

The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project

ITC Brazil Project Report



FINDINGS FROM THE WAVE 1 AND 2 SURVEYS (2009-2013)

MAY 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Promoting Evidence-Based Strategies to Fight the Global Tobacco Epidemic



Ministério da Saúde

Secretaria Nacional de Políticas sobre Drogas

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Findings from the ITC Brazil Wave 1 and 2 Surveys

ITC Brazil Project Report Executive Summary

2009-2013

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Message

The National Policy on Tobacco Control is dedicated to fulfilling the obligations and guidelines of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC). As the FCTC measures are of a multisectorial nature, the implementation of this international public health treaty requires the active participation of many government sectors, not exclusively the health sector.

To this end, a presidential decree established the National Commission for the FCTC Implementation (CONICQ) in 2003, which is responsible for the governance of this policy. This Committee is composed of representatives from 18 areas of the federal government, and aims to direct the organization and implementation of an intersectorial government agenda towards addressing the obligations under this treaty.

The National Cancer Institute José Alencar Gomes da Silva (INCA) has been a key player in addressing the obligations to the FCTC. As Executive Secretary of CONICQ, one of INCA's responsibilities is coordinating the participation and alignment of all parts of the government to meet the objectives and measures set out in the treaty. INCA is also responsible for execution of some actions included in the treaty. Through its Tobacco Control Division, INCA coordinates smoking cessation treatment in the Public Health System, and conducts national campaigns and educational activities in schools, workplaces, and health units. The Epidemiology Division of INCA has actively participated in various national surveys, such as the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), in partnership with the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). Through our surveillance and monitoring system we can monitor trends in tobacco product consumption in Brazil, as well as the effect of different policy measures. This has allowed us to observe that the policy is on track, as we have seen significant reductions in smoking prevalence over the past 20 years — from 34.8 % in 1989 to 18.2 % in 2008, among adults aged 18 years and over.

INCA's role in assessing and monitoring tobacco consumption and behaviour provides a natural fit as a partner for Brazil's participation in the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (the ITC Brazil Project), internationally coordinated by the University of Waterloo in Canada.

This report provides scientific evidence about the strengths and weaknesses of the National Policy, resulting from a cohort survey of adult smokers and non-smokers who live in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre conducted in 2009 (Wave 1) and 2012-2013 (Wave 2). The results show that Brazil has achieved great progress in areas of tobacco control such as the adoption of health warnings on packages of tobacco products that inform about the dangers of smoking and encourage smoking cessation; the ban on smoking in workplaces and public places which reduces exposure of the population to secondhand smoke; and the ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship which reduces people's exposure to marketing that induces consumption. Although Brazil has shown global leadership in these areas, the report points out some aspects that need to be strengthened or redirected to fully implement the FCTC and its guidelines.

Although nationally coordinated by INCA and the National Secretary of Drugs Policy (SENAD), the ITC Brazil Project had valuable contributions from several other governmental and non-governmental partners: Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), Brazilian Alliance for Tobacco Control (ACTbr), and the Cancer Foundation. This partnership reflects the participative and collaborative spirit of the National Policy on Tobacco Control — a core strategy for facing opposition and undue interference of the tobacco industry.

We thank the ITC Brazil Project team at University of Waterloo led by Professor Geoffrey T. Fong for their ongoing support for the ITC Brazil Survey and commitment to disseminating ITC Project findings to assist Brazil and other countries in the global fight against tobacco.

Director General, Instituto Nacional de Câncer José Alencar Gomes da Silva



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Message

Brazil has been highly successful in reducing the prevalence of smoking with the adoption of a strong National Policy on Tobacco Control. However, tobacco consumption continues to burden the Brazilian Public Health System, because it is responsible for 130,000 deaths annually and 30% of cancer deaths. Meanwhile, the tobacco industry continues to circumvent the law.

The Cancer Foundation became a partner in the ITC Brazil Project in 2009, recognizing the importance of conducting evidence-based research to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Brazilian Policy on Tobacco Control, and to promote behaviour change among smokers.

