

## Inputs to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2025

**1. Entity/ Intergovernmental body or forum:** Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

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**4. Your assessment** of the impacts of the multiple and interconnected crises on the implementation of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17 – 2000 characters with spaces

Tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable death. The objective of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control WHO FCTC is to protect present and future generations from the devastating health, social, environmental and economic consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke. Tobacco negatively impacts all SDGs and their targets including those under SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17. Examples of the multiple crises impacting these SDGs that are interconnected with tobacco use include: A) Health-harming industries represent a crisis for SDG implementation. The tobacco industry, a health-harming industry, is a commercial determinant of health that causes substantial harm to human health and well-being (SDG3). From the vantage point of the WHO FCTC, the continued and sustained interference by the tobacco industry in tobacco control policy is a threat to health and sustainable development. B) Exploitation of gender norms: The tobacco industry integrates gender norms in its business strategies. Almost two-thirds of deaths attributable to second-hand smoke are women; tobacco exposure is also linked to heart disease, lung cancer and poor pregnancy outcomes. Women also suffer from inequities, including in relation to access to care and quality of care received. (SDG 5). C) Plastic pollution: Trillions of cigarette butts containing plastic filters made of cellulose acetate are littered into our environment every year. Littered cigarette butts contribute to the current crisis of marine and ocean pollution(SDG14). D) Illicit trade: The tobacco epidemic is further aggravated by illicit trade in tobacco products, posing a serious threat to global public health, security, and government revenues through lost taxes. Illicit trade increase sthe accessibility and affordability of tobacco products, thus fueling the tobacco epidemic and undermining tobacco control policies. It also contributes to the funding of transnational criminal activities (SDG17).

**5. Three key areas** where sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2025, also bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets. - 2000 characters with spaces

A) Partnership with UNEP to combat microplastics in cigarettes (SDG 14): The Secretariat of the WHO FCTC and UNEP have partnered to raise awareness and urge action to be taken on the human and environmental impacts of plastic cigarette filters. Composed of thousands of cellulose acetate fibers, discarded cigarette butts break down into microplastics, contaminating the world's ecosystems, and releasing heavy metals and other chemicals into the environment. In addition to plastic cigarette filters, tobacco product waste, and waste from related electronic

devices such as batteries, plastic cartridges and metals, pollute soil and water resources, threatening the environment and life on our planet. B) Promoting economically viable alternatives to tobacco production (SDG 8): As part of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, the Secretariat of the WHO FCTC produced a toolkit to promote economically viable alternatives to tobacco growing. Of the ten largest tobacco cultivators, nine out of ten are in LMICs, where tobacco is increasingly grown. Tobacco growing takes up 3.2 million hectares of land, diverting resources that could be used to support growing food instead. Land that is deforested to make space for tobacco growing also leads to environmental suffering, contamination of water sources, and soil deterioration. C) Harnessing international cooperation to combat illicit trade (SDG 17): International cooperation contributes to the enhancement of the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources. Among the general obligations of Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products is to cooperate and communicate with relevant regional and international intergovernmental organizations in the secure exchange of information.

**6. Three examples** of measures to accelerate progress towards SDGs through well-coordinated actions in key transitions to bring progress to scale (food security, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), building on interlinkages between SDGs to ensure cohesive progress. - 2000 characters with spaces

