MEDIA OWNERS AND EDITORS IN CHIEF ROUNDTABLE ON TOBACCO CONTROL

HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL, NAIROBI 15TH MAY 2013
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Government of Kenya has taken concrete steps to domesticate the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and has developed a National Tobacco Control Action Plan (NTCAP) for 2010-2015. Smoking is now prohibited in public places and workplaces except in specially designated smoking areas, tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship has been banned and health warning must cover 30-50 percent of tobacco packaging and labelling.

The success of government and other efforts to control tobacco depends on the communication of key issues, resolutions, and initiatives on the widest possible scale. News media coverage is an important source of health information and can shape discussions of tobacco-related issues among both policymakers and the general public. Tobacco control advocates should then view the media as a valuable tool and develop practical strategies and ensure that they access and engage the media to champion their cause.

The Africa Media Initiative (AMI) received a grant from the ‘Campaign for Tobacco – Free Kids’ to run the media leaders roundtable, a series of training workshops for journalists on developing a tobacco control agenda as well as running a pilot case of a ‘Fellowship Programme’ for journalists.

The African Media Initiative (AMI) organized a media round-table workshop that targeted media owners and editors in chief from major media houses including but not limited to Royal Media, Nation Media Group, Capital FM, Ghetto Radio, Radio Africa, Parents Magazine among others in Nairobi and civil society organizations working on tobacco control advocacy in Kenya. The roundtable of Kenyan media leaders and editors in chief was intended to bring to their attention the importance and relevance of a tobacco control agenda.

The African Media Initiative (AMI) is the continent’s largest umbrella association of African media owners, senior executives and other industry stakeholders. AMI’s mandate is to serve as a catalyst for strengthening African media by building the tools, knowledge resources and technical capacity for African media to play an effective public interest role in their societies. This mandate includes assisting with the development of professional standards, financial sustainability, technological adaptability and civic engagement.

The objective of the workshop was to develop an alliance of stakeholders (media, civil society and legislators) to push for a pro-tobacco control agenda and ensure that it translates into policy, promote a less polarized coverage of tobacco issues so as to enable the emergence of a balanced, accurate and unbiased tobacco control agenda, develop and explore new strategies for involvement of the media in tobacco control, and engage media leaders and editors in chief to treat tobacco control stories as newsworthy.
BACKGROUND
Currently, epidemiological survey results show that 26% of the general Kenyan population smokes tobacco\(^1\). That means about 8.4 million Kenyans are currently addicted to the nicotine in tobacco. It is even more worrying to note that 13% of primary school children smoke\(^2\) which translates into over one million underage smokers and it has been found that girls are now taking up the habit almost the same as boys. These troubling figures should ring loud alarm bells because if the number of smokers continue to rise, Kenya runs the risk of having a generation of disabled people.

Today’s news media extends beyond newspapers, radio, and television bulletins. New technologies such as the Internet, handheld computers, and mobile telephones have revolutionized the way people obtain their news. The news media are recognized as among the world’s most influential and powerful institutions. Public media is irreplaceable as a mechanism for moving a problem to a solution.

In the field of public health, research has established that the news media serve as an important source of health information for members of the general public. Given the potential of the media as a channel of influence, media advocacy should be a key aspect of tobacco control and strategic efforts to attract media attention to this issue should be prioritized to harness the impact and attention the media can provide.

Internationally, tobacco issues have become newsworthy as organized national and public health efforts to reduce tobacco use have grown and tobacco issues have become more politicized. Tobacco control has received wide coverage various issues such as tobacco deaths, increase of cigarette taxes, and criticism of tobacco industry advertising and enforcement of smoke-free law among others. Much of the increase in international news coverage has resulted from the rise in the number of newsworthy tobacco-related events internationally. In Kenya, reporting has primarily focused on the links between smoking and adverse health outcomes. This creates an opportunity for the Kenyan media to focus on other areas or develop newsworthy facets of tobacco control.

