

Tobacco and Poverty: Research for Advocacy Guidelines



Tobacco and Poverty: Research for Advocacy Guidelines

**Written by Debra Efroymson, Sian FitzGerald,
and Lori Jones**

HealthBridge Foundation of Canada, Ottawa

March 2011



This guide was funded by the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (BI) through a grant from The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Purpose of this Guide	1
1.2	Tobacco and Poverty as a Development Issue ...	2
1.3	Research for Advocacy	4
2	KEY ISSUES IN TOBACCO AND POVERTY	8
2.1	Tobacco Expenditure and Opportunity Costs ...	8
2.1.1	Per capita expenditures	9
2.1.2	Opportunity costs of tobacco	10
2.2	Tobacco Farming and Production.....	13
2.2.1	Harmful effects of tobacco production.....	15
2.2.2	Lack of profitability.....	15
2.2.3	Child employment.....	16
2.2.4	Opportunity cost for family labour.....	17
2.2.5	Contracting issues	17
3	UNDERTAKING RESEARCH FOR ADVOCACY	19
3.1	Getting Started.....	19
3.2	Methods Used in Research for Advocacy	20
3.2.1	Secondary data analysis.....	20
3.2.2	Opinion polls and surveys	22
3.2.3	Review of tobacco industry documents	23
3.2.4	Qualitative research	24
3.2.5	Literature reviews.....	28
3.3	Other Sources for Research for Advocacy	29
3.3.1	Economics data	29
3.3.2	Poverty indicators.....	30
3.4	Presenting Research Results for Advocacy	32
4	KEY ADVOCACY MESSAGES	34
4.1	Higher Taxes Reduce Tobacco Use.....	34
4.2	Tobacco Control Can Create Jobs.....	34
4.3	Tobacco Control Benefits the Economy	36
5	CONCLUSION	37
	APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	38

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Guide

This guide is intended for those conducting research for advocacy in tobacco and poverty; it is aimed at both tobacco control advocates who wish to address tobacco and poverty issues and researchers who wish to get involved in tobacco control by exploring tobacco and poverty. This guide will be of most use to people who wish to improve tobacco control policies and who are interested in generating new tobacco control-related research ideas that will support their advocacy goals.

As guidelines, these are meant to be adapted to local needs and local circumstances, as the intersection of tobacco and poverty plays out differently in different countries and regions. These guidelines are therefore intended more to suggest possibilities than to provide a strict regimen; as such, they illustrate potential influential issues to investigate.

The guide highlights some of the key issues in tobacco and poverty that can most effectively be addressed through research for advocacy, and offers examples of how to design and undertake that research. Specifically, the guide aims to:

- illustrate why tobacco and poverty is an important development issue;
- explain how research can be used for advocacy;
- highlight the key issues relating tobacco and poverty and how they may be addressed through research for advocacy; and
- propose guidance for and concrete examples of tobacco and poverty research for advocacy.

1.2 Tobacco and Poverty as a Development Issue

While significant advances have been made and continue to be made in tobacco control internationally, including in low-income countries, significant gaps remain. One gap that needs to be addressed is the lack of understanding of tobacco control as an important development issue and its links to poverty reduction.

In many countries, tobacco control continues to be seen solely as a “health” issue. In low-income countries with many immediate causes of ill health, the long-term illnesses caused by tobacco use and manufacture are not always perceived to be urgent enough to address as a development priority. However, tobacco may also have a great impact on poverty, and thus reframing tobacco control as a poverty issue would help to highlight the potential impact of tobacco manufacture and use on child malnutrition, education, and family economic well-being, in addition to health. Raising awareness of the tobacco-poverty links could therefore help to both incorporate tobacco control into global and national development agendas and make an examination of tobacco control as a poverty alleviation measure attractive to non-health players. Raising awareness through country-specific evidence can influence development agencies with poverty reduction objectives to prioritize tobacco control as a development issue and motivate governments to address tobacco control through national poverty alleviation schemes.

There are a number of links between tobacco and poverty:

- ◆ The **poor have higher smoking rates than the rest of the population**, but can afford tobacco least. All expenditures on tobacco represent lost funds that could have been spent on basic needs such as food, education, and health care.
- ◆ Many **tobacco farmers find that rather than generating**

real income on the crop, they simply fall further into debt. This is in part because tobacco is a very chemically-intensive and labour-intensive crop, requiring not only high fertilizer and pesticide inputs but also much labour. Many of those employed in tobacco production earn very low wages and work in inhumane working conditions. In addition, farmers have no control over the grading of their product or of the price that they receive for it; this can mean that they earn less than it cost to grow the crop. However, since they normally obtain loans from the company for seed and fertilizer, tobacco farmers cannot stop growing tobacco until they repay the loan—a system that benefits the industry. The high labour costs can also mean that parents do not send their children to school, thereby virtually ensuring the generational continuation of poverty.

- ◆ **Tobacco consumption can affect the family economy** in several important ways. First, it reduces the total amount of money available for basic needs, as mentioned above. It also potentially increases health costs and reduces productivity as a result of illness.

According to the South East Asia Tobacco Control Alliance,

Tobacco spending contributes to poverty in two ways: tobacco expenditure is welfare-reducing¹, and at the same time reduces welfare-enhancing expenditures for education, health or nutrition. Tobacco spending also contributes to widening the gap between the rich and the poor, because the poor have higher rates of smoking and spend a higher proportion of their income on tobacco.²

¹ That is, it reduces the physical well-being of people in terms of the negative health effects that it causes.

² *The Collaborative Funding Program for Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Research Regional Research Report on Tobacco*. Bangkok: Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, 2007.

HealthBridge and others have conducted several studies on tobacco and poverty.³ The study by Efroymsen et al, for example, estimated that tobacco expenditures by the poor could instead be used to purchase enough healthy food to spare 10.5 million Bangladeshi children from their current state of malnutrition⁴. Related research was undertaken on the economics of tobacco in Vietnam⁵, as well as on tobacco and poverty related to production and use in India and Bangladesh⁶. These research studies laid the groundwork for WHO's 2004 World No Tobacco Day theme of "tobacco and poverty," and provided the impetus for the production of this guide to encourage others to undertake similar work to further address the knowledge gap about the tobacco-poverty link.

1.3 Research for Advocacy

Extensive research has already demonstrated the tobacco-health link, and there have also been numerous epidemiological studies measuring prevalence rates of tobacco consumption. Studies have also been conducted to determine how best to achieve behaviour change related to tobacco use. The results of these studies have shown that one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco consumption is to change the environment within which tobacco is consumed. For example, tobacco use can be

³ WHO. *Tobacco and Poverty: A Vicious Circle*. Geneva: WHO, 2004. www.who.int/tobacco/communications/events/wntd/2004/en/wntd2004_brochure_en.pdf.

