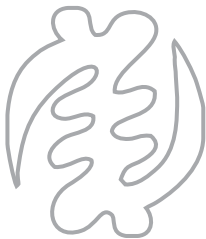
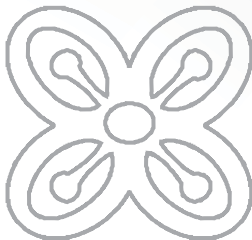




**VISION FOR ALTERNATIVE  
DEVELOPMENT - GHANA**



**THE EXCISE DUTY  
AMENDMENT ACT,  
2023  
AND THE  
TOBACCO INDUSTRY  
INTERFERENCE  
GHANA**



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2023 and the Tobacco Industry  
Interference Report”**

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# INTRODUCTION

Tobacco use is among the leading causes of preventable death globally. Nearly 80% of the estimated 1.1 billion smokers worldwide reside in Low- and Middle-Income countries (LMICs)<sup>1</sup>. Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the LMIC regions presently experiencing a significant increase in tobacco use. While smoking prevalence is projected to fall in developed countries, it is anticipated to rise in the African region, from 12.8% to 18.1% by 2025, due to weak enforcement of tobacco control policies, industry interference in public policy, and the lack of resources for tobacco control<sup>2</sup>. Governments worldwide, including Ghana, adopted the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) as early as 2003 to combat the globalisation of the tobacco epidemic.

One of the primary goals of the FCTC is to reduce health, social, economic, and environmental harms caused by tobacco use. The FCTC provides 181 countries with evidenced-based guidelines for implementing and accelerating tobacco control programs. However, implementing and accelerating tobacco control programs has been a persistent challenge for LMICs<sup>3</sup>. The slow progress is attributed to a range of factors, **including resource constraints<sup>4</sup>; economic impact<sup>5</sup>; political will<sup>6</sup>; legal and regulatory challenges<sup>7</sup>; monitoring and enforcement<sup>8</sup>, lack of effective and robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and Industry Interference<sup>9</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup> Erku, D.A. and Tesfaye, E.T., 2019. Tobacco control and prevention efforts in Ethiopia pre-and post-ratification of WHO FCTC: Current challenges and future directions. *Tobacco Induced Diseases*, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Amul, G.G.H., Tan, G.P.P. and Van Der Eijk, Y., 2021. A systematic review of tobacco industry tactics in Southeast Asia: lessons for other low-and Middleincome regions. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*, 10(6), p.324.

<sup>3</sup> Singh A, Owusu-Dabo E, Mdege N, McNeill A, Britton J, Bauld L. A situational analysis of tobacco control in Ghana: progress, opportunities and challenges. *J Glob Health Rep.* 2020 Apr 3;4:e2020015. doi: 10.29392/001c.12260. PMID: 33184609; PMCID: PMC7116349.

<sup>4</sup> Muggli, M. E., Lee, K., Gan, Q., Ebbert, J. O., & Hurt, R. D. (2008). "Efforts to control tobacco smoking in low- and middle-income countries." Retrieved from <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/17/6/433>

<sup>5</sup> Jha, P., & Chaloupka, F. J. (2000). "The economics of global tobacco control." *BMJ*, 321(7257), 358–361.

<sup>6</sup> Collin, J., Lee, K., & Bissell, K. (2002). "The framework convention on tobacco control: the politics of global health governance." *Third World Quarterly*, 23(2), 265–282.

<sup>7</sup> Drope, J., & Chapman, S. (2001). "Tobacco industry efforts at discrediting scientific knowledge of environmental tobacco smoke: a review of internal industry documents." *J Epidemiol Community Health*, 55(8), 588–594.

<sup>8</sup> Uang, R., Crosbie, E., & Glantz, S. A. (2019). "The tobacco control community's use of tobacco industry-funded studies of the illicit tobacco trade: a systematic review." *Tobacco Control*, 28(e1), e66–e77.

<sup>9</sup> Drope, J., & Lencucha, R. (2014). "Evading the 'Avalanche'? Exploring actor strategies in the 2011 Thai tobacco tax proposal." *Global Public Health*, 9(9), 1072–1089.

Despite these challenges, Ghana has demonstrated its commitment to tackling the tobacco threat by ratifying the WHO FCTC in 2004 and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products in 2021<sup>10</sup>. Ghana has also maintained very low tobacco use prevalence rates by adopting and implementing the Tobacco Control Measures of the Public Health Act in 2012 and the Tobacco Control Regulations in 2016<sup>11</sup>. While Ghana has made significant strides in tobacco control legislation and regulations enforcement still poses challenges, mainly due to the tobacco industry's interference, which remains a critical obstacle to the effective implementation and enforcement of tobacco control policies. This interference is reflected in the Tobacco Industry Interference Index (TII) of 2020 and 2021, where Ghana recorded 58 and 56 scores<sup>12</sup> respectively, showing the attempts by the tobacco industry to undermine tobacco control efforts.

The Tobacco Industry Interference Index is premised on the WHO FCTC Article 5.3<sup>13</sup> Guidelines, a valuable advocacy tool for assessing progress and gaps in national attempts to comply with WHO FCTC Article 5.3. This includes evaluating the marketing and advertising strategies used by the tobacco industry, political influence, and lobbying, attempts to subvert tobacco control laws, and funding for projects or research that encourages tobacco use. Thus, scores are based on the degree of interference in the country, hence, higher scores suggest greater tobacco industry interference<sup>14</sup>.

Tobacco taxation is a critical policy tool aimed at reducing tobacco consumption and its associated harms. It involves levying taxes on tobacco products to increase their price, which, in turn, discourages consumption, particularly among low-income individuals. Higher tobacco taxes promote public health by reducing smoking rates and generating significant government revenue<sup>15</sup>. The WHO FCTC provides a comprehensive framework for implementing evidence-based tobacco control measures, including taxation<sup>16</sup>. WHO FCTC's Article 6 specifically addresses tobacco taxation, encouraging Parties

<sup>10</sup> <https://fctc.who.int/newsroom/news/item/29-09-2022-ghana-assesses-its-needs-for-effective-implementation-of-the-who-fctc#:~:text=By%20ratifying%20the%20WHO%20FCTC,the%20lives%20of%20its%20citizens.>

<sup>11</sup> Singh A, Owusu-Dabo E, Mdege N, McNeill A, Britton J, Bauld L. A situational analysis of tobacco control in Ghana: progress, opportunities and challenges. J Glob Health Rep. 2020;4:e2020015. Published 2020 Apr 3. doi:10.29392/001c.12260

<sup>12</sup> <https://globaltobaccoindex.org/country/GH>

<sup>13</sup> Assunta M, Dorotheo EUSEATCA Tobacco Industry Interference Index: a tool for measuring implementation of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

Article 5.3 Tobacco Control 2016;25:313-318.