The greatest power of the media is focusing or gaining attention for particular issues, referred to as “Agenda Setting”. The other part is the selection of the issues, and how they will be shaped for public consumption, referred to as “News Framing.” Media advocacy should be targeted at these two aspects of media because tobacco-related news coverage guides people’s thoughts about tobacco and plays an important role in determining how people address the issue of tobacco.

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\(^1\)World Health Survey and NCDs Risk Factors’ Survey
\(^2\)Global Youth Tobacco Survey
OPENING SESSION
The welcoming remarks were made by Dr Roukaya Kasanelly of African Media Initiative, who after welcoming all to the workshop, mentioned that the workshop was a first of a series planned for the tobacco control agenda. A training workshop was to be held on the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} of May 2013. The training was meant for journalists from the various media houses in Kenya and is meant to provide a better understanding of tobacco control and to get the media to highlight the issues surrounding tobacco control. AMI spearheads developmental issues across the continent and thus the tobacco control agenda falls among the many agendas to improve development in Africa. She stated that the media has a social responsibility to inform people to make the right choices hence the crucial role of the media in educating and informing audiences. The workshop thus was intended to provide necessary tools for the journalists to use while reporting on the effects of tobacco and tobacco control. She highlighted AMI’s sixth pillar of content development - The African Story Challenge (TASC) where there is need to come up with stories that are contextual to Africa, by lack of this content there has been lack of home grown solutions.

OVERVIEW OF A PRO-HEALTH AND TOBACCO CONTROL IN THE MEDIA
(See annex 1 for full presentation)

The Overview of a Pro-Health and Tobacco Control in the Media was presented by Dr. Roukaya Kasenelly, who highlighted the tobacco industry to be having a great impact on children and adolescents, often reversing public health gains made in the 1970s and 1980s. The tobacco industry has a high penetration in developing markets which has resulted in deaths related to tobacco increase significantly. The global funding for tobacco control has been insignificant compared to a US $ 400 billion industry that promotes tobacco. Meanwhile the tobacco companies are aggressively using a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework that promotes ‘socially responsible’ elements of their business practices.

The tobacco control has been set on the context of rights approach to development, as a part of the health in the post 2015 development agenda, in the advance and value health equity, in the right to health and sustainable health systems, in the integral part of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of which 3 out of 8 goals are related to health). It is also set in the context of the Framework Convention on tobacco control of World Health Organization (WHO), and finally in the context of the African Tobacco Control Consortium (ATCC) present in 10 Sub-Saharan African countries and works on strong media advocacy arm.

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) was adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2003 and enacted in February 2005. Its aim is to respond to the globalisation of the tobacco epidemic and is an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health. Its current membership is 176 parties.
representing 90% of the world population and in recent years. There has been a growing political recognition of the role of the FCTC on the global health / development agenda

The importance of the media was highlighted as the media communication plays a key role in shaping tobacco-related knowledge, opinions, attitudes and behaviours among individuals and within communities, considering that the cigarette is the most heavily marketed product. Evidence from controlled field experiments and population studies shows that mass media campaigns designed to discourage tobacco use can change youth attitudes about tobacco use

Media Advocacy Strategies were also presented because working with the media to bring about policy change is of essence. Agenda setting where creating the necessary public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media was discussed to be one of the media advocacy strategies as the Agenda framing which refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover and the way audiences interpret what they are provided.

There is need to secure media buy in by understanding and documenting on how media has and reports on tobacco issues. Making a case of media’s key role as part of its public service advocacy and enhancing the depth and breadth of news coverage by providing a greater appreciation of the complexities of tobacco control and effective remedies is hoped to secure the media buy in. This can also be done by generating newsworthy reports that go beyond the usual beats, supporting media houses with specialised capacity building programmes, tapping into the potential of new media platforms and creating a collaborative framework between the various stakeholders (advocacy groups, media and legislation). Finally the media buy in can be secured by developing a tobacco control media agenda premised on the gender media reporting. There has to be a commitment to reporting on health related issues and tobacco control agenda just the same way the gender related issues are reported in order to mainstream the issue.