⁴ Efroymsen D, Ahmed S, Townsend J, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* (2001) 10: 212-217.

⁵ Hoang MA, Le TT, Tran T, Kinh HV, Efroymsen D, FitzGerald S. *Tobacco over Education: An Examination of the Opportunity Losses for Smoking Households*. Hanoi: HealthBridge Vietnam 2005.

⁶ Efroymsen D, ed. *Tobacco and Poverty: Observations from India and Bangladesh*. Dhaka: HealthBridge 2002.

reduced through the implementation of laws and policies, such as those that ban all forms of tobacco advertising, make public places smoke-free, and place strong and pictorial warnings on tobacco products. However, these types of changes require political will. Governments must be moved to make change⁷. One tool that can be used to catalyze such change is targeted research for advocacy.

Research for advocacy has a very targeted goal: to provide specific evidence of the need for a certain policy or program, or to demonstrate public opinion around a certain government action or planned action. The point of research for advocacy is to provide evidence to influence policy. What distinguishes *research for advocacy* from other types of research is its focus on laws and policies. The research is conducted with specific policy aims in mind, as part of an overall strategy to provide evidence for the passage and implementation of specific laws and policies. For example, while a study on youth smoking rates may have important repercussions for programs working with youth, it is not likely to provide key messages that influence policy. On the other hand, research which demonstrates that children are highly aware of tobacco advertising, or that people support a ban on tobacco advertising, feeds directly into policies on tobacco advertising. This guide looks specifically at rapid and targeted research directly related to government policy.

Research for advocacy can serve to:

- **provide the information needed to convince government** and other decision-making bodies of the importance of a specific cause;
- **respond to a specific objection** that is raised about tobacco control recommendations; or

⁷ In this context, political will refers to convincing policymakers that it is more to their benefit to act in the interest of public health and wellbeing than for the sake of the tobacco industry.

- **demonstrate popular support** or lack of support for a specific policy or program.

To undertake research for advocacy, researchers must define the problem, the desired solution(s), and the audience they wish to reach.⁸ While the overall problem may be tobacco use, research for advocacy generally addresses a more specific problem that leads to tobacco use. Examples include advertising of dangerous products, taxation that fails to encourage positive purchases but rather encourages harmful ones, and lack of knowledge about the harm and benefit of different products or choices. The solutions could then be advertising bans, higher taxes on all tobacco products, and better warnings on tobacco products. The research results must reach the policymakers who can make the recommended changes. In addition, researchers may want to reach the general public, so that they will support the recommended laws — and thus increase the chance that the laws will be passed and enforced.

Once the problem, solution(s), and audience are clear, researchers can begin to identify their strategy to collect the evidence that will support the desired solutions. Research for advocacy does not need to be lengthy or costly. It can be performed quickly, in a matter of weeks or months, and can produce key information that is directly relevant and meaningful to policymakers.

The main reason to conduct research for advocacy on tobacco and poverty is to contribute key advocacy messages to effect policy change. Research on how tobacco use can exacerbate poverty is important to:

- **generate interest and action** among development agencies, including NGOs and international donors, in

⁸ Wallack L, Woodruff K, Dorfman L, and Diaz I. *News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications 1999.

tobacco control;

- **increase government commitment** to take proven, effective action on tobacco control; and
- **contribute to international understanding** of the tobacco-poverty nexus, as a catalyst for change.

There are research for advocacy targets all along the tobacco continuum, from growing through harvesting and processing, to sale and use. Therefore, research could look at individuals or groups involved in various aspects of the chain, including tobacco farmers, those involved in processing tobacco (e.g., making bidis⁹ or working in a cigarette factory), and low-income users. Several or just one of these groups or aspects of tobacco may be addressed.

⁹ Also sometimes spelled beedis, these are inexpensive hand-rolled cigarettes. In India they are made with tendu leaf, while in Bangladesh they are rolled in paper.

2 Key Issues in Tobacco and Poverty

There are several key issues related to tobacco and poverty that would benefit from further research for advocacy, both globally and in specific countries. Many of these issues are inter-related and overlapping, particularly as they impact on poverty. Tobacco consumption can impact poverty through opportunity costs; for example, by reducing available income for basic needs. Tobacco production can increase poverty by trapping producers in a cycle of debt. Examples of these issues are discussed below.

2.1 Tobacco Expenditure and Opportunity Costs

Tobacco is mostly consumed by the poor, who can least afford such purchases and who potentially would be significantly better off if they spent their money on food or other basic needs rather than on tobacco. While spending less money on tobacco is no guarantee that low-income users will spend more on basic needs, it is nevertheless true that money spent on tobacco inherently means that less money is available for other needs. While it is ideal to demonstrate that those spending less on tobacco *do* in fact spend more on basic needs, it is equally meaningful to demonstrate the *potential* for doing so. When researchers can demonstrate the potential savings and benefits of buying food rather than tobacco, other organizations may become interested in implementing campaigns that could, in turn, ultimately lead to an actual shift in expenditures.

Some of the key links between tobacco and poverty – related particularly to expenditure and opportunity costs – that are useful for influencing policy include:

▣ **actual per capita monthly expenditures on tobacco versus other expenditures** on food, housing, education, and health care relative to total expenditure or income;

▣ **opportunity costs of purchasing tobacco for**

individuals/families (what food or other products could be purchased on the typical weekly or monthly expenditures of a tobacco user);

▣ **opportunity costs of purchasing tobacco at the national level** (the total expenditure on tobacco for the country; that is, average expenditures times total users, compared to national expenditures on development, health care, etc.; or the quantity of foodstuffs or other basic needs that could be purchased if money spent on tobacco was redirected to basic needs).

Each of these points is explored in more detail below.

2.1.1 *Per capita expenditures*

At the most basic level, comparing per capita tobacco expenditures against expenditures (monthly, daily, or yearly) on food, education, and health care provides a picture of how household income is distributed and how much of that income goes to tobacco rather than other basic needs that would benefit the entire family. For example, research in Bangladesh¹⁰ showed that when tobacco expenditure is analyzed by income group, a very striking picture of how income is allocated becomes evident: the lowest income group spent almost ten times as much on tobacco as on education, while the highest income group spent more on education than on tobacco. This is true even when both the total amount spent on tobacco and the percentage of total income spent on tobacco were higher in the higher income groups.