This report presents the results of the two waves of the ITC Brazil Survey, which clearly show that the country has implemented effective measures in several important areas of tobacco control. For example, health warnings on cigarette packs were selected by more than half of respondents (56%) as a reason that led them to think about quitting smoking. The prohibitive laws on advertising, promotion, and sponsorship have reduced the awareness of tobacco promotion from 46% of smokers and 37% of non-smokers in 2009, to 21% of smokers and 24% of non-smokers three years later.

It is important to highlight the findings which point to specific measures that Brazil should adopt to enhance its national policy. For example, the percentage of smokers and non-smokers who own homes free of tobacco smoke is still low (41% in Wave 1 and 46% in Wave 2). ITC research data in Europe show that national laws banning smoking in public places, supported by ongoing educational campaigns in the media, result in an increase in the number of tobacco-free homes.

The policies that promote smoke-free places in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre resulted in over 80% of workplaces being totally free of smoking, and less than 10% of smokers and non-smokers have reported noticing people smoking in restaurants in these three cities. These numbers could be even better if Law no. 12,546 of 2011, which prohibits smoking in public places around the country was put into practice, regulated, and enforced, and if permanent financing was provided for mass-media educational campaigns about the dangers of second-hand smoke exposure, which would support smokers to quit. The vast majority of non-smokers (95% to 97% in the three cities) and smokers (88% to 90%) support the national legislation of smoke-free places.

Moreover, enforcement of the prohibition of cigarette advertising at point of sale (POS) in the country has not been established. As a result, the display of cigarette packs became more visible, with many stores placing them in attractive and illuminated showcases. The ITC Survey report urges Brazil to quickly implement compliance with this ban on advertising at POS, and also to further advance the policy by banning the display of cigarettes and other tobacco products in stores.

Finally, although Brazil has been playing a leadership role in adopting strong health warnings, the ITC Brazil Survey found that while there was a significant increase in the percentage of smokers who read or looked closely at the messages in the packaging between Waves 1 and 2, there was a downward trend in warnings making smokers think about the harms of smoking or making them more likely to quit smoking. The report recommends that in the next round of pictorial warnings, the messages be included on at least 50% of the front face of the packaging and that the target date for this implementation be accelerated from 2016 to 2014.

We thank Professor Geoffrey T. Fong and ITC Project staff in Brazil and Canada for preparing this comprehensive analysis. We are certain that this report of the ITC Brazil Survey findings will contribute to the formulation of effective tobacco control policies, both in Brazil and internationally

Marcos Moraes
Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cancer Foundation

“The ITC Brazil Survey findings provide an important and comprehensive roadmap for guiding successful tobacco control policies, and will contribute to strengthening governmental efforts to regulate this lethal product. Brazil has been working hard to reduce the prevalence of smoking and the burden of tobacco consumption, especially among youth and low-income people. We are on course, but there are many challenges to overcome. The ITC Survey is a useful tool to guide the advances needed to curb the smoking epidemic and to evaluate the effects of global tobacco control.”

Tânia Cavalcante
Executive Secretariat of the National Commission for FCTC
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ITC POLICY EVALUATION PROJECT

The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (the ITC Project) is a multi-country prospective cohort study designed to measure the psychosocial and behavioural impact of key policies of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in more than 20 countries.

The ITC Brazil Project was created in 2009, when the National Cancer Institute José Alencar Gomes da Silva (Instituto Nacional de Câncer - INCA) partnered with the ITC Project at the University of Waterloo to design a longitudinal survey to evaluate the impact of tobacco control policies in Brazil. The ITC Brazil Wave 1 Survey was conducted from April to June in 2009 in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre. Wave 2 was conducted in the same cities from October 2012 to February 2013.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prevalence of cigarette smoking has declined over the past two decades in Brazil, in no small part as a response to the government policies implemented to reduce tobacco use. In addition, the impacts of these policies are reflected in the reduction of deaths from chronic diseases, such as lung cancer. Unfortunately, smoking and smoking initiation continue to occur as the tobacco industry finds ways to work around some of these policies and continue to promote their deadly product. Although Brazil has achieved very significant results in tobacco control, there are still issues that need to be addressed, such as the regulation of the total ban on smoking in enclosed places, the display of tobacco products at point of sale, as well as the effective prohibition of the use of additives aimed at making cigarettes more attractive.