<sup>14</sup> Assunta M, Dorotheo EUSEATCA Tobacco Industry Interference Index: a tool for measuring implementation of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Article 5.3 Tobacco Control 2016;25:313-318.

<sup>15</sup> Goodchild M, Perucic AM, Nargis N. Modelling the impact of raising tobacco taxes on public health and finance. Bull World Health Organ. 2016;94(4):250-257. doi:10.2471/BLT.15.164707

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/2017-09/Seychelles\\_report\\_card\\_0.pdf](https://www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/2017-09/Seychelles_report_card_0.pdf)

to adopt tax policies that reduce tobacco consumption and its health and economic consequences. This article serves as a guideline for countries to design effective tobacco tax policies as part of their broader efforts to curb tobacco use and protect public health<sup>17</sup>.

Over the years, Ghana adopted a unitary tax administration strategy with a unified ad valorem tax structure on all excisable goods, including tobacco<sup>18</sup>. The excise tax levied 175% as an ad valorem rate of the Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) value, still because the CIF value was such a small fraction of the retail price, the excise tax as a percentage of the retail price is below the average tax burden of lower-middle-income countries such as Ghana.

To combat the drawbacks of an ad valorem system on tobacco products, particularly cigarettes, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) directive on tobacco control by the WHO-FCTC (WHO 2003) advises a straightforward tax structure employing a mixed excise system with a minimal specific tax floor<sup>19</sup>. This led to an effective collaboration between key stakeholders and the government to draft and amend the current tax regime to align with WHO recommendations and the ECOWAS Protocol.

It was expedient that Ghana reform its excise tax structure because it was outdated, not benchmark to inflation and potential industry manipulation, benefits to industry, low revenue and public health impact. Ghana has maintained the Excise Duty Act of 2014 (Act 878) for nearly a decade, despite its vulnerability to manipulation, inflation, unintended consequences for cigarette pricing and the benefit to the tobacco industry. The Excise Duty Act, 2014 (Act 878) was based on the ad valorem system, which depends on the manufacturer' (ex-factory) price or CIF value<sup>20</sup>. The ad valorem system ties the taxation of products to their manufacturer's price or CIF value. This linkage ideally means that as inflation drives up the cost of production and the manufacturer's price, the excise tax should increase proportionally.

<sup>17</sup> van Walbeek C, Filby S. Analysis of Article 6 (tax and price measures to reduce the demand for tobacco products) of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Tob Control. 2019 Jun;28(Suppl 2):s97-s103. doi: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2018-054462. Epub 2018 Jul 25. PMID: 30045973; PMCID: PMC6589458

<sup>18</sup> Wellington, E.K., 2018. Implementation of the WHO FCTC article 6-price and tax

measures to reduce the demand for tobacco in Ghana. Tobacco Induced Diseases, 16(1).

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ictd.ac/publication/fiscal-public-health-impact-change-tobacco-excise-taxes-ghana/>

<sup>20</sup> Vision for Alternative Development. (2022). Economics of Tobacco Control in Ghana

However, this seemingly straightforward relationship between inflation and taxation conceals the inherent problem. As the manufacturer's price rises due to inflation, the excise tax burden on the tobacco industry should also increase<sup>21</sup>. In response, industry players strategically adjust the ad valorem tax base, effectively minimizing the impact of inflation on their products' final prices. This manipulation allows the tobacco industry to keep cigarette prices low and affordable, contrary to the intended impact of the excise tax derailing tobacco control efforts<sup>22</sup>.

The Ghanaian Parliament passed the Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2023 (Act 1093) in March 2023 to amend the Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2014 (Act 878), which took effect on 1st May, 2023. The objectives of the Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2023 were to revise the excise duty for cigarettes and other tobacco products to conform with the ECOWAS Protocols; mitigate the harmful effects of some excisable products; increase the excise duty on wine, malt drinks and spirits, impose an excise duty on sweetened beverages (including fruit juices), electronic cigarettes and electronic liquids<sup>23</sup>. Details of the progress made are fully highlighted in Appendix.

The report primarily aims to identify and document the tobacco industry and its allied groups' influence in the passage and implementation of the 2023 Excise Duty Amendment Act. The study sheds light on the tactics employed by the tobacco industry throughout the policy process, examines the inclusion of e-cigarettes as a taxable product, and proposes effective countermeasures to safeguard public health policies. This study provides policymakers and public health advocates with empirical evidence on how to strengthen tobacco control efforts in Ghana, strengthen regulatory frameworks, and mitigate tobacco industry influence to protect the health and well-being of the population.

<sup>21</sup> Shirane, Risako, Katherine Smith, Hana Ross, Karin E. Silver, Simon Williams, and Anna Gilmore. "Tobacco industry manipulation of tobacco excise and tobacco advertising policies in the Czech Republic: an analysis of tobacco industry documents." *PLoS medicine* 9, no. 6 (2012): e1001248.

<sup>22</sup> Singh A, Owusu-Dabo E, Dobbie F, et al. A situational analysis of tobacco control in

Ghana: progress, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Global Health Reports*. 2020;4:e2020015. doi:10.29392/001c.12260

<sup>23</sup> <https://globaltaxnews.ey.com/news/2023-0763-ghanas-new-laws-introduce-new-taxes-affecting-individuals-and-businesses>



# METHODOLOGY

**T**his report results from a mixed methods study comprising a desk review of existing documents and semi-structured stakeholder interviews. The data collection exercise took place from July - August 2023.

**Desktop Research:** There was desk review of pre-existing secondary data, reports, and pertinent documents concerning tobacco control policies. The Excise Duty Amendment Bill, 2023 and the tobacco industry's activities in Ghana from 2022 to 2023 were also reviewed. This process involved sourcing information from various government publications, academic studies, international organizations' reports, and data from Non- Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations actively engaged in tobacco control efforts. The study also monitored print and electronic media to assess the tobacco industry's influence on public perception. A systematic approach was adopted to track and analyze news articles, opinion pieces, advertisements, and editorials related to tobacco, tobacco control policies, and the tobacco industry.

To optimize the desk review process, a systematic literature review using Google search engines was conducted by using specific keywords such as "tobacco industry interference", tobacco, "tobacco industry lobbying", "tobacco industry frontiers" "tobacco industry-allied" tobacco company allied" "tobacco company frontiers" "Ghana Excise Amendment" Excise tax bill" "tobacco excise amendment bill Ghana." etc. There was a specific search for relevant documents on various sites, including government sites, e.g. the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, the tobacco industry sites, and other relevant sites. Some quotes, such as "Tobacco Excise Amendment Bill 2023 Ghana", were also searched. Further, some, academic and relevant NGOs and CSO websites were also identified and explored.