The results are similar from related studies undertaken in Vietnam. One study found that the poorest 20% of the population spent 150% more on tobacco than on education,

¹⁰ Figures taken from Efroymson D, Ahmed S, Townsend J, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* (2001) 10: 212-217.

while among the richest 20% the percentage was only 46%.¹¹ Other studies observed that households without smokers spent more money on education per student than did households with smokers; smoking households classified as very poor spent 2.3 times more on tobacco than on education per pupil.¹² Likewise, comparisons could be made of tobacco expenditures against housing, food purchases, or health care. Making the same comparisons over time could demonstrate whether, as income increases, the allocation of expenditures shifts to basic needs or other goods, or whether tobacco expenditures change.

Another way to examine expenditures is to compare male and female expenditure patterns related to tobacco (and types of tobacco purchased) against per capita expenditures on food, housing, health, and education. This would be particularly illustrative when examined in terms of household expenditure decision-making roles and responsibilities. For example, can significant differences be seen in how household income is spent where women have more responsibility for overall household spending? There are numerous other ways to analyze the data, and the researcher could use his/her imagination to identify the most meaningful linkages.

2.1.2 *Opportunity costs of tobacco*

Household Level

Beyond just looking at the actual expenditures on tobacco versus other household basic needs, including food, housing, and education, it is even more powerful to

¹¹ Hoang VK, Ross H, Levy D, et al. The effect of imposing a higher, uniform tobacco tax in Vietnam. *Health Res Policy Syst* 2006;4(6). <http://www.health-policy-systems.com/content/4/1/6>

¹² Hoang MA, Le TT, Tran T, Kinh HV, Efroymsen D, FitzGerald S. *Tobacco over Education: An Examination of the Opportunity Losses for Smoking Households*. Hanoi: HealthBridge Vietnam 2005.

extrapolate this comparison to demonstrate what is not being purchased. In other words, what amount of food, housing, or education *could have been purchased* with the amount that was spent on tobacco, if it were so redirected? Table 1 provides sample figures for different types of tobacco, average expenditure by sex, and the equivalent in calories of rice (that is, quantity of rice that could be purchased with that same expenditure multiplied by its caloric value).

Table 1 Average daily expenditure on tobacco, Bangladesh, 1997¹³

Type of tobacco	Average expenditure on tobacco		Equivalent calories of rice	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Average - all types of tobacco	\$0.11	\$0.06	1,402	770
Bidi	\$0.06	\$0.07	797	907
Cigarettes	\$0.24	\$0.15	2,942	1,869
Hukka/pipe/etc.	\$0.06	\$0.04	715	522

Presenting calories rather than serving sizes allows a comparison of the potential impact of tobacco expenditure on poverty-related malnutrition. At the same time, it permits the researcher to demonstrate the potential *reduction in malnutrition* if poor smokers were to redirect their tobacco expenditures to food products instead. This would be done by presenting the potential increase in consumption of high nutrient foods (such as eggs or milk) or staple foods (such as wheat or rice) should money spent on tobacco be spent on food instead. Using a table such as the one below, a researcher could substitute the caloric value of rice in the table above for any of the following foodstuffs.

¹³ Efroymsen D, Ahmed S, Townsend J, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* (2001) 10: 212-217.

Table 2 Average cost and caloric value of high value food products, Bangladesh, 1997

Foods	Cost in taka/kg	kg/1000kcal	cost/1000kcal
Potatoes	8	1.1	9.0
Pulses	36	0.3	10.5
Beef	70	0.9	61.4
Puishak	7	3.7	25.7
Rice	14	0.3	4.1
Hilsa fish	78	0.4	28.6

Similar comparisons could be made between tobacco expenditures and children’s education costs (including school fees, books and other materials, school uniforms, transportation, etc) or housing (rent, cost of toilet, etc.).

National Level

The opportunity cost of tobacco expenditure extends beyond the individual smoker and his/her family. As noted in the quote below, the opportunity cost of tobacco expenditure affects entire countries and directly contributes to national-level poverty.

Smokers in Vietnam spent 5,834 billion VND (\$US416.7 million) on cigarettes in 1998. This amount could buy 1.6-1.8 million tons of rice, which is sufficient to feed 10.6-11.9 million people per year.¹⁴ [Likewise... the] amount spent annually in Cambodia on tobacco products is equivalent to the price of 274,304 tons of high quality-rice, 1,388,382 bicycles, or to 27,778 large wooden houses in the provinces.¹⁵

¹⁴ Kinh HV, Nguyen TM, Nguyen TTH, Nguyen TL, and Vu TBN. “Financial Burden of Smoking on Households in Vietnam.” In: *The Collaborative Funding Program for Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Research Regional Research Report on Tobacco*. Bangkok: Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, 2007.

¹⁵ Sisovanna S. “Tobacco, Poverty and Socio-Economic Status in Cambodia.” In: *The Collaborative Funding Program for Southeast Asia*

Similarly, the quantity of rice that could be purchased with cigarette expenditures in Cambodia would be enough to feed 1.82 million poor people, representing 38.8% of the those living below the poverty line (4.68 million people).

Other studies have addressed the issue of health costs to governments incurred for treating diseases caused by smoking. Their results suggest that the lifetime health costs of smokers are greater than non-smokers¹⁶.

A significant national-level opportunity cost arises from the disproportionate cost to governments (largely related to health care for tobacco-related illness) than the “benefits” derived from tobacco industry contributions to national budgets (through taxes and other means). In Vietnam, for example, the contribution to the state budget by the tobacco industry is equivalent to only one-third of the total tobacco spending by Vietnamese smokers and certainly does not cover the health care costs incurred as a result of their use of tobacco.

2.2 Tobacco Farming and Production

The tobacco industry often claims that large numbers of people – mostly tobacco farmers and their families, but also those employed as producers and sellers of tobacco products – are dependent on tobacco for their livelihood. The industry may inflate the number of people employed in the tobacco industry by including those for whom tobacco cultivation is only one of many sources of income: those who grow tobacco as well as other crops, or who sell tobacco as well as a variety of other products. However the numbers are calculated, concerns about the livelihoods of

Tobacco Control Research Regional Research Report on Tobacco. Bangkok: Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, 2007.

¹⁶ Pham THA, Efroymsen D, Jones L, et al. “Tobacco and Poverty: Evidence from Vietnam.” *Tobacco Control*, Published Online First March 31, 2011, DOI: 10.1136/tc.2010.039735.

those currently employed in some way by tobacco production often deters governments from taking strong action to reduce tobacco use – believing that tobacco control would reduce tobacco production and cause unemployment. While it is true that a large number of people are currently dependent for employment on tobacco production, the shift to other products would be a very gradual process, and there is no sound basis for believing that there will be sudden massive unemployment.