The World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) is a global health treaty, established in 2005 to provide a framework for countries to reduce the use of tobacco products. The government of Brazil ratified the treaty in 2005 and continues to implement policies to meet the FCTC guidelines. The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (the ITC Project) was developed to provide an evidence base to guide policies enacted under the FCTC and to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of these legislative efforts. The ITC Project conducts longitudinal cohort surveys in more than 20 countries to assess the impact, and identify the determinants of effective tobacco control policies, in the areas of: health warning labels and pack descriptors; pricing and taxation of tobacco products; smoke-free legislation; tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship; and education and support for smoking cessation. In addition to policy evaluation, the ITC Project provides a greater understanding of patterns of tobacco use and cessation — over time and across countries, including factors that predict quit attempts and successful quitting.

The ITC Brazil Project was created in 2009 to develop a longitudinal smoking behaviour survey that was comparable to surveys used in all other ITC countries. The project is a partnership between the ITC Project in Canada at the University of Waterloo and several institutions in Brazil including: the National Cancer Institute (INCA), the National Secretariat for Drug Policy (SENAD), and the Cancer Foundation, with support from Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), and the Brazilian Alliance for Tobacco Control (ACTbr). A cohort of approximately 1,200 adult smokers (18 years and older) and 600 adult non-smokers living in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre were randomly selected and interviewed by telephone in 2009 (Wave 1) and 2012-2013 (Wave 2). The sample was replenished in the second wave to replace Wave 1 respondents who were lost to follow-up. Data analyses incorporated survey weights, as well as adjustments for the potentially confounding effects of “time-in-sample”,¹ gender, age, smoking status, and wave.

Some highlights of the results of the ITC Brazil Wave 1 and Wave 2 Surveys are summarized below.

¹ Time-in-sample is the number of times a respondent has participated in the survey and controls for the variation in responses among respondents who are newly recruited compared to those who have completed one prior wave, who vary from those who have completed two prior waves and so on.

Smoking Behaviour

Daily consumption of cigarettes is relatively high in the three cities surveyed in Brazil, based on a comparison with other ITC countries. Overall, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day (CPD) by daily smokers in Brazil remained similar from Wave 1 to Wave 2 at 17 CPD; however, there was a significant increase in CPD by daily smokers in the city of Porto Alegre — from 15 cigarettes per day at Wave 1, to 19 cigarettes at Wave 2. This increase was significant for both females and males in Porto Alegre. In addition, the CPD in Porto Alegre at Wave 2 was significantly higher than both São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

A common indicator of addiction to cigarettes is measured by the amount of time after waking up that a smoker has his/her first cigarette of the day. Male smokers in the three cities surveyed (19%) are more likely to have their first cigarette within five minutes of waking than male smokers in the other ITC Latin American countries of Uruguay (16%) or Mexico (5%). Female smokers in these three cities (18%) are similar to female smokers in Uruguay (19%), but much higher than female smokers in Mexico (5%) in this measure of addiction.

Five percent (5%) of the smokers in the ITC Brazil Survey reported regularly smoking a flavoured cigarette brand (including menthol or vanilla). These findings differ from a recent survey conducted in Brazil with youth which found that 60% of this population preferred to smoke menthol cigarettes, and may be reflective of the difference in the age of the samples (the ITC Brazil Project surveys adults 18 years and older). The findings suggest that the flavours added to cigarettes increase smoking initiation.