Some documents dated back to 2022 were screened for eligibility using a checklist. Relevant data were then extracted using a data extraction template which captured data on the name and source of data, topic, summary of key findings, limitations /caveats, document eligibility and main point or summary of findings.



**Semi-structured interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers, ministries and government agencies directly involved in implementing the Excise Duty Amendment Act, of 2023. Representatives from key tobacco control agencies and some selected CSOs were also interviewed. These interviews sought their perspectives on industry interference, the challenges faced during the policy process, and their experiences in countering tobacco industry tactics. Policymakers shed light on the strategies used by the industry to influence decision-making. The inputs from tobacco control agencies offered a broader picture of the policy landscape and efforts to safeguard public health from industry interference.

**Data analysis:** Data from the desk review and media monitoring were subjected to qualitative content analysis methods. This approach enabled us to identify relevant themes, patterns, and trends in tobacco industry interference, including e-cigarettes in the Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2023 and media coverage of tobacco control. This report's findings will substantiate the study objectives and to facilitate the drawing of conclusions regarding the impact of industry tactics on public health policies.

# STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

**T**his study reveals the strategies and tactics directly and indirectly deployed by industry and their allies to interfere in the process leading to the passage of the Excise Duty Amendment Bill 2023.

## 1. The Tobacco Industry-Allied Organizations in Ghana

**T**he tobacco industry usually works through third parties to represent their interests. This is a form of coalition management where it operates with other organisations to promote industry interests to undermine public health. These organizations work closely with the tobacco industry to shape public opinion, influence policy discourse, and impede effective tobacco control initiatives at the expense of public health<sup>24</sup>. This was evident in the process leading up to the passage of the 2023 Excise Duty Amendment Bill.

- i.** The American Chambers of Commerce Ghana: The United States (US) Chamber of Commerce and its local chapters are the “World's largest businesses organisation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors and regions<sup>25</sup>. The Chamber's explicit aim is to drive a pro-business agenda and strengthen the competitiveness of the US economy by advocating on behalf of business. According to reports, the Chamber has a long-standing affiliation with Philips Morris International (PMI), a known tobacco industry giant<sup>26</sup>. Not only is it affiliated with PMI, but in a dozen instances, the Chamber has intervened on behalf of some of the world's biggest tobacco companies to interfere with countries' efforts to pass and implement proven, life-saving policies<sup>27</sup>.
- ii.** The Harm Reduction Alliance of Ghana (HRAG): HRAG is an organization that receives funding from Knowledge Action Change (KAC) to advocate for the adoption of harm reduction policies in Ghana<sup>28</sup>. KAC is a private organization funded by the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW), funded by PMI<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> <https://tobaccotactics.org/article/tobacco-industry-tactics/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.uschamber.com/about/history>

<sup>26</sup> <https://tobaccotactics.org/wiki/us-chamber-of-commerce/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/chamber-of-commerce/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.hrgh.org/achievements.html> accessed on 3rd February 2023

<sup>29</sup> <https://tobaccotactics.org/article/knowledge-action-change/>

- iii. The Institute of Liberty, Policy, and Innovation (ILAPI): ILAPI is a think tank in partnership with the Atlas Network and promoting e-cigarettes in Ghana<sup>30</sup>. The Atlas Network is a strategic tobacco industry ally, with over 500 think tanks. The Atlas supports think tank actors to produce publications supportive of industry positions. This collaborative partnership between the industry and think tanks allows the industry to propagate misinformation to undermine evidence-based public health policies.<sup>31</sup>

## 2. Economic Exaggeration Tactics Used by the Tobacco Industry

The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) exaggerated the negative economic impact of introducing the Excise Duty Amendment Bill, 2023 when they cited high job losses and possible business shutdown as possible effects<sup>32</sup>. The Chamber works systematically worldwide to help the tobacco industry avoid regulatory measures to reduce tobacco use. For example, in 2012, cigarette prices in the Philippines were among the lowest in the world<sup>33</sup> yet, when the country decided to raise taxes on tobacco products, the Chamber exerted its influence on legislators and prevented the passage of the policy<sup>34</sup>. They argued that increasing tobacco taxes significantly would undermine the government's revenue growth targets and pose severe threats to national security<sup>35</sup>. A similar approach was used by AmCham Ghana when the Excise Duty Amendment Bill was laid before Parliament and debated. The Chamber asserted that the proposed increase in excise taxes, and the nation's existing economic challenges, would overburden companies, and potentially lead to layoffs. They also escalated production and distribution costs and reduced sales as other projected negative impacts on business<sup>36</sup>. They elucidated these economic challenges to prompt the government to reconsider its decision to raise excise taxes, calling for a reduction in the proposed excise duty rates. They assured the government that such a move would elicit heightened foreign investment interest while ensuring a consistent influx of government revenue<sup>37</sup>. Comparable strategies and tactics have been utilized and are well-documented, showcasing instances where the Chamber has applied these methods to shape tobacco control measures and policies<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>30</sup><https://www.atlasnetwork.org/partners/global-directory/institute-for-liberty-and-policy-innovation>

<sup>31</sup>Smith J, Thompson S, Lee K. The atlas network: a "strategic ally" of the tobacco industry. *Int J Health Plann Manage*. 2017 Oct;32(4):433-448. doi: 10.1002/hpm.2351. Epub 2016 Apr 28. PMID: 27125556; PMCID: PMC5716244.

<sup>32</sup><https://amchamghana.org/2023/02/01/amcham-ghana-statement-on-excise-duty-amendment-bill-2022-before-parliament/>

<sup>33</sup><https://www.who.int/westernpacific/news/item/12-03-2012-who-supports-higher-tobacco-taxes-in-the-philippines-expresses-concern-about-upcoming-tobacco-exposition>

<sup>34</sup><https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/chamber-of-commerce/chamber-interference#ph>

<sup>35</sup><https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/chamber-of-commerce/#letters>

<sup>36</sup><https://amchamghana.org/2023/02/01/amcham-ghana-statement-on-excise-duty-amendment-bill-2022-before-parliament/>

<sup>37</sup><https://amchamghana.org/2023/02/01/amcham-ghana-statement-on-excise-duty-amendment-bill-2022-before-parliament/> accessed on 5th February 2023

<sup>38</sup><https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/chamber-of-commerce/#letters>

### 3. Delay in Progress on Excise Taxes and British American Tobacco, Ghana's involvement

The pervasive influence of the tobacco industry on public health policies has been a global concern, and Ghana is no exception to this interference. In its efforts to hinder the increases in excise taxes on tobacco, BAT Ghana employed a range of tactics to safeguard its interests.