But what is the truth about most tobacco producers? Are they really making a liveable wage, with which they can support their families? Under what conditions do they actually work? Exploring these sorts of questions sheds a very different light on the economic benefits that the tobacco industry claims to provide.

Both qualitative and quantitative research can be helpful to examine the range of issues related to tobacco production. Case studies of tobacco farmers and of those engaged in tobacco production can present a human face to the employment numbers. Some of the key links between tobacco and poverty that are related particularly to tobacco production and are useful for influencing policy include:

- ▣ **physical harms** caused by handling green tobacco or agricultural chemicals;
- ▣ **poor working conditions** in tobacco factories: e.g., being forced to sit in uncomfortable positions for hours on end, or inhalation of tobacco dust;
- ▣ **lack of profitability** of tobacco growing: e.g., farmers who take out loans from the tobacco industry but are unable to sell the leaf at a price sufficient to repay the debt are regularly forced to continue growing tobacco for the companies;
- ▣ **child employment** in tobacco cultivation and production;

- ▣ **opportunity costs** for family labour involved in tobacco farming, at the expense of education or more profitable labour;
- ▣ tobacco industry **contracting conditions** which contribute to poverty.

2.2.1 *Harmful effects of tobacco production*

Tobacco cultivation exposes workers to a range of dangerous chemicals and to the toxins found in green tobacco. Documented negative health effects include incidences of Green Tobacco Sickness¹⁷, symptoms of which include nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and severe weakness. These symptoms may be accompanied by fluctuations in blood pressure or heart rate. Abdominal cramping, headaches, chills, increased sweating, salivation and difficulty breathing are also common.

Being employed in tobacco factories can subject people to extremely difficult working conditions. For example, workers in Bangladeshi bidi factories must spend many hours sitting in cramped positions performing repetitive tasks, breathing air thick with tobacco dust. Such conditions result in many respiratory and other physical health impacts.

2.2.2 *Lack of profitability*

Many of those employed, formally or informally, in cultivating and making tobacco products are extremely poor. Most tobacco farmers fail to earn a decent living, due to high cost of requisite agricultural inputs to grow tobacco, high labour demands, and the low sales price paid by the monopolistic industry¹⁸

¹⁷ McKnight RH, Spiller HA. “Green Tobacco Sickness in Children and Adolescents.” *Public Health Rep* (Nov-Dec 2005) 120(6):602-5.

¹⁸ For an excellent source on this, see Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, *Barren Leaf, Golden Harvest: The Costs of Tobacco Farming*. 2001.

In some cases, tobacco employment actually serves not to lift people from poverty but rather to keep them entrenched in it. For example, bidi workers – mostly women and children – earning only pennies a day¹⁹ are unlikely ever to emerge from poverty. Unfortunately, calculating whether or not growing tobacco is profitable to farmers can actually prove quite complicated, as can assessing the potential or feasibility of alternate crops; such research is generally beyond the scope of research for advocacy. However, research for advocacy describes the issues and highlights the problems, and thereby questions the industry's claims. This in turn can potentially stimulate larger research studies to examine profitability and crop replacement.

2.2.3 Child employment

Children are often used in the production of tobacco products, such as bidis, because their small fingers are efficient and because they can be made available during the more intense labour periods. The same is true of children helping on family tobacco farms, when extra hands are needed. There are intensive periods of work in tobacco cultivation and production, and it is easier and less costly for families to use their children to do this work than to hire casual help (as members of the family, children do not represent a direct labour cost). Children are taken out of school during these intensive periods of labour. Thus there is an important lack of educational opportunities for children employed in tobacco cultivation and production, which contributes to multi-generational poverty.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/campaign/global/FCTCreport1.pdf>.

See also "Informative Document: Economically Sustainable Options for Tobacco Growing." *Second Session of the WHO FCTC Conference of the Parties*. Bangkok, Thailand. June 30 – July 6, 2007.

¹⁹ Blanchet T, "Child work in the bidi industry, Bangladesh," In: Efroymson D, ed. *Tobacco and Poverty: Observations from India and Bangladesh*. Dhaka: HealthBridge 2002.

2.2.4 Opportunity cost for family labour

When opportunity costs for the family labour used in tobacco cultivation and production are taken into account, it is often not profitable to farm tobacco.²⁰ The apparent profitability for the family is in fact a deception, because the family members work for free. Most farmers economize on the cost of labour required for producing this highly labour-intensive crop by using their own labour and that of their families (especially of women and children). In fact, they could better use their time on gainful employment, and profits would occur from growing less labour-intensive food crops. Some of the greatest obstacles that prevent tobacco farmers from shifting to food crops are the lack of availability of loans to grow food and the lack of storage and transportation facilities to move food crops to the market. That is, rather than growing tobacco because it is profitable, farmers may grow it because they lack the basic opportunities to profitably grow food.²¹

2.2.5 Contracting issues

Two main groups of tobacco farmers have been identified in various countries: those contracted directly by the industry and those without contracts. Some with contracts (usually the larger-scale farmers) are able to command a reasonable price for their crop, making growing tobacco at least comparable economically to other common crops. Other smaller-scale farmers with contracts often find themselves forced to accept whatever price the industry offers for the leaf, even if that means losing money when selling the tobacco. For those without a contract, the

²⁰ Naher, F and Chowdhury AMR. *To Produce or Not to Produce: Tackling the Tobacco Dilemma*. Research Monograph Series No. 23. Dhaka: Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC, 2002.

²¹ Naher, F and Efroymson, D. *Tobacco Cultivation and Poverty in Bangladesh: Issues and Potential Future Directions*. Geneva: WHO 2007.

situation is usually worse. Attracted by the seemingly high profits of those contracted to grow tobacco, others will start to grow tobacco. They can sometimes sell their leaf to the contracted farmers, but usually at a low price, and often they have difficulty finding a market if the contracted farmers do not require additional leaf. It is worth examining what the situation is in different countries and whether the issue of contracted versus non-contracted farmers exists; where it does, the tobacco industry is likely to cite the success of a sub-set of contracted farmers and extrapolate their profits across all tobacco farmers, contracted or not.

It is often difficult for small farmers to access loans to grow food crops. The tobacco industry is often ready to provide loans to grow tobacco, on the provision that the farmers sell the leaf to that company. Such a deal, however, means that the company itself will determine the grade and thus price of the leaf, sometimes to the farmer's economic loss. Many farmers do not themselves understand the details of their contract. They can also be misled into taking a loan which they are unable to repay, and then find themselves forced to continue supplying tobacco to the company until the loan is repaid, in "an endless cycle of debt".