The *non-cigarette* products that survey respondents reported using most frequently (including those who smoke regular cigarettes and those who do not smoke cigarettes) are clove cigarettes (13%), cigars (10%), and shisha/waterpipes (8%). Although the sale of electronic cigarettes is banned in Brazil, about one-third of all respondents had heard of them, and of those that had heard of them, about half (60% of smokers; 46% of non-smokers) believed they were less harmful than regular cigarettes. About 4% of all smokers had tried the product.

There were important findings that together provide evidence to support improvements to smoking cessation interventions in Brazil: Nearly all smokers (85% to 89%) regret ever having started to smoke and over two-thirds (69%) believe that Brazilian society disapproves of smoking. Indeed over two-thirds (69%) of smokers themselves have a negative overall opinion of smoking, and, as presented below, 80% have tried to quit. But the vast majority of smokers feel that they are addicted to cigarettes, with over half (54%) reporting that they are very addicted. It is clear from these findings, taken together, that the majority of smokers in Brazil don't want to smoke but are trapped into continuing to smoke because they are addicted.

More than 80% of Brazilian smokers regret ever starting to smoke, with over half (54%) reporting that they are very addicted. The findings provide evidence that the majority of smokers in Brazil don't want to smoke, but are trapped because they are addicted and support the need for improvements to smoking cessation interventions in Brazil.

Smoking Cessation

Eighty percent (80%) of smokers in the Wave 2 sample reported ever making a quit attempt. Of the 495 cohort smokers in Wave 1 who were re-interviewed at Wave 2, 69% attempted to quit and 25% were successful in quitting. Of 303 female cohort smokers, 73 (24%) quit at Wave 2 and of 192 male cohort smokers, 52 (27%) quit. Smokers who reported that they were making plans to quit significantly altered their timeframe for a planned quit date between Waves 1 and 2. Those that planned to quit within one month decreased from 36% at Wave 1 to 19% at Wave 2. Those planning to quit within six months (20% at Wave 1 and 26% at Wave 2) or sometime later in the future (23% at Wave 1 and 32% at Wave 2), significantly increased.

The most common reasons cited by smokers to think about quitting and by quitters as reasons for quitting were: concern for their personal health, setting an example for their children, concern about the effect of their cigarette smoke on non-smokers, and warning labels on cigarette packages. Visits to a doctor or other health professional were significantly higher among smokers in Porto Alegre at Wave 2 compared to smokers in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Among those who visited a doctor or other health professional, smokers in Porto Alegre were also more likely than those in São Paulo to receive: advice to quit (62%), suggestions for quitting (62%), referrals to other professionals (50%), and prescription medication to help them stop smoking (39%) at Wave 2.

A high percentage of smokers (85%) and non-smokers (92%) at Wave 2 agreed that the government should do more to tackle the harm done by smoking. Additionally 85% of all smokers felt that the government should do more to help smokers give up smoking.

Smoke-free Public Places

There was an increase in the percentage of smokers who reported having a complete workplace smoking ban between Waves 1 and 2. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of smokers at Wave 1 reported that smoking was not allowed in any indoor area of their workplace, and 85% reported that there was an indoor smoking ban at Wave 2. For non-smokers, 79% reported a workplace ban in Wave 1 and 89% reported there was a ban in Wave 2. Over three-quarters of smokers (75% at Wave 1 and 80% at Wave 2) believed that smoking should not be allowed at all in indoor workplaces.

Noticing smoking indoors in *restaurants* over the last 6 months by smokers decreased from 17% at Wave 1 to 5% at Wave 2. There was also a decrease in noticing smoking among non-smokers from 30% to 9%. Noticing smoking in *bars* over the last 6 months also decreased between waves. Sixty eight percent (68%) of smokers and 69% of non-smokers noticed smoking in bars at Wave 1, declining to 19% of smokers and 26% of non-smokers at Wave 2. There is very high support for the national smoke-free policy in both non-smokers (range of 95% to 97% across the three cities) and smokers (range of 88% to 90%). The percentage of smokers and non-smokers who had smoke-free homes at Wave 2 did not increase over time (41% to 46%), but support for banning smoking in cars with children was very high (88% of smokers and 91% of non-smokers) at Wave 2.