She concluded by stating that there is need for a better comprehension of the ‘environment’ in which the tobacco industry operates, the need for a paradigm shift in reporting tobacco related issues, creating a more informed citizenry when it comes to public health choices and balancing commercial and public interest. The presentation led to a discussion on how to create a synergy among the several stakeholders in pushing the agenda of tobacco control. The participants agreed that there has to be a sustained campaign against the use of tobacco pointing out that it does not have to be a one off affair, and for this to happen support must be provided for the media houses for example in terms of capacity building programmes on coverage of tobacco control stories.
LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON TOBACCO CONTROL IN KENYA
(See annex 2 for full presentation)

Legal Framework on Tobacco Control in Kenya was presented by Mr. Hillary Cheruyot of ILA, who started his presentation by introducing ILA after which he proceeded to explain the reasons behind tobacco control stating that tobacco causes the largest single preventable disease and death in the world. Smoking increases the risk of disabling and fatal conditions like heart diseases, cancer and bronchitis. It also affects reproductive health and that growing of tobacco causes environmental hazards.

There are three Tobacco Control Instruments; the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Tobacco Control Act, No. 4 of 2007. Tobacco Control Act was passed in 2007 and its objectives are to protect the health of the individual against illness, disease, disability and death caused by tobacco. To protect purchasers/consumers of tobacco products from misleading/deceptive inducements to use tobacco, to protect the health of minors, Inform/educate/communicate to the public on the harmful effects of tobacco, promote the right to smoke-free environment, to promote the interest of tobacco growers by providing viable alternatives, to provide for rehabilitation and cessation programmes for smokers, to adopt effective measures to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco and to promote research and dissemination.

Highlighted was the government’s mandate to promote public awareness on health consequences of tobacco use, to provide training and or sensitization programmes on the effects of tobacco to concerned persons including media professionals, and to finally adopt the tax and price policies. Thus Kenya has a comprehensive legal and legislative tobacco control framework, and there is need for more public education and awareness on the devastating effects of tobacco. The enforcement of the Act still requires more effort and collaboration and a dire need for training and capacity-building for enforcement agents (media and others).

PLENARY DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The workshop facilitator Mr. Levi Obonyo led the plenary discussion after the workshop presentations. The participants were asked to give feedback on whether or not their media houses cover tobacco related issues, to discuss on the challenges they might be facing when it comes to covering tobacco related issues, how they can be assisted in promoting tobacco control agenda and what can be done to create the focus needed for the tobacco control agenda.

**Media Feedback on Tobacco Control Agenda**

The presentations generated a lot of discussion on the four issues raised above. On the coverage of tobacco related issues, it was clear that most media houses cover less if none at all. Most media houses cover health issues in general and not on tobacco control
specifically. For example Star News has health issue coverage on all sorts of drugs including but not limited to miraa, cigarettes, alcohol among others. The Parents Magazine covers a wide variety of topics related to tobacco control. Being a magazine that promotes family issues, the magazine has widely covered stories on the effects of tobacco by the survivors, victims and even doctors who deal with these cases. These include stories of smokers and the tobacco smoking repercussions. It handles first hand cases of people struggling to quit smoking, people sharing how their parents died from tobacco side effects and those who have lost their vocal cords due to smoking.

The challenges the media faces when it comes to covering tobacco related issues include; the packaging of the stories and issues to be covered. Tobacco control is seen to not have much and the stories covered would be termed as not ‘sexy’ enough. The priorities are usually given to issues like politics and any current event. Therefore there is a need to package coverage in a better and interesting way. Another challenge brought up by the participants was the issue of sustainability of the coverage. How much tobacco control can be covered and for how long? The biggest challenge is the airtime costs for the media houses, who will cover the costs? As it is important to remember that the media houses are commercial and the competition among them can lead to the tobacco control coverage being ignored. These challenges are in addition to intimidation from the tobacco industries and corruption, as there have been cases where the tobacco industry bribe journalists not to carry a story or worse still journalists are threatened.