While working through their lobby agents and allies, BAT Ghana submitted counter papers to policy makers that suggested that an increase in excise duties would have dire consequences for government revenue, increase illicit tobacco trade and worsen economic conditions for government, industry and workers (Figure 2). Their assessment revealed that illicit trade accounted for a staggering 56% of the tobacco industry in Ghana. This high percentage of illicit trade translated to a substantial loss of approximately 60 million cedis (£7.4 million) in government revenue, attributed to the allure of cheaper illicit products due to high excise rates<sup>39</sup>. BAT Ghana further claimed that the price disparity motivates smokers to seek untaxed, cheaper substitutes, stimulating demand for illicit products. The socio-economic landscape further amplifies this demand, as budget-conscious consumers evade taxes, driving down prices for illicit items<sup>40</sup>.

10

**This was confirmed by the narration of a government official**

**“The industry submitted several studies and research reports to policy makers from various institutions on why it will be very bad for Ghana to raise its excise taxes. It got to a point where policymakers became overwhelmed and confused as to which direction they should head because the research reports the industry submitted indicated negative implications and consequences if it proceeded to raise excise taxes, meanwhile, we were also pushing for amendment in the excise tax. Interestingly, most of the research submitted by the industry was not even peer-reviewed. (IDI - 1) ”**

<sup>39</sup>BAT, “Interview with Freddy Messanvi-BAT CORPORATE EVOLUTION GHANA,” BAT A BETTER TOMORROW, 2021, [Online]. Available:[https:// www.batwca.com/group/sites/BAT\\_BUCDFL.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DOBZ2JYT/\\$FILE/Interview\\_about\\_our\\_Corporate\\_Evolution\\_-\\_Ghana.pdf?openelement](https://www.batwca.com/group/sites/BAT_BUCDFL.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DOBZ2JYT/$FILE/Interview_about_our_Corporate_Evolution_-_Ghana.pdf?openelement) accessed on 10th February 2023

<sup>40</sup>BAT, “Interview with Freddy Messanvi-BAT CORPORATE EVOLUTION GHANA,” BAT A BETTER TOMORROW, 2021, [Online]. Available:[https://www.batwca.com/group/sites/BAT\\_BUCDFL.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DOBZ2JYT/\\$FILE/Interview\\_about\\_our\\_Corporate\\_Evolution\\_-\\_Ghana.pdf?openelement](https://www.batwca.com/group/sites/BAT_BUCDFL.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DOBZ2JYT/$FILE/Interview_about_our_Corporate_Evolution_-_Ghana.pdf?openelement) accessed on 10th February 2023

Even though BAT Ghana ostensibly supported equitable and transparent taxation of tobacco products, they appealed for the Ministry of Finance to maintain the existing ad valorem tax structure (Figure 1).

3) retention of current excise rates (i.e. no increase in excise)  
One of the unintended consequences of the Government's drive to increase its revenue base, has been a steady increase in illicit trade. Presently, excise rate on cigarettes in Ghana stands at a staggering 175%, which is the highest rate across the Region and as such our operations have been negatively impacted as our operating cost base is higher in Ghana in comparison to other West African countries. This has mainly resulted in a tremendous increase of illicit trade from neighbouring countries and negatively impacted the Ghana economy in view of unfair competition - as it translates to higher cost of cigarettes produced by legitimate players. That high taxes result in smuggling is long acknowledged.

In view of the fragile economic situation in the country and how much impact excise rate has on illicit trade in Ghana, we humbly appeal for the current excise rates to be retained and for effective enforcement measures to be in place. We believe it is in the best interest of all parties for status quo to be maintained.

4) retention of the benchmark policy  
We would like to thank the Ghanaian Government for introducing the Benchmark Policy in 2019 and retaining the same, despite proposals to the contrary. While we have benefited from the Benchmark Policy, the Ghanaian Government is reaping the rewards, especially in connection with the fight against illicit trade, in terms of revenue collection. Kindly refer to the enclosed submission for our analysis.

Due to (a) Benchmark Value Reduction by the Ghanaian Government in 2019; (b) re-organisation of our products portfolio in Ghana to enable us compete more effectively against illicit traders; and (c) our reinvestment of the gains from the Benchmark Value Reduction to increase our efforts against illicit trade, we are beginning to see a gradual but significant reduction in illicit trade. Our internal (but preliminary) analysis indicates a significant reduction in the Duty-Not-Paid segment from [26% to 18% between 2019 - 2020].

We thank you for your time and consideration. Kindly let us know if we could visit you on any date of your convenience during the week of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to further discuss the proposals above (and the enclosed submission).

Your faithfully.

For: British American Tobacco (Ghana) Limited

DocuSign by

**Freddy A. Massanvi**

Yr-mjAtdDjcwv.

**Freddy Massanvi**

General Manager, West & Central Africa Markets

Digitized by:

**Odini Ekwu-Magison**

External Affairs Director

Encl:

British American Tobacco Ghana Limited, Inc. "B&T" in Ghana No. C5C1a&O"  
A subsidiary of British American Tobacco PLC

Figure 1:

BAT Appeal to MoF to maintain the ad valorem structure

The company contended that retaining this structure would augment government revenue, stimulate employment, and mitigate health and safety risks by curbing illicit trade and preventing substandard product influx. BAT further argued that combatting illicit tobacco trade is pivotal in preventing potential links to terrorism and conflicts, positioning it as a matter of national security to preserve the current excise tax rates (Appendix II).