The government has not yet established regulations for the national comprehensive smoke-free law legislated in December 2011, thus many parts of the country are not protected by smoke-free laws.

Packaging and Labelling

The current series of warning labels on cigarette packages have been in circulation in Brazil since 2009 and are located only on the back of the pack. These factors may negatively influence their impact on smokers. The study found that although smokers who reported noticing the labels showed a significant increase in reading or looking closely at the warning labels from Waves 1 to 2, there was little change, or a decreasing trend, in labels making smokers think about the harms of smoking, forgoing a cigarette, or making them more likely to think about quitting. There was a significant increase in the percentage of smokers who reported the warning labels made them feel extremely worried; however, this was reported by less than 15% of the sample at Wave 2. From a cross-country comparison perspective, female smokers in Brazil were the most likely to avoid looking at the warning labels out of the 20 countries surveyed.



A ban on misleading descriptors such as “light” and “mild” was implemented in Brazil in 2001, as the scientific evidence has established that these cigarettes are no less harmful to a smoker’s health than regular cigarettes. However, approximately 10% of smokers believe their regular brand is “a little less harmful” than other brands, and about half believe that their brand is lighter in taste and smoother on their throat and chest. About half of the smokers agreed that cigarettes should be sold in plain packaging, i.e., not allowing colorful designs on the packaging which can mislead consumers into perceiving that different cigarette brands or varieties have different levels of harm.

Tobacco Price and Taxation

Although ITC Brazil data shows that the affordability of cigarettes decreased between Waves 1 and 2, the percentage of smokers who reported that they “often” or “very often” thought about the money they spent on smoking remained relatively unchanged. In addition, decreases were also observed in the percentage of smokers reporting price as a reason for choosing their regular brand of cigarettes, as well as in the percentage of smokers who reported that the price of cigarettes led them to think about quitting.

Pictorial warnings currently appear on 100% of the back of the pack. Decreases in warning label effectiveness between Waves 1 and 2 suggest that the 2011 law requiring text warnings on 30% of the front of the pack by 2016 be revised to require pictorial warnings on 50% of the front in 2014, in addition to the current 100% of the back. A new set of pictorial warnings is also needed to avoid the wear-out effect.



The 2011 point of sale advertising ban has not been fully enforced, allowing illuminated cigarette display cases to become the norm and often lacking the required warning labels.

Education, Communication, and Public Awareness

The majority of smokers were aware of the variety of health risks associated with smoking, with the exception of smoking-related blindness. Noticing advertisements or information related to the dangers of smoking, or encouraging quitting, decreased between Waves 1 and 2. Only a quarter of smokers surveyed frequently noticed anti-smoking information at Wave 2. Similarly, there were decreases in the percentage of smokers who thought about the harm smoking might be doing to them or to others, as well as in the percentage who thought that smokers have a “somewhat high” or “very high” likelihood of developing lung cancer.

Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship

The ITC Survey findings demonstrate clearly that laws passed in Brazil since 2000 have subsequently reduced public awareness of tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS), and continue to do so. Smokers in all cities report significant decreases in noticing promotion of smoking (from 46% at Wave 1 to 21% at Wave 2), with low-income smokers more likely to notice smoking promotion at both waves. However, despite the passing of Federal Law no. 12.546 in December 2011 banning the promotion and advertising of cigarettes at point of sale in Brazil, the law has not yet been implemented; thus, in many places the tobacco industry has continued to promote their product within stores, clearly violating the current legislation. In parallel, the display of cigarettes has been enhanced through attractive, illuminated cases in stores, restaurants, and other venues where they are sold; sometimes without the required health warnings.

Noticing sponsorship of sport events by tobacco products decreased significantly between the two waves from 8% to 4% in smokers and 12% to 6% in non-smokers. Noticing art event sponsorship significantly decreased for smokers from 6% to 2%.