The media houses can be assisted in promoting tobacco control agenda by developing content to be covered by the journalists for example good stories that have led to tobacco use being controlled or production of it reduced and alternative livelihoods provided for the tobacco farmers. Most radio stations concentrate on playing music but maybe there is need to introduce some educative content to get the youth to listen for awareness creation. Campaigns need to be up scaled to reduce the use of tobacco. Media counsel should be able to provide support when it comes to content being aired in the media. Media owners and leaders should have a talk to the sales people on the airtime costs to promote tobacco control, and least but not last training of journalists on the coverage and packaging of the tobacco related stories as there is need to give a good reason why tobacco control should be promoted.

Suggestion for thinking out of the box when it comes to the airing of health issues is one among the many issues that can be done to create the focus needed for the tobacco control agenda. Taking the discussions as a development agenda not just a tobacco issue only could be a start for example focusing on cancer; number of doctors available and treatment affordability. The statistics of non-communicable diseases are on the rise and thus there is need to create awareness. A Connection to the 2030 vision can be made and statistics used to show how the workforce will be in the future if tobacco control agenda is not pushed. Division of health promotion could work with NGO’s and the media to figure out how they
can partner to promote health issues in the media and link all the chains. Social media can be used to sustain the debates on tobacco control. The Kenyan government could give tax incentives to media houses that promote tobacco control.

The media could open debates with county Governors on the development issues and by probing and keeping check on these issues being done by the counties to eradicate poverty for example could lead to covering tobacco related issues. Poverty has been known to be the main cause of most drug abuse cases. The western world has some certain disdain to developmental journalism but there is need to look at this critically. Maybe professionals are needed to write or provide content on these issues for example columnists with content being brought in. There is need to understand the micro-environment for example linking the dots in between environment, poverty and health issues. Ensuring how policy can be included in the development agenda, ensuring the influence in the legislature to promote tobacco control and having home grown content is essential.

Messages being aired should be done in a fun way for the younger generation. The tobacco industry interference in the media houses was mentioned as being a major challenge to the media and the whole tobacco control agenda. If editors buy the tobacco advocacy then it would help to promote tobacco control but one finds editors being compromised by the tobacco industries. Media has a way of promoting tobacco smoking, showing pictures of celebrities smoking among others. The media needs to be part of the campaigns to reduce the use of tobacco.

The need to understand each media houses separately was suggested during the discussion. The media has to air what is going on and so no matter what it is people are doing be it smoking, drinking among others as long as it is what is in vogue. The media though could be countered by being provided for information and content on tobacco control coverage. An example is how Internews gives its journalist cases to cover which has been seen to assist Internews in achieving their objectives of covering the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The sponsor should be able to work with the editors when it comes to airing of the information. Provision for training for editors will be essential because they are the ones who will assign the journalists to cover tobacco related stories. It is important to be realistic on the goals that we can reduce smoking not stop. Challenges would be to do it in such a way that the media houses do not come across as activists. The information should be given in a way that gives people a choice to quit or not pick up smoking. It was agreed that the need for training is enormous especially for journalists in the rural areas and this is due to the shift of focus to the Counties, and the need to improve the expertise of the journalists.

Finally Ms. Edna Gathecia of African media initiative explained to the participants what the Fellowship being organized by African Media Initiative will be all about. Specialized and continuous training for the media community should be giving priority to develop strategies to leverage on the power and influence that the media has in order to improve tobacco
control coverage in the media. Also such training should be extended to include new media user such as bloggers and other influential content generators. In addition to the above, it is important to create and support champions for tobacco control within the journalistic corps and this was being proposed through the setting up of a ‘Tobacco Control Journalism Fellowship Programme’.

