaded by Executive Director of the HFJ and JCTC board member, Deborah Chen, with support from Programme Officer, Tobacco Control, Dania Bogle. The project is sited at the JCTC's Secretariat located at 28 Beechwood Avenue.

Benefits of Implementing Comprehensive Tobacco Legislation

According to the 2016-17 Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey ¹, 15% of Jamaicans age 15 and older, report currently use tobacco products. Tobacco was responsible for 11% of all non-communicable deaths and 3% of communicable deaths in Jamaica in 2004 ².

The Public Health (Tobacco Control) Regulations 2013 of Jamaica ³ bans smoking in public places and workplaces, mandates 60% graphic health warnings on cigarette packs, and requires the tobacco industry to disclose product content. It is anticipated that a ban on the marketing of tobacco products to children and young adults will reduce the rate of tobacco usage in Jamaica, and lower the rate of hospital admissions for smoking-related diseases which include cardiovascular diseases, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and reduce Government expenditure in the health sector.

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ⁴ is a legally binding treaty negotiated by the 192 member states of the World Health Organization. To date, 181 parties, including Jamaica, are Parties to the FCTC. The world's first public health treaty, the FCTC requires Parties to the treaty to:

- Implement the requirements of Article 5 of the WHO FCTC, to protect tobacco control policies from the commercial interests of the tobacco industry.
- Strengthen tobacco tax.

- Implement WHO FCTC measures for a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.
- Place effective health warnings on tobacco packaging.
- Implement smoke-free work and public places.

Jamaica became the 73rd country in the world to ratify the FCTC in 2005. The expectation is that the policies required or recommended by the FCTC will reduce tobacco use in Jamaica.

Tobacco Facts

Tobacco products include cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, bidi, clove cigarettes, snuff, snus, and heated tobacco products. Tobacco use kills more than 8 million people around the globe annually⁵, with approximately 1.2 million of those deaths being attributable to second-hand smoke. Tobacco use is linked to incidence of lung cancer, heart disease and chronic pulmonary respiratory disease, while second-hand smoke is linked to pregnancy complications, low birth weight and sudden infant death syndrome in babies^{6,7}.

The Heart Foundation of Jamaica

The Heart Foundation of Jamaica, established in 1971, is involved in prevention programmes for cardiovascular disease. The Foundation is a member of the InterAmerican Heart Foundation, the World Heart Federation, the Framework Convention Alliance, and the Healthy Heart Coalition. The JCTC, which was spearheaded-by the HFJ, was launched on World No Tobacco Day, May 31, 2002.

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is one of five implementing organisations of the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use and is a global force in the fight to reduce tobacco use. Through its vision: A future free of the death and disease caused by tobacco, the organisation advocates for public policies that prevent children from smoking, help smokers to quit, and protect non-smokers from second-hand smoke.

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