3 Undertaking Research for Advocacy

3.1 Getting Started

When planning research for advocacy, it is important to start with a few key questions:

- ◆ **What policy goal does this research address?** Since research for advocacy is so closely linked with policy, the policy goals should be clear before the study is planned. Section 4 of this guide offers suggestions on research targeted to specific advocacy goals.
- ◆ **Is this research relevant to the policy goal?** Research for advocacy should be targeted and should be designed to meet specific objectives. If a particular policy issue is being debated, it is important to have results that specifically address that issue. To determine what sort of research will be useful, it is important to understand the political climate. For example, if the government is reluctant to institute strong policies to reduce tobacco use due to fears of negative consequences on employment, it is helpful to show that many of those employed through tobacco are being exploited by the industry and would likely benefit more from alternate income possibilities of growing other products. If the government is reluctant to raise taxes due to arguments by the industry that it already pays more tax than any other industry, research could illustrate the point (through information about the tobacco-poverty connection) that the tobacco industry profits substantially from the world's poorest, with tax payments equalling only a small portion of that profit.
- ◆ **Will the research be completed in time to meet the policy objectives?** Research for advocacy responds to actions in the policy arena. If the response takes too long, then its utility will be drastically reduced.
- ◆ **How will the research results be used to advocate for the**

policy goal? When designing a research study, it is important to have a plan for disseminating the study's results. How the results are presented, as well as the presentation format, will depend on the target audience. Research for advocacy can be an important part of a media advocacy campaign, for example. Gaining media attention to tobacco and poverty issues is critical, and new research findings can be one way of gaining publicity. Being creative with results is an important consideration in attracting the media.

- ◆ **Is the information already available?** Do not reinvent the wheel, or repeat research that already has been conducted. Always start with what is already available. Also beware of officials who say “but we need a local study”—while it may sometimes be true, there may be a comparable study that would provide the required evidence. Always consider the wisest use of funds available; for example, analyzing existing national statistics rather than collecting data to demonstrate the need for action can be important research for advocacy.

3.2 Methods Used in Research for Advocacy

A variety of methods can be effectively used in research for advocacy; some examples of information gathering methods are summarized below.

3.2.1 *Secondary data analysis*

In some countries, national surveys exist on population expenditures on various goods and services, including tobacco. Such surveys provide researchers with a large sample size and usually a wide range of information, which allow for many types of analyses, depending on the research goals. It is usually possible through secondary data analysis to produce studies comparing tobacco expenditures to expenditures on education, health care, or food.

Using existing data does require the researcher to be flexible when planning his/her research to accommodate the information/statistics available; however, it also significantly reduces time and cost. Relevant national data may often be found in standardized Living Standards Surveys, national health surveys, poverty and malnutrition surveys, and others; all of these should be explored before embarking on data collection. It is important, of course, to be very clear about the data indicators being used, e.g. monthly versus daily expenditures, individual versus per capita, absolute versus proportional.

With national data on tobacco expenditures, for instance, it is possible to estimate the contribution that could be made to reducing malnutrition among children if smokers purchased food instead of tobacco. Virtually every country has national data on the number of malnourished children under a certain age (i.e., 5 or 14). Using these data, it is possible to make an estimate of how much malnourishment could be reduced (how many currently malnourished children would have enough to eat if their parents bought food instead of tobacco) by taking the percentage of malnutrition or underweight and multiplying it by population figures for the age group of interest, using the most recent census data available. (It is important to make notes on and reference the sources of the figures and estimations.) For instance, if 50% of children are malnourished, and upwards of 50% of the poor spend enough on tobacco to save one child from malnutrition, then a conservative estimate is that for each two poor smokers, one child could be saved...thereby cutting malnutrition in half.

If there are no figures available related to average expenditure on tobacco by income group, it may be possible to arrive at a reasonable estimation from other surveys. Surveys may exist of the average quantity of tobacco consumed per tobacco user which can then be multiplied by

the price of low-cost tobacco products. Likewise, with estimates of the money spent by the poor on tobacco and the number of malnourished children in the family, one can calculate the tobacco expenditures as potential food purchases (of staple foods only, or of a mix of staple and more nutritious foods) by representing those purchases as calories. This allows one to arrive at an estimate of the potential decrease in malnutrition if undernourished children were consuming those available calories (see section 2.1).

3.2.2 *Opinion polls and surveys*

Opinion polls and surveys can be useful to show, when it is the case, that the general public supports the policy being promoted. Evidence of public support can reassure the government that it will not lose popularity if it enacts laws to protect public health. If the public is not supportive, then it may be the researcher's task to educate people about the importance of those policies, to gain more support and better compliance.

Numbers can be very powerful tools for responding to industry arguments or for persuading politicians to take action. However, when drafting questionnaires, be sure to understand how the information collected will be used so that only useful information is collected. Information costs money and time to collect; therefore it is important to collect only what can be used.

Survey questions should be clear, specific, and phrased in a way that is unbiased. For example, the following three questions about income from tobacco may yield very different answers: "Is your livelihood dependent on tobacco?" or "Do you earn sufficient income to meet all of your basic needs from growing tobacco/rolling cigarettes?" or "Do you wish you were engaged in some other occupation instead, and if so, what other occupation?" As

answers to the latter two questions would provide more insight into the farmers' situation than would answers to the first question, it is important to have a very clear understanding of what information you want as you design your questions. It is even more important that the questionnaire be pre-tested to ensure that the questions are being understood as intended.

Respondents' answers will vary greatly between even very similar questions, depending on the exact wording used. Be aware of your power to influence results by the way you frame questions. For example, you would probably get quite different answers to "Do you earn sufficient income to meet all of your basic needs from growing tobacco" and "Do you NOT earn sufficient income to meet all of your basic needs from growing tobacco?" You would expect those who answered yes to the first to answer no the second. But experience shows this is not the case. Pilot testing variations on your key questions will help you understand how your questions are being interpreted by the respondents.

Sampling is a key step in carrying out surveys, and there are numerous methods of sampling. If the sampling is not done correctly, then the data collected may not be valid or useful. Whether or not samples need to be representative, an accepted and documented sampling method must be used. A reliable resource on sampling methods should be consulted prior to designing the questionnaire (<http://www.statpac.com/surveys/index.htm#toc>; <http://stattrek.com/AP-Statistics-2/Survey-Sampling-Methods.aspx?Tutorial=AP>).