The African Media Initiative (AMI) proposes to conduct a series of training / capacity building workshops for senior and middle journalists aimed at building and consolidating critical skills and techniques to better comprehend the tobacco control agenda. Develop and operationalise a ‘Tobacco Control Journalism Fellowship Programme’. The main objective will be to offer fellows the necessary support, time and structure for journalists and civil society advocates to pursue in-depth and investigative work in the field of tobacco control in the media. The workshops will be targeted at journalists working social or health-related beats in major media houses in Nairobi. Civil society organizations working on tobacco control advocacy in Kenya will also be invited.

CONCLUSION

The roundtable workshop concluded with the participants all agreeing that there is an urgency to promote tobacco control and reporting on health and tobacco related issues. That mentioned it was agreed that there is need to come up with an objective for the Tobacco Control Agenda and this is in terms of creating a driving force with an end result for the campaign, for example having the legal frameworks being enforced as the implementation is almost always lacking despite attempts by the Kenyan government to enforce the Act. The need to look at advocacy strategy in a way that the journalists’ safety is ensured was discussed and this is because the tobacco industry is largely profit making and will not stand back and watch their industries being shut down. Dr. Roukaya closed the meeting thanking all the participants for their attendance and mentioned looking forward to working with them to promote the tobacco control agenda.
ANNEXES

Annex 1
Overview of a Pro-Health & Tobacco Control in the Media

The Tobacco Industry in a Nutshell

- Impact on children and adolescent most visible, often reversing public health gains made in the 70s and 80s
- High penetration in developing markets
- Death related to tobacco on the rise
- Global funding for tobacco control insignificant compared to a US $ 400 billion industry that promotes tobacco
- Tobacco companies are aggressively using a CSR framework that promotes ‘socially responsible’ elements of their business practices

Setting the Context

- Rights approach to development
- Part of the health in the post 2015 development agenda
- Advance and value health equity
- Right to health and sustainable health systems
- Integral part of MDGs (3 out of 8 goals are related to health)
- Framework Convention on tobacco control of WHO
- The African Tobacco Control Consortium (ATCC) - present in 10 Sub-Saharan African countries – strong media advocacy arm

Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)

- Adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2003 and enacted in February 2005
- Aim is to respond to the globalisation of the tobacco epidemic and is an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health
- 10 years down the line: current membership is 176 parties representing 90% of the world population
- In recent years, been a growing political recognition of the role of the FCTC on the global health / development agenda
Media: Why and What it can do?

- Media communication plays a key role in shaping tobacco-related knowledge, opinions, attitudes and behaviours among individuals and within communities
- Cigarette most heavily marketed product
- Evidence from controlled field experiments and population studies shows that mass media campaigns designed to discourage tobacco use can change youth attitudes about tobacco use

Media Advocacy Strategies

- Working with the media to bring about policy change
- Agenda setting – creating the necessary public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media
- “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” (Bernard Cohen, 1963)
- Agenda framing: refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided.
- Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings. Frames influence the perception of the news of the audience, this form of agenda-setting not only tells what to think about, but also how to think about it.

Securing Media Buy in

- Understanding and documenting on how media has and reports on tobacco issues
- Making a case of media’s key role as part of its public service advocacy
- Enhance the depth and breadth of news coverage by providing a greater appreciation of the complexities of tobacco control and effective remedies
- Generating newsworthy reports that go beyond the usual beats
- Supporting media houses with specialised capacity building programmes
- Tapping into the potential of new media platforms
- Create a collaborative framework between the various stakeholders (advocacy groups, media and legislation)
- Developing a tobacco control media agenda premised on the gender media reporting

Concluding Remarks

- Better comprehension of the ‘environment’ in which the tobacco industry operates
The need for a paradigm shift in reporting tobacco related issues

Creating a more informed citizenry when it comes to public health choices

Balancing commercial and public interest

Annex 2

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON TOBACCO CONTROL IN KENYA
15th May 2013

About ILA

• The International Institute for Legislative Affairs (ILA) is a not for profit organization that works with policymakers, government departments, Members of Parliament, and other stakeholders to draft and lobby for pro-people legislation and policies

• ILA’s thematic areas include public health (tobacco and alcohol control)

• ILA was involved in the drafting and passage of the Tobacco Control Act, 2007

• ILA is also involved the development of Tobacco Control Regulations and the Policy

Why tobacco control?