## 4. Swaying and Influencing Public Opinion

The industry-allied organizations employed tactics to influence public opinion to diminish support for tobacco taxation as a pivotal tobacco control measure, including press conference statements, webinars etc. They exploited the gaps in tobacco control measures to instigate the adoption of tobacco harm reduction policies as an alternative approach to evidence-based tobacco control measures, like increased taxes. They contend that raising taxes on tobacco products will yield negligible reductions in tobacco consumption and related health burden.<sup>41 42</sup>

The HRAG stated in a news article that

“Based on current knowledge, vaping is at least 95% less harmful than smoking remains a good way to communicate the large difference in relative risk unambiguously so that more smokers are encouraged to make the switch from smoking to vaping...therefore, it is hoped that the Ghanaian Government will embrace tobacco harm reduction as a public health strategy.”<sup>43</sup>

In a related statement, ILAPI said,

“For decades, Ghana has tried to curb smoking through packaging education and taxation with limited success. Reductions in smoking prevalence have generally slowed, with modest annual declines but a lot more can be achieved. In response to the opportunities that can be provided through Tobacco Harm Reduction (THR), the Ghanaian government should establish a regulatory framework that enables and facilitates access to THR products, support public education campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of THR, increase the availability of THR products across the country...”<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> <https://gna.org.gh/2023/04/let-us-embrace-tobacco-harm-reduction-as-part-of-control-strategies/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/5012-persons-die-from-tobacco-related-illness-annually-harm-reduction-alliance/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/The-science-of-tobacco-harm-reduction-1621463>

<sup>44</sup> [https://3news.com/tobacco-harm-reduction-key-as-index-shows-radical-decline-in-smoking-rates-in-other-countries/?fbclid=IwAR0fVTH5wtdpBlzUapyqQe-8gyxqsSFE8CG9EASnkdhZaeg-8SfcnUOr\\_b4](https://3news.com/tobacco-harm-reduction-key-as-index-shows-radical-decline-in-smoking-rates-in-other-countries/?fbclid=IwAR0fVTH5wtdpBlzUapyqQe-8gyxqsSFE8CG9EASnkdhZaeg-8SfcnUOr_b4)

A central theme in their messages was the promotion of tobacco harm reduction policies as a more viable strategy to reduce tobacco use, emphasizing alternatives that are perceived as safer and less risky, rather than solely focusing on tobacco cessation or eradication.<sup>45</sup> These activities were held when the bill was deliberated in Parliament. By inaccurately framing tobacco taxation as ineffective and potentially hazardous due to its potential to bolster illicit trade in their unsuccessful attempt to, cast doubt on the efficacy of excise tax increase.

## 5. Public Opposition Against the Proposed Excise Taxes

A central theme in their messages was the promotion of tobacco harm reduction policies as a more viable strategy to reduce tobacco use, emphasizing alternatives that are perceived as safer and less risky, rather than solely focusing on tobacco cessation or eradication. These activities were held when the bill was deliberated in Parliament. By inaccurately framing tobacco taxation as ineffective and potentially hazardous due to its potential to bolster illicit trade in their unsuccessful attempt to, cast doubt on the efficacy of excise tax increase.

Officials from the Food and Drug Authority, Ghana Revenue Authority, and Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority who were interviewed mentioned the public's opposition as a significant challenge during the passage of the Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2023. They said the industry capitalized on the present economic crisis and sighted tax fatigue to make its argument against further tax increases, including the tobacco excise tax.

Another narrative by the tobacco industry propagated on economic and social development platforms and described the bill as an additional burden on citizens.

**A government official during the interviews posited**

**“ One of the things we didn't have was the citizen's buy-in for the bill, even now we still do not have the majority of the citizen buy-in for the law. Most media took a stance with the industry and so every news out there that was available to the public painted the bill as a burden to the people. (IDI - 2) ”**

<sup>45</sup><https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/The-science-of-tobacco-harm-reduction-1621463> accessed on 10th March 2023



Industry claims suggested that the government's revenue generation efforts through increased taxes, including the tobacco excise tax, would lead to more financial hardship without delivering tangible benefits to the public.<sup>46</sup>

Government agencies faced substantial hurdles in countering the industry's narrative and generating public support for the Excise Duty Amendment Bill. The widespread negative perception created scepticism among citizens, hampering attempts to gain public endorsement for the bill. During the in-depth interview, **one of the government officials disclosed that**

**“ One of our biggest challenges was the opposition from the general public. The narrative was that the Excise Duty Amendment Bill would burden the citizens and make life difficult for the people. This made it very difficult for us to get the public buy-in for the bill. Moreover, because we are government agencies it was difficult to go out there during that period to discuss the public health significance of the excise bill and the main reasons why we were calling for the reform. Thanks to CSOs led by VALD Ghana whom we commend for the intensive advocacy and media engagement they did to change the public narrative and bring in the public health implications and significance of the bill, if not it would have been very difficult to pass the bill. (IDI - 3) ”**

## 6. Promotion of E-cigarettes and Policy Influence

**T**he tobacco industry-allied organizations sustained advocacy and various activities for the promotion of e-cigarettes which led to its dangerous inclusion in the Excise Duty Amendment Bill 2023. BAT, a key industry player, has disclosed a sustainability strategy to replace conventional tobacco smoking with novel e-cigarettes, positioning it to secure its future market<sup>47</sup>. BAT's approach targets young individuals to establish a consumer base and to transition existing adult users from conventional tobacco products to supposedly safer e-cigarettes. This strategy is manifested through the Global Tobacco Harm Reduction Policies<sup>48</sup>, an initiative designed by KAC to amplify e-cigarette access and usage.

The Tobacco Industry has a long history of involvement in the illicit trade of its products to undermine tobacco control policies<sup>49</sup>. The industry employs this tactic to overwhelm tobacco control within a country while offering opportunities and means for regulatory agencies to curb the illicit trade.

<sup>46</sup><https://www.modernghana.com/news/1222843/tobacco-use-kills-more-than-6700-ghanaians-each.html>

<sup>47</sup>Greenland, S., Lužar, K. and Low, D., 2020. Tobacco Csr, sustainability reporting, and the marketing paradox. The palgrave handbook of corporate social

responsibility, pp.1-27.

<sup>48</sup><https://gsthr.org/resources/thr-reports/no-fire-no-smoke-global-state-tobacco-harm-reduction-2018/>

<sup>49</sup><https://www.bath.ac.uk/case-studies/understanding-illicit-tobacco/>

This gives the tobacco industry a unique opportunity to participate in tobacco control measures and regulations<sup>50</sup>. The continuous influx of illicit e-cigarettes in Ghana, increasing the availability and accessibility to the youth and the public, was used strategically by the industry to argue for excise taxes being levied on e-cigarettes as government officials confirmed that the decision to tax e-cigarettes was made based on the rampant illicit e-cigarettes in Ghana.

#### **A government official stated during the in-depth interview that**

**“ We decided to tax the e-cigarettes because we found a lot of them in the market that are not taxed. Yes, it is an illicit and unregulated product, but the truth is that they have become abundant in our markets and we don't know how they manage to get them into the country. If they have become rampant on our streets and we can't control them, why don't we just tax them. (IDI - 4) ”**

Even though e-cigarettes are not being regulated as tobacco products for cessation in the smoke-free law in Ghana, the industry has persistently sought to sway regulatory decisions to favour the consumption of the product in Ghana.