3.2.3 *Review of tobacco industry documents*

References to tobacco industry behavior in a given country can be very useful for attracting the attention of media and politicians and, sometimes, for countering their own arguments. Some excellent information taken

from tobacco industry documents and about the industry's work in low-income countries is available, for instance, on the ASH UK website (www.ash.org.uk). For example:

- *“We should not be depressed simply because the total free world market appears to be declining. Within the total market, there are areas of strong growth, particularly in Asia and Africa... It is an exciting prospect.” (BAT)*
- *In Uganda, 12 million people get malaria each year, and 110,000 die. BAT and other corporations blocked a government malaria prevention programme to treat farm workers' homes with pesticides - because of fears the chemicals might contaminate their crops. www.ash.org.uk*
- *In Kenya, BAT's political connections resulted in a new law compelling farmers to sell tobacco to BAT. It was already paying farmers less than other companies.*

3.2.4 Qualitative research

Qualitative research can be used to better understand the results of quantitative research. For example, if during the opinion poll you found that most tobacco farmers were not meeting their basic needs, yet they did not want to get out of tobacco farming, qualitative research could help determine why this apparent contradiction exists. (Perhaps all other options in their neighbourhood are perceived as even worse, or they have been threatened, or some other reason that would not come out unless you took the time to talk to them, which cannot be done in large scale surveys).

A second value of qualitative research is to generate quotes and case studies with which to back up quantitative research. Qualitative research can address issues that cannot be measured through numbers. For instance, numbers of deaths do little to convey the misery of the survivors of Green Leaf Sickness, or the suffering of a child

whose father committed suicide by drinking agricultural chemicals for tobacco cultivation. Similarly, benefits from the policies being promoted may be best expressed in words, such as the wife of a former tobacco user expressing her pleasure at having more money available and thus being able to feed her children better, or of former tobacco farmers relieved at having an easier life and higher income now that they grow vegetables.

Various methods of qualitative research exist; some books you may wish to consult are in the Additional Resources section. Whichever method you use, it is important to consider getting ethical review approval of your proposed research study, particularly if you plan to publish the results.

Qualitative research methods include:

- ◆ **Direct observation** (e.g. of tobacco farmers, home bidi rollers, factory workers);
- ◆ **In-depth interviews** (IDI) or key informant interviews (e.g., with those employed via tobacco or with those in a position to comment on employment, such as local religious leaders, teachers, politicians); and
- ◆ **Focus group discussions** (FGD), usually with a carefully selected group of specific sex, age, or work status. The advantage of groups is that the energy in the room can lead people to be more open than they would be during an IDI, while the disadvantage is that some people may be uncomfortable saying certain things, or may say some things other than they feel, because they are in a group.

For each of these methods detailed guides should be consulted before proceeding.

(<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualmeth.php>;
<http://www.fhi.org/NR/rdonlyres/etl7vogszehu5s4stpzb3tyqlpp7rojv4waq37elpbyei3tgm4ty6dunbccfzxtaj2rvbaubzmz4f/overview1.pdf>).

Interesting quotes may be offered from the research:

“My brother and I, we don’t like this work. But our parents don’t want to know. If I don’t go to the factory, I get no food.” –8-year-old bidi roller in Bangladesh

“I often cannot meet my expenses. I have to borrow money to meet the family expenses, and the educational costs of my children. I always hope for profit and continue growing tobacco, but usually I just run into debt.” – Bangladeshi tobacco farmer

One sub-contractor, referring to a sign at the entrance of a factory stating that he is against child labour, remarked, *“The owner placed this here but he does not want to stop child labour. Nor does the government. Who will work for \$0.35 a day? No adult. We need the children. The owner gives us \$0.59 for this work but we get it done for \$0.35. We cheat the children.”*

“Before I was healthy. Now I am weak and thin. Every day I breathe tobacco gas and fine tobacco dust. It is very hot at the factory. There is no circulation of air. And for hours I must sit in the same position. You see how small I am. That is why I don’t have a normal growth, because I spend all of my time sitting.”–12-year-old boy²²

*“Growing tobacco requires much more working time and labor than other crops like rice or maize... Children aged from about 10 and above have to work for their family”*²³

Still not sure what sorts of questions to ask in your

²² The above examples are taken from Efroymson D, Ahmed S, Townsend J, et al. “Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh.” *Tobacco Control* (2001) 10: 212-217.

²³ Nguyen TH, Hoang VM, Kim BG. “Impact of Tobacco Growing on the Livelihood and Health of Tobacco Farmers and Environment: A Preliminary Study in Vietnam.” Bangkok: SEATCA 2008.

qualitative research? The sample questions below will of course have to be revised based on local circumstances.

Tobacco farmers

- Do you have a contract directly with the industry? Do you think the terms are good? Do you understand your contract? Are you satisfied with the price you receive for your crop, or do you ever feel that you are being underpaid for your tobacco leaf? Do you think that you are making money by growing tobacco?
- Do you take loans from the industry? If so, what amounts, when, to do what? Do you have any difficulties repaying the loans? Have you tried to get loans to grow something else, and if so, what was the result? If you could get a loan to grow food instead of tobacco, would you be interested in switching crops?
- Have you/any family members ever experienced any physical problems from handling green tobacco or from using agricultural chemicals? Please describe.
- Do your children help on the farm? Do they go to school (sometimes, regularly)? If your children help on the farm, what kinds of tasks do they perform, and how do you feel about using their labour?
- Do women in your family (also ask this to women!) work on the farm? Do they still have time for family chores? If they feel any pressure, please describe.
- Do you cure (dry) the tobacco you grow? If so, please describe the process. Do you feel it has any effect on your health? On the environment?

Makers of tobacco products

- What work do you do in tobacco production?
- How much are you paid? Is it a reasonable/fair wage? Is it enough to support your family?

- How are your working conditions: hours, vacation, difficulty of the work, physical problems, exposure to tobacco dust, boredom; conditions in the workplace (access to a decent toilet, canteen facilities, breaks)
- What is the relationship between workers and managers/owners in your job?

Users

- Do you or your close family members use tobacco?
- Do you feel that you/family members have money for tobacco but not for basic needs?
- Have you ever calculated what you/family members could buy instead if they did not buy tobacco?
- Do you think the poor are better served with lower prices on tobacco or on food prices, school fees, etc.?

3.2.5 Literature reviews

Before undertaking research, it is important to understand what has already been done. For example, while in 2000 a literature review would have turned up very little on tobacco other than prevalence and health care costs, over the last ten years a number of studies have been conducted related to the subject of tobacco and poverty. An examination of the literature, both published and unpublished, might also reveal patterns or findings not previously noted or reported upon. If the topic being researched has already been addressed in a country other than your country of focus, there may be important information that can be extracted from that research which might prevent unnecessary data collection. Furthermore, existing studies conducted with a non-tobacco control objective may be amenable to re-analysis with a view to linking poverty measures to tobacco expenditures or consumption. There are also some useful books that outline methods for searching the literature:

(http://york.ac.uk/inst/crd/systematic_reviews_books.htm; <http://www.cochrane.org/traning/cochrane-handbook>).