A) In decision FCTC/COP10(14), at the Tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the WHO FCTC, the COP requested the Convention Secretariat to examine regulatory options for the prevention and management of waste generated by the tobacco industry and its products, including a ban on plastic cigarette filters. This decision provides Parties with a way forward to take into account the negative environmental impacts of the tobacco product life cycle and related electronic devices, as well as to strengthen the implementation of tobacco control measures for the protection of the environment. B) Measures to address how digital transformation may hinder and endanger health (digital determinants of health): Enacting and enforcing comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is identified as a cost-effective intervention for the prevention and control of NCDs in the global NCD action plan for 2013-2030. While the current global digital transformation can contribute to health and wellbeing, measures must also address how it may hinder and endanger health, particularly among young people. The tobacco industry is increasingly using digital platforms for advertising. Specific guidelines to address cross-border tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship in entertainment media, including on media communication digital platforms, are laid out in COP10 decision FCTC/COP10(23); drawing on the best available evidence and Party experience, these guide. Parties on how to take further action in this regard. C) Growing food not tobacco: Tobacco growing threatens food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture. The WHO-led Tobacco-Free Farms initiative has been a recent success story that has helped farmers in Kenya switch from growing tobacco to high-iron beans, thereby helping to provide a decent living for farmers, while restoring farmland damaged by tobacco growing.

**7. Follow-up actions and measures** being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. – 2000 characters with spaces

Three examples from decisions adopted at the Tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC are: A) Decision FCTC/COP10(14) “Implementation of Article 18 of the WHO FCTC”: This decision urges Parties to take into account the environmental impacts from the cultivation, manufacture, consumption and waste disposal of tobacco products and related electronic devices. The Convention Secretariat is preparing a report for the Eleventh session of the COP that will examine regulatory options regarding the prevention and management of waste generated by the tobacco industry and its products, including a ban on plastic cigarette filters. B) Decision FCTC/COP10(12) “Forward-looking tobacco control measures (in relation to Article 2.1 of the WHO FCTC)”: This decision recognizes that forward-looking tobacco control measures and measures that expand and intensify approaches to tobacco control have been developed since the Convention was adopted. An expert group has been established to identify and describe forward-looking tobacco control measures and measures that expand or intensify approaches to tobacco control as they apply to tobacco products. The expert group is preparing a report to be submitted to COP11. C) FCTC/COP10(23) “Specific guidelines to address cross-border tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) and the depiction of tobacco in entertainment media for implementation of Article 13 (Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship) of the WHO FCTC”: This decision recognizes that tobacco companies and those working to further their interests increasingly use digital communication platforms for TAPS, and to interfere with the setting and implementation of tobacco control measures. The COP adopted specific guidelines to address cross-border tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship and the depiction of tobacco in entertainment media, which Parties are called to implement; including with support from the Convention Secretariat.

**8. Recommendations and key messages** to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2025 HLPF. (2000 characters with spaces)

1. Strengthen the effective implementation of the WHO FCTC and its Guidelines for implementation, as well as the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, if applicable (SDG 3).
2. Establish and operationalize national coordinating mechanisms for the implementation of the WHO FCTC as part of a national tobacco control strategy with specific mandates, responsibilities and resources (SDG 3).
3. Tobacco use is one of the leading causes of preventable death and negatively impacts well-being (SDG 3).
4. Tobacco control policies are life-saving and cost-effective (SDG 3).
5. Commercial determinants of health, including the activities of the tobacco industry, can negatively impact well-being and drive health inequities (SDGs 3 and 5).
6. Interference by the tobacco industry in tobacco control and public health is a threat to well-being and sustainable development (SDGs 3 and 17).

7. Increasing excise taxes and prices on tobacco products has been identified as a cost-effective intervention for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and can help generate greatly needed increases in government revenues (SDGs 3 and 17).
8. At every stage of its life cycle, tobacco poses a serious risk to the environment, including oceans and marine life. The harms to the environment caused by tobacco cultivation, production, distribution, consumption and waste, including the trillions of plastic cigarette filters discarded every year must be taken into account (SDG 14).
9. Tobacco industry advertising makes tobacco products appeal to women, such as the colours, sizes and shapes of tobacco packaging. Tobacco control policies should be gender-responsive and take measures to reduce the harmful effects of tobacco on women (SDG 5).
10. The preamble and specific provisions of the WHO FCTC reminds us that there is a need for the full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation and the need for gender-specific tobacco control strategies (SDG 5).