#### **According to the interviewed government officials,**

**“ before the bill's submission to Parliament, the industry had met with the FDA and as a regulatory agency. They presented their research reports indicating the reduced nature of e-cigarettes and how other countries benefit from the regulation of e-cigarettes. They recommended that it's time Ghana also accepted and regulated e-cigarettes for use. (IDI - 3) ”**

<sup>50</sup><https://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/680311548773329872/pdf/133959-v2-WBG-Tobacco-IllicitTrade-ExecutiveSummary-web-R4.pdf>

In a related matter, “CSOs representatives expressed worry over the decision to tax e-cigarette despite knowing that the Tobacco Control Measure of the Public Health Act, 2012 only recommends the use of non-tobacco products (e-cigarettes) only for cessation and not for recreation, as we are experiencing at the moment”. They urged the various key government institutions – MoH, MoF, FDA, GRA, CSOs and Mental Health Authority to dispassionately discuss the way forward for e-cigarette in Ghana.

Some of the government agencies opposed BAT Ghana's stance, highlighting its misleading nature and disregard for numerous clinical and peer-reviewed studies that underscore e-cigarette health hazards, particularly concerning youth initiation and long-term health effects. Despite the industry push, the FDA maintained its stance on e-cigarettes. Despite the open sale ban, there were illicit e-cigarette proliferation in Ghana that might undermine existing tobacco control initiatives in the country.

The industry-allied group ILAPI during the same period organized a webinar titled "Rethinking Tobacco Control Policies: Exploring Tobacco Harm Reduction Policies in West Africa" during the parliamentary debate on the bill. The aim was to equip stakeholders with information to endorse the adoption of tobacco harm reduction policies as a public health solution<sup>51</sup>. In addition, ILAPI released a statement to undermine and fuel public opposition by deeming current tobacco control measures as a discourse to our culture and heritage and the need for e-cigarette adoption.

### **In their statement, they claimed that**

**“ FDA does not support harm reduction alternatives such as vapes; it does support cultural efforts to reduce tobacco use...by advocating for the removal of tobacco products as part of marriage dowries in the northern region. Approaches such as tobacco taxes and banning THR products as the best efforts to prevent people from smoking only lead to poor smuggling, adding to the cost of fighting illicit tobacco transactions...e-cigarettes should be regulated and made available to smokers who were unable or unwilling to stop smoking<sup>52</sup>. ”**

<sup>51</sup><https://ilapi.org/s-event?id=6>

<sup>52</sup><https://www.modernghana.com/news/1222843/tobacco-use-kills-more-than-6700-ghanaians-each.html>

The choice to advocate for these policies during the critical time when the bill was being debated on the floor of Parliament, exposed the hidden agenda of these allied organizations that sought to misinform various stakeholders on the harmful effect of e-cigarettes.

Industry-allied organizations like HRAG have some of their leadership working within the health sector, this presents the opportunity for them to misinform the government about the dangers of using e-cigarettes. Their position within the health sector presents them with an opportunity to engage with policymakers. This increases their chance to promote the industry's interest in advocating for adopting of tobacco harm reduction policies in Ghana<sup>53</sup>. The government is very likely to accept information from health institutions to guide policy decisions in the health sector.

<sup>53</sup><https://www.hragh.org/achievements.html> accessed on 3rd February 2023

# CONCLUSION

Taxation as a tobacco control measure has proven to be a highly effective strategy to reduce and curb tobacco consumption and the tobacco epidemic. However, the effectiveness of this measure presents a direct threat to the profits and market share of the industry. The tobacco industry has a long history of interfering with taxation policies and other tobacco control measures to protect its profit-making interests and maintain business growth<sup>54</sup>.

The presence of industry-allied organizations in Ghana presents a significant obstacle to the implementing effective tobacco control measures. By collaborating with the tobacco industry and promoting so-called "tobacco-harm reduction policies," these organizations divert attention from evidence-based strategies, potentially undermining comprehensive efforts to improve public health. Policymakers and stakeholders must recognize and address these challenges to ensure that tobacco control measures prioritize public health over commercial interests.

BAT Ghana's strategic tactics to influence policymakers on the 2023 Excise Duty Amendment Bill demonstrate the tobacco industry's relentless efforts at prioritizing its business interests over the public health of the Ghanaian people. Taxation remains a proven and essential tool in curbing tobacco use and its related health hazards. The efforts of organizations like HRAG and ILAPI to undermine tobacco taxation and promote harm reduction policies have implications for tobacco control in Ghana..

The tobacco industry's strategies to challenge and weaken tobacco control efforts in Ghana through misleading practices, deceptive evidence presentation, and fostering illicit trade reveal their resolute determination to undermine the implementation of FCTC protocols in Ghana. By promoting e-cigarettes, diverting focus from comprehensive tobacco control measures, and manipulating legislative processes, the industry aims to reshape policy landscapes and safeguard its market interest. Recognizing and countering these industry tactics remain vital to preserving Ghana's public health priorities.

<sup>54</sup>Egbe, C. O., Magati, P., Wanyonyi, E., Sessou, L., Owusu-Dabo, E., & Ayo-Yusuf, O. A. (2022). Landscape of tobacco control in sub-Saharan Africa. *Tobacco Control*, 31(2), 153-159.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**B**ased on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are suggested to the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance/Tax Policy Unit, Ghana Revenue Authority, Food and Drugs Authority and Parliament and other relevant stakeholders.

1. The Ministry of Health (MoH) should urgently facilitate the process towards the development and adoption of a code of conduct to protect public health policy from tobacco industry interference as enshrined in the Tobacco Control Regulations and in line with the WHO article 5.3.
2. The Ministry of Finance/Ghana Revenue Authority, Food and Drugs Authority, CSOs and other leading stakeholders should embark on an effective nationwide public sensitization targeting Customs, Ghana Immigration Service and GRA official at the entry point on the Excise Duty Amendment Act for effective implementation of the Act.
3. Stakeholders including MoH, MoF, GRA, FDA, WHO Ghana and CSOs should urgently meet to discuss and review the inclusion of e-cigarette as an excisable product contrary to the Public Health Act (Act 851).
4. CSOs should work collaborate to draw key government agencies' attention to how their direct and indirect engagement with industry contravenes WHO FCTC Article 5.3 and copy relevant stakeholders.
5. Through relevant stakeholders, the government should facilitate the development of a Ghana specific industry argument and public health responses to counter the arguments.
6. All stakeholders must support the enforcement and effective implementation of existing tobacco control measures and regulations.
7. Further research is required to ascertain the tobacco industry's allies' gains from working for and on behalf of the industry against public health benefits.