3.3 Other Sources for Research for Advocacy

3.3.1 Economics data

The argument for policy change is strengthened by data illustrating that the measures you recommend will not unduly hurt the economy, and could in fact be beneficial. Possibilities include:

- Asking low-income smokers whether they would prefer to have the price low on tobacco or on food.²⁴
- Asking low-income smokers how they would be likely to react to an increase in tobacco prices.
- Conduct a few simple calculations of potential employment benefits of switching expenditures from tobacco to more labour-intensive goods/services (or use figures from the World Bank's *Curbing the Epidemic*).
- Utilize the experience of various countries (described in the World Bank, *Curbing the Epidemic* and elsewhere), and taking into account increases in the young population, estimate the likely decrease in numbers of tobacco users from any likely decrease in prevalence due to policies, over time (e.g. it may take 10-20 years for the number of tobacco users to decrease significantly; hence, such policies are highly unlikely to have any effect on employment).
- Compare import-export figures on tobacco for a given country (as most countries are net importers of tobacco, most lose large quantities of foreign exchange on it).

²⁴ *Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh: Research and Recommendations on Agriculture and Taxes*. Dhaka: WBB Trust and HealthBridge 2007.

3.3.2 *Poverty indicators*

Definitions of poverty are numerous; it can be measured in a variety of ways, none of which are totally satisfactory. The most common measure of poverty is daily income. Poverty is also sometimes measured with nutrition indicators, for example a minimum daily caloric intake. If existing measures of poverty are available in your setting, they should be used to analyse the link between tobacco and poverty. However, do carefully consider the validity of the indicator in your setting. For example,

In Vietnam, poverty is [measured by] household expenditures, including expenditures on tobacco. This is a rather misleading measure of poverty given that tobacco expenditures contribute to poverty. As noted in a study by SEARCH, some families labelled as non-poor based on their expenditures would be labelled instead as poor if their tobacco expenditures were deducted. If those people who should be labelled as food poor (but are not) were included [in the total numbers], the number of food poor would increase significantly; if those who are newly (and more correctly) classified as food poor shifted those tobacco expenditures to food, then the number of food poor families would decline by 11.2%.²⁵

Whichever measure of poverty is used, it is helpful to calculate expenditures on tobacco relative to that measure, so that a direct comparison can be made. If poverty is defined by other measures, such as availability of a toilet, type of roof on the house, children going to school, etc., then tobacco expenditures could be translated into expenses on those commodities or basic needs.

A powerful argument for the link between tobacco

consumption and poverty can be made by comparing the daily amount spent on tobacco to the amount needed to purchase enough food to pull one or more children out of malnutrition. The simplest calculation uses caloric intake (and caloric intake can be used as a measure of poverty). Taking the most common food product consumed by the poor, how many calories could one purchase using the daily (or monthly) tobacco expenditures? As a result, how many children would move from below to above the minimum caloric intake? Other options would be to identify high nutrient-value foods that could be purchased, or a food basket, or to calculate whether an additional meal per day could be purchased, and for how many people.

If no information is available on the number of low-income tobacco users, apply national prevalence figures. That is, if it is known that 35% of the adult population smokes but no figures are available for low-income smokers, one can simply use the 35%, knowing it will likely be an underestimate, since low-income earners are more likely to use tobacco.

The estimated figures of calories that could be purchased if tobacco expenditures were redirected to food purchases can be applied to people who do not get enough to eat:

*The average low-income tobacco user spends 100 units of local currency on tobacco each day. With that same expenditure, s/he could purchase enough additional food to raise one child under five years out of malnutrition. **OR***

In X country, there are two million children who are malnourished. As there are roughly 500,000 low-income smokers whose expenditures on tobacco could be redirected to food, the number of malnourished children could be reduced by one quarter simply by diverting tobacco expenditures among the poor to food.

²⁵ *The Collaborative Funding Program for Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Research Regional Research Report on Tobacco*. Bangkok: SEATCA 2007.

3.4 Presenting Research Results for Advocacy

Results need to be documented in a research report with detail about the methodology, analysis, and a complete list of references. Refer to journals such as *Tobacco Control* for examples of well written reports. However, for advocacy purposes it is often necessary to present results more succinctly and to an audience unlikely to read a full report. A useful tool for dissemination may well be a short report with a few charts and graphs that illustrate the key findings, rounded out with some quotes and/or case studies. The abbreviated report should focus on what is directly relevant to the policy issue at hand and that will most interest the media and politicians. Media workers and politicians are likely to be dissuaded by long reports and are more likely to pay attention to short “sound bites”. It is useful to have fact sheets to quickly and clearly explain the study’s main findings; the full research report can be made available to those who are interested in understanding the study in more depth.

The research findings presented should link explicitly and directly to the policy issue. For example, a newspaper headline “Loans to help farmers switch from tobacco to food could greatly decrease rural poverty and malnutrition” – emphasizing the need to provide loans to grow vegetables – is much more meaningful than “Study conducted on tobacco and agriculture.” Depending on the significance of the findings and the target audience, examples of ways of presenting the research results may include:

- Communicate the results directly to policymakers and include a summary highlighting the key findings and the policy relevance.
- Hold a press conference. If possible, invite well-known people in the field covered by the research to

discuss the significance of the findings. It is a good idea to brief them well, prior to the press conference, and to provide a pre-written a speech.

- Host a meeting with members of the press to discuss the results. This can work well if there are not sufficient resources for paid media, if the media may not attend a press conference, or where the research team has good relations with some individual members of the press.
- Give one journalist “exclusive” rights to the research, with the possibility that it will then be an important feature. If the reporter fails to use the information, approach someone else!
- Write a press release and send it to various media outlets. Be sure to make it interesting as well as policy relevant—highlight the key findings of the research and the policies to which it relates.
- Refer to the research findings in letters to the editor or to politicians, speeches, and on banners.
- Share the research results with other organizations potentially interested in your cause and those actively working in the area. Be sure to send it to those who oppose as well as support the issue. After all, new information may help change people’s minds. Enclose a letter encouraging them to join an alliance, to write to newspapers or politicians, to cover the issue in their newsletter, and/or to get in touch for collaborative action.

4 Key Advocacy Messages

The objective of research for advocacy is to highlight one or two key messages that aim to influence policy change. Therefore, the key messages should be closely linked to the specific policy being addressed and the particular barrier that is being faced which is preventing implementation of the policy. Below are some examples of key messages that address some of the most significant policy changes being sought in tobacco control globally.