• Tobacco causes the largest single preventable disease and death in the world

• Smoking increases the risk of disabling and fatal conditions- heart diseases, cancer, bronchitis

• Affects reproductive health

• Growing tobacco causes environmental hazards

Tobacco Control Instruments

• The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

• Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

• Tobacco Control Act, No. 4 of 2007

Constitution of Kenya

• Recognize international conventions-Art 2

• The Bill of Rights-Article 19

• Right to clean and healthy environment-Art 42

• Right to the highest attainable standard of health-Art 43
• Consumer rights-Art46

Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)

• This is the first global health treaty under WHO
• It was adopted on 21 May 2005 and entered into force on 27 February 2005
• FCTC is a global effort to reduce tobacco use
• It reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health
• There are now 176 State parties
• Kenya ratified the FCTC in June 2004
• Domesticated under the Tobacco Control Act

Tobacco Control Act

• Passed in 2007
• Has 7 parts
  • Preliminary (definitions/objectives)
  • Establishes the Tobacco Control Board
  • Information, education and communication
  • Tobacco products
  • Promotion
  • Exposure to tobacco smoke
  • Enforcement

Objectives of the Act

• Protect the health of the individual against illness, disease, disability and death caused by tobacco
• Protect purchasers/consumers of tobacco products from misleading/deceptive inducements to use tobacco
• Protect the health of minors
• Inform/educate/communicate to the public the harmful effects of tobacco
• Promote the right to smoke-free environment
• promote the interest of tobacco growers by providing viable alternatives
• Provide for rehabilitation and cessation programmes for smokers
• Adopt effective measures to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco
• Promote research and dissemination

Public awareness and information
• Govt to promote public awareness on health consequences on tobacco
• Training/sensitization programmes on tobacco to concerned persons including media professionals
• Tax and price policies to be adopted

Promotion of Tobacco Products
• Promotion defined as
  • Representation, including advertisement, whether direct or indirect;
  • Any communication of information about a product or service and its price and distribution, that is likely to influence and shape attitudes, beliefs and behaviour
  • Has the effect of inducing use of tobacco
  • Creating goodwill for the tobacco manufacturer
• Promotion prohibited
• Misleading testimonials not allowed (e.g. keep walking)

Advertising
• Any statement, communication, representation or reference aimed at the public and designed to promote or publicise a tobacco........
• The use of a tobacco product or manufacturer’s name in any advertisement or promotion aimed at the public........
• Product stacking and displays of any kind or size
• Promotion by advertising (print, electronic or any other form of communication) prohibited
• Lifestyle advertising banned
• Promotion by sponsorship (sports, cultural, recreational, educational or entertainment) prohibited
• Contravention punishable by a fine of Kshs 500,000 or 3 years’ or both

Exposure to tobacco smoke
- Right to a clean and healthy environment
- Protection from exposure to second-hand smoke
- Smoking in public places prohibited

Subtle advertisements?
Packaging and Labelling

Conclusion

- Kenya has a comprehensive legal and legislative tobacco control framework
- There is need for more public education and awareness on the devastating effects of tobacco (WNTD)
- Enforcement of the Act still requires more effort and collaboration (smoking areas, sale, promotion)
- Need for training and capacity-building for enforcement agents (media and others)

What can you do?

“News media coverage is an important source of health information and can frame discussions of tobacco-related issues among both policymakers and the general public. As a result, media coverage has the potential to affect individual attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes regarding tobacco use.”