Finally, addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, academia, media and the general public. Strengthening enforcement mechanisms, enhancing public awareness campaigns, and implementing effective strategies to combat illicit trade are essential steps towards achieving robust tobacco control measures in Ghana. This study has unearthed and exposed the strategies and tactics adopted by the tobacco industry and allied organizations to subvert this important Excise Duty Amendment Act, 2023 targeted at supporting government and stakeholders' efforts to maintain an effective and robust tobacco control system in Ghana.



# APPENDIX

## Appendix I

**Table 1: Evolution of Excise Tax on Tobacco Products in Ghana**

Year	Description
Before 2007	Flat ad valorem rate of 140% of the CIF value on all products.
2007	The tax structure changed from ad valorem to specific excise tax with differential rates on different brands
2008	The specific excise duty was duly indexed to the 2008 Consumer Price Index to increase the rate of excise duty.
2010	A flat ad valorem rate of 140% of CIF was reintroduced and the range of products expanded compared to Specific. Cigarettes 140%, Cigars 140%, Snuff and other tobacco 170%
2011	The rate was increased to 150% of CIF.
2012-2022	<div> <div>(a) Cigarette</div> <div>175% of the ex-factory price</div> </div> <div> <div>(b) Cigars</div> <div>175% of the ex-factory price</div> </div> <div> <div>(c) Negrohead</div> <div>12.00 per kg</div> </div> <div> <div>(d) Snuff and other tobacco</div> <div>170.65% of the ex-factory price</div> </div>

2023: ad valorem and specific rates as shown below	
(a) Cigarette	50% of the ex-factory price and a specific duty of 28 pesewas per stick
(b) Cigars	50% of the ex-factory price and a specific duty of 28 pesewas per stick
(C) Negrohead	GHC 280 per kilogram
(d) Snuff and other tobacco	GHC280 per kilogram
(e) Electronic cigarette liquids falling under heading 24.03 of the Harmonized System and Custom Tariff Schedules, 2022	50 per centum of the ex-factory price and a specific duty of 50 pesewas per milliliter
(f) Electronic cigarette liquids and similar personal electric vaporizing devices falling under heading 85.43 of the Harmonized System and Custom Tariff Schedules, 2017:	
(l) Electronic cigarettes	50% of the ex-factory price
(l) Electronic smoking devices	50% of the ex-factory price

55,56

<sup>55</sup> Singh, A., Owusu-Dabo, E., Mdege, N., McNeill, A., Britton, J., & Bauld, L. (2020). A situational analysis of tobacco control in Ghana: progress, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Global Health Reports*, 4.

<sup>56</sup>Act of the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana: Entitled: Excise Duty (Amendment) ACT, 2023



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5th August 2021

**The Honourable Minister of Finance**  
**Ministry of Finance**  
Finance Drive,  
Accra, Ghana,

through:

**The Commissioner General**  
**Ghana Revenue Authority**  
Off Starlets 91 Road Ministries,  
Kinbu, Accra,  
Ghana.

through:

**The Commissioner, Customs Division**  
**Ghana Customs Division**  
Off Starlets 91 Road Ministries,  
Kinbu, Accra,  
Ghana.

Dear Sirs,

**PROPOSAL FOR ANTI-ILLCIT TRADE ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT REVENUE LOSS, PROMOTE FAIR COMPETITION AND REDUCE THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY**

We write further to our previous correspondence and meetings regarding the above subject matter.

As you may recall, we, British American Tobacco Ghana Limited ("BAT Ghana") are majority owned and controlled by the British American Tobacco Group, which is a leading tobacco company in the world. BAT Ghana has, since inception, been one of the leading non-oil companies in Ghana. In terms of economic impact, we have contributed at least 600 million Cedis (€73 million) in taxes to the government treasury over the past 5 years. From an employment perspective, BAT Ghana's operations involve about 50 direct employees, 20 distributors, 200 indirect sales personnel, 200 wholesalers and over 18,000 retailers.

By this letter (and enclosed memorandum / submission), we wish to present to you our concerns regarding (the levels of) illicit trade in Ghana - including the impact of this illegal activity both on the government, the citizenry and legal players in the tobacco industry (such as BAT Ghana), as well as the relationship between increase in excise rates or similar fiscal policies and the growth of illicit trade in Ghana. Based on our initial assessment in Q1 of 2019, illicit trade accounted for about 26% of the tobacco industry in Ghana. This meant that approximately 1 of every 4 packs of cigarettes sold and consumed in Ghana was illicit (i.e. Duty not paid), which translated to a loss of revenue to the Government of circa 60 million Cedis (€7.4 million).

The rise in illicit trade has been attributed to key factors such as (a) high rate of excise; (b) gaps in current enforcement measures; and (c) decreasing consumer spending index, which is (still) being compounded by the COVID pandemic, linked with cheap rates of illicit products that make them attractive to consumers.

BAT Ghana Limited, registered in Ghana No. CS43782015  
a subsidiary of British American Tobacco PLC

**Figure 2:**  
BAT Ghana letter  
to the Minister of  
Finance on Excise  
tax revision in  
Ghana

We have written to you, Sirs, because our proposal is multi-faceted and the actions that we recommend extend beyond the Ghana Revenue Authority or Customs Division. We humbly propose the following for consideration by your office and the Ghanaian Government:

- 1) Establishment of Transit Regulations mint traders would An appropriate response to the prevalent transit abuse through Ghana's ports, Ghana's Customs be a specific directive championed by the Ministry of Finance, Ghana's proposed Transit Division, that clearly regulates transit activities of the tobacco industry. The proposed transit directive should, at a minimum, require tobacco dealers, (manufacturers, importers, etc.) to comply with and show proof that any products being shipped in transit in Ghana's ports are for other destinations, meet the key / easily verifiable regulations of the country of the words "For Sale country of final destination e.g. the correct health warnings and inscription of the words "For Sale in (Burkina Faso)" on the cigarette packs.

It would also be useful to constitute a special committee / unit / task force that is dedicated to the establishment of the transit regulations, identification of the sponsors or enablers of illicit trade in Ghana, monitor activities of relevant Government ministries, departments and agencies ("MDAs") and propose a lasting / effective solution to the illicit trade problem

- 2) increased enforcement at borders and in-market Effective, aggressive enforcement (together with efficient tax administration), especially in a situation of high taxes, has been identified by several parties. Including the World Health Organisation ("WHO"), as key factors to combat illicit trade. As part of measures that can be taken in this regard, we have proposed (a) increased and targeted scrutiny of goods declared to be in transit; and (b) increased enforcement at borders and in-market. Additional details are in the enclosed memorandum.