4.1 Higher Taxes Reduce Tobacco Use

The tobacco industry regularly claims that high tobacco taxes harm the poor and should therefore be kept low. International evidence demonstrates, however, that high tobacco tax reduces tobacco use among the poor, while low prices make it easy for young people to try tobacco and become addicted. Opportunity cost research could be used to demonstrate how high tobacco taxes encourage the redirection of tobacco expenditures to other basic needs such as food, housing, health care, and education.

4.2 Tobacco Control Can Create Jobs




Although an important aspect of the tobacco and development agenda is the link between tobacco production and its direct impact on poverty for those involved in its production, researchers must also address fears of employment losses resulting from tobacco control. The tobacco industry often exaggerates the number of people whose livelihood is in some way dependent on tobacco use. In one sense, the question of the number of people employed by the tobacco industry is irrelevant, as tobacco control leads to such gradual reductions in use that no rapid or large impact on employment is likely. However, the spectre of large populations of unemployed does much to frighten politicians out of taking tobacco control seriously

and thus needs to be addressed. Issues that, when addressed, could mitigate this fear include:

- Ways that the **industry inflates the employment numbers** by counting everyone whose living is marginally related to tobacco, e.g. farmers who mostly grow other crops or for whom occasional tobacco farming is not a major income source, or people who sell other products as well as tobacco. If the industry uses this argument in a country, it may be helpful to collect actual employment data and/or obtain from the industry its own explanation of how it arrives at its estimates. This could usefully be combined with interviews with various people whose income comes from tobacco to document their own experiences.
- The **poor quality of tobacco employment**, e.g. income/wages compared to similar work on other crops, exposure to dangerous chemicals, green tobacco sickness, human rights issues in employment, or use of child labour. The industry only speaks about the positive aspects of employment, not the negative aspects of what that employment actually involves. Obtaining information on this issue can shed light on the true situation of those employed by the tobacco industry.
- Potential for the **creation of new jobs if people switched from buying tobacco to buying more food** (multiple benefits would ensue: food production is generally more labour-intensive so more jobs would result). The World Bank has performed these calculations for many countries (*Curbing the Epidemic*); if the figures are not available, a few illustrations may help. For instance, ads by cigarette companies may show how modern they are by using machines to roll cigarettes; such mechanization clearly involves virtually no human labour. Compare this to a wide range of products that are clearly more labour-intensive.

4.3 Tobacco Control Benefits the Economy

The tobacco industry makes many arguments about the ways in which tobacco control causes economic harm, beyond the job losses of those in the industry. For example, it emphasizes that increasing taxes will only serve to increase smuggling (and thereby lower government tax revenue). The industry uses this argument to suggest that tobacco taxes should be kept low. The tobacco industry may also claim that raising taxes will only serve to push poor people further into poverty. Likewise, the industry may claim that tobacco control will reduce its own “significant” contributions to a country’s economy, through the taxes that it pays and the social programs that it funds. Potential arguments to address these claims include:

-  **Tobacco control will benefit, not harm, the economy.** Given all the above, helping people to shift their expenditures from tobacco to other healthy or beneficial products will improve the economy as well as health and wellbeing.
-  **Tobacco control is progressive, as it helps the poor more than the rich.** Since the poor are more price-sensitive, use tobacco more, and can least afford tobacco, policies and programs that reduce tobacco use will have a particularly beneficial effect on the poor.
-  **In many countries smuggling operations are actually sponsored by the tobacco industry,** or at least implicitly supported by individual tobacco companies. The industry therefore benefits economically through both illicit and legally-traded tobacco products. Examining the impact of smuggling cultures on poverty may help to further counter industry arguments that tobacco taxes should be kept low to reduce smuggling.

5 Conclusion

Raising awareness through the provision of country-specific evidence may influence development agencies that seek to reduce poverty to prioritize tobacco control as a development issue. It can also convince governments to address tobacco control in national poverty alleviation schemes. Tobacco and poverty research is an important mechanism to support advocacy campaigns for stronger tobacco control laws and policies. Even with little time and a small budget, useful research can be conducted which, if properly presented, can have a significant impact on policymakers. Proper planning and preparation will save time and allow for focused efforts that will be more likely to lead to a fruitful study.

The authors hope that these guidelines will both awaken an interest in conducting tobacco and poverty research and provide helpful assistance in formulating ideas as to what sort of research could be most useful. Research can be a powerful tool to promote democracy by addressing the power imbalance between the public and powerful corporations. The tobacco industry has the financial resources to conduct ongoing lobbying against favourable government regulations. Public health advocates have fewer resources and ongoing lobbying is expensive. Research for advocacy, especially when presented in a way that generates media attention, can do much to gain the attention of policymakers, and thus motivate them towards action in the cause of tobacco control.

Appendix 1: Additional Resources

- *Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh: Research and Recommendations on Agriculture and Taxes*. Dhaka: WBB Trust and HealthBridge 2007.
- Naher F, Efroymsen D, and Ahmed S. *Tobacco Cultivation and Poverty in Bangladesh, Issues and Potential Future Directions*. Geneva: WHO 2007.
- *The Collaborative Funding Program for Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Research Regional Research Report on Tobacco*. Bangkok: Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, 2007.
- *Using Media and Research for Advocacy: Low Cost Ways to Increase Success*. Ottawa: HealthBridge 2006.
- *Tobacco and Poverty, Observations from India and Bangladesh*. Dhaka: PATH Canada 2002.
- Efroymsen D, Ahmed S, Townsend J, et al. "Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh." *Tobacco Control* (2001) 10:212-217.
- *A Burning Issue: Tobacco Control and Development; A Manual for Non-Governmental Organizations*. Ottawa: PATH Canada 2001.
- *Hungry for Tobacco: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tobacco on the Poor in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: PATH Canada 2000.
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. *Barren Leaf, Golden Harvest: The Costs of Tobacco Farming*. 2001. http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/campaign/global/FC_TCreport1.pdf
- StatTrek. *AP Statistics Tutorial: Survey Sampling Methods*. 2011. <http://stattrek.com/AP-Statistics-2/Survey-Sampling-Methods.aspx?Tutorial=AP>
- Research Methods Knowledge Base. *Qualitative Methods*. 2006. <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualmeth.php>
- Mack N, Woodsong C, MacQueen KM, et al. *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. Research Triangle Park, North Carolina: Family Health International, 2005. <http://www.fhi.org/NR/rdonlyres/etl7vogszehu5s4stpzb3tyqlpp7rojv4waq37elpbyei3tgmc4ty6dunbccfzxtaj2rvbaubzmz4f/overview1.pdf>