Analyses showed that 13% of smokers and 18% of non-smokers reported seeing an actor smoking “often” or “very often” in soap operas and TV programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the ITC Brazil Survey demonstrate that Brazil has made progress in implementing effective tobacco control policies; however, the evidence also points to areas where Brazil should strengthen policies to increase the salience and effectiveness of the health warnings, reduce second-hand smoke in public places, increase cessation, and reduce the initiation of smoking.

1. To broaden the impact of health warnings, it is recommended that Brazil require pictorial warnings on at least 50% of the front of the pack, in addition to the current status of 100% of the back. The present law which plans for text-only messages to occupy 30% of the front of the packaging by 2016 does not meet the recommendations of the Article 11 Guidelines which call for pictorial health on at least 50% of the front and back of the pack. To avoid warning label wear-out, it is important to conduct a permanent rotation of messages. As the current warnings have been in circulation for five years, the government should move forward the scheduled date of implementation of the new warnings — from 2016 to 2014.
2. Effectiveness of the 2011 advertising ban at point of sale (POS) is weak due to poor enforcement. The tobacco industry continues to advertise their brands on panels at POS. Furthermore, the display of cigarette packs has generally become more visible as many establishments exhibit them in attractive, illuminated cases. To avoid further promotion of cigarettes in retail establishments, Brazil should quickly establish regulations and protocols for enforcement of the POS ban. Further restrictions on product advertising at POS should focus on implementing a complete ban on the display of cigarettes and other tobacco products at POS.
3. Retailers and the public should be educated about deceptive tactics used by the tobacco industry to promote their products among youth audiences and the harms of such strategies on the uptake of smoking among youth.
4. Strong public support for government initiatives to assist smokers in quitting, high perceived negativity about smoking overall, and strong feelings of regret among smokers for initiating smoking demonstrate that the timing is favourable to strengthen regulatory measures, such as a complete ban on the use of additives in tobacco products, as well as other initiatives to support smoking cessation. Increases in cigarette consumption among daily smokers in Porto Alegre, indicate that smokers in that city in particular could benefit from increased anti-smoking campaigns and access to cessation services. Smokers in Porto Alegre indicated a willingness to quit as they reported higher levels of visits to health professionals and a greater likeliness to receive cessation support than smokers in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

5. Protocols for regulation and enforcement of the 2011 national legislation that bans smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public places need to be defined to fully implement and ensure compliance with this law, as already is in effect in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Paraná.
6. Sustained funding for mass media campaigns should be in place to educate the public about the harms of second-hand smoke, to further increase compliance with the forthcoming national smoke-free law regulations, as well as to encourage the adoption of home smoking bans.
7. The ITC Brazil Survey shows very strong public support for a ban on smoking in cars with children (88% of smokers and 91% of non-smokers). This demonstrates that Brazil is well-positioned to adopt national smoke-free legislation, which has been implemented in a number of countries, including Cyprus, Bahrain, Mauritius, Australia, and Canada, and which will be implemented in other countries, including the United Kingdom.
8. The World Cup in Brazil in 2014 presents an opportunity to associate the sport with a life free from tobacco. This could be done by completely banning smoking and prohibiting the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products within all sports stadiums.
9. A new tax structure implemented in 2012, prior to ITC Brazil Wave 2 Survey, requires annual increases on cigarette tax rates for four years, up to the year 2016. The impact of these increases on cessation, quit intentions, and smoking behaviour should be closely monitored by the ITC Brazil Project and other studies because increasing the price of cigarettes is known to have an important influence on increasing quitting.
10. The high prevalence of noticing smoking in the entertainment media and conclusive evidence indicating that smoking in movies leads to initiation of smoking, suggests the need for Brazil to regulate smoking in movies and television programming by implementing strategies outlined in the FCTC Guidelines for Article 13.

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The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project

The ITC Project Evaluating the Impact of FCTC Policies in...

20+ countries • 50% of the world's population
60% of the world's smokers • 70% of the world's tobacco users

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