- 3) retention of current excise rates (i.e. no increase in excise) One of the unintended consequences of the Government's drive to increase its revenue base, has been a steady increase in illicit trade. Presently, excise rate on cigarettes in Ghana stands at a staggering 175%, which is the highest rate across the Region and as such our operations have been negatively impacted as our operating cost base is higher in Ghana in comparison to other West African countries. This has mainly resulted in a tremendous increase of illicit trade from neighbouring countries and negatively impacted the Ghana economy in view of unfair competition - as it translates to higher cost of cigarettes produced by legitimate players. That high taxes result in smuggling is long acknowledged.

In view of the fragile economic situation in the country and how much impact excise rate has on illicit trade in Ghana, we humbly appeal for the current excise rates to be retained and for effective enforcement measures to be in place. We believe it is in the best interest of all parties for status quo to be maintained.

- 4) retention of the benchmark policy We would like to thank the Ghanaian Government for introducing the Benchmark Policy in 2019 and retaining the same, despite proposals to the contrary. While we have benefited from the Benchmark Policy, the Ghanaian Government is reaping the rewards, especially in connection with the fight against illicit trade, in terms of revenue collection. Kindly refer to the enclosed submission for our analysis.

Due to (a) Benchmark Value Reduction by the Ghanaian Government in 2019; (b) re-organisation of our products portfolio in Ghana to enable us compete more effectively against illicit traders; and (c) our reinvestment of the gains from the Benchmark Value Reduction to increase our efforts against illicit trade, we are beginning to see a gradual but significant reduction in illicit trade. Our internal (but preliminary) analysis indicates a significant reduction in the Duty-Not-Paid segment from 26% to 18% between 2019 - 2020).

We thank you for your time and consideration. Kindly let us know if we could visit you on any date of your convenience during the week of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to further discuss the proposals above (and the enclosed submission).

Yours faithfully,  
For: British American Tobacco (Ghana) Limited

DocuSigned by  
**Freddie ALESSAUM**  
Freddie Messaumi  
General Manager, West & Central Africa Markets

Encl:

DocuSigned by  
**Odini Enwa-Muggison**  
Odini Enwa-Muggison  
External Affairs Director

## Appendix II

For most African countries, though legislation on conventional tobacco exists there is a near absence or non-existence of legislation on RRP. Regulatory authorities still see prevention of tobacco consumption as a one size fits all approach to tobacco harm reduction with little or no interest shown in the efficacy of RRP.

In Ghana, for example, the Tobacco Control Regulations, 2016 (L.I. 2247), which is the country's legislative document on tobacco does not adequately cater to these reduced-risk products. Evidence shows that countries that are successfully reducing smoking rates with THR have also established separate legislation or policies to guide the use, categorization, and sale of RRP.

For THR to work, there is a need for effective and balanced regulations which recognize the reduced risk benefits that these alternative products can provide for adult consumers who have made an informed choice to smoke.

Another challenge for Ghana as well as many other developing economies is the level of awareness of RRP among consumers. In the United States, for example, a study by Brose et al. suggests that the daily vaping of e-cigarettes bolsters the user's effort to stop smoking or helps reduce the number of cigarettes smoked. The same cannot be said about Nigeria where combustible cigarette consumption remains popular.

It is gratifying that more and more governments and regulators, all over the world, are increasingly becoming aware of the effectiveness of safer alternatives, not only in reducing the health impact of tobacco consumption but also as an effective strategy for smoking cessation.

Therefore, it is hoped that the Ghanaian Government will embrace tobacco harm reduction as a public health strategy. RRP, according to experts, present a more realistic, pragmatic, consumer-oriented, and science-based approach to accelerate tobacco control and smoking cessation.

Figure 3: Tobacco Industry allied groups press releases on Harm Reduction Policies

## Appendix III

### Tobacco Industry allied groups press releases on Harm Reduction Policies



Figure 4: ILAPI Press Conference after webinar theme "Let us embrace tobacco harm reduction as part of control strategies" Photo Credit: (GNA)

## Appendix IV

Nkwanta South (O/ R) April 5, GNA -The Foundation for Consumer Freedom and Advancement (FCFA) and the Institute of Liberty, Policy, and Innovation (ILAPI) have encouraged regulatory agencies, tobacco controllers and public health institutions to embrace tobacco harm reduction as part of tobacco control strategies.

The statement issued by the Institute of Liberty and Policy Innovation (ILAPI) at a press conference, attended by journalists and editors, and an online webinar which featured experts in public health policy and consumer advocates enabled discussions on Tobacco Harm Reduction (THR) strategies deployed across the 59 countries evaluated in the index titled "Effective Anti-smoking Policies Global Index."

Mr Peter Bismark Kwofie, the Executive Director of the Institute of Liberty, and Policy Innovation in an interview with Ghana News Agency (GNA) said, findings from the global index show that embracing tobacco harm reduction strategies using reduced risk alternatives, such as non-combustible, smokeless tobacco or nicotine products, is critical to prevent the majority of the harm associated with smoking.

"The most up-to-date scientific evidence indicates that reduced-risk alternative products are the most effective method to quit smoking and avoid most of the health harms associated with smoking. For many decades, we have been aware of the dangers of smoking.

We have known for a long time that it is the smoke from combustion, not nicotine, that is to blame. We also know that we can distribute nicotine in low-risk methods," he said.

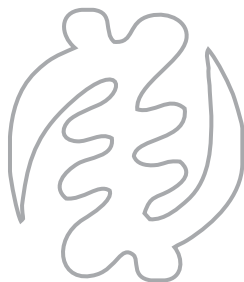
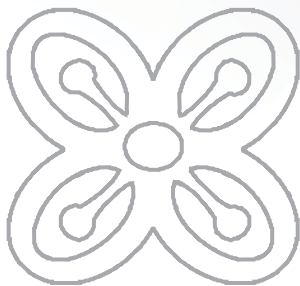
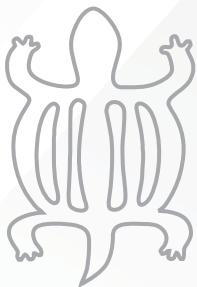
Mr Peter Kwofie added that countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, New Zealand, Japan, and Norway have successfully implemented THR approaches, and Ghana can learn from their policies and frameworks to tailor its policies on tobacco control to the unique needs of its population.

**Figure 5:** ILAPI press briefing calling on government to tailor policies to include e-cigarettes





**VISION FOR ALTERNATIVE  
DEVELOPMENT - GHANA**



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