



NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

Dr. Olivia Agyekumwaa Boateng

Director, Tobacco and Substances of Abuse Directorate, FDA- Ghana

WHO FCTC Focal Person on Tobacco Control



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ABBREVIATIONS

- **WHO FCTC- WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR TOBACCO CONTROL**
- **FDA- FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY**
- **OSP- OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR**
- **CHRAJ- COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE**
- **NIB- NATIONAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU**
- **GRA – GHANA REVENUE AUTHORITY**
- **MoTI- MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**
- **UNDP- UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**
- **UNODC- UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUG AND CRIME**
- **NGO- NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION**
- **VALD- VISION FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

WHY A NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION?

Following Ghana's ratification of the Protocol (in the year 2021), there was a need to assess the state of illicit tobacco trade and develop a roadmap for the implementation of the Protocol with support from the FCTC secretariat.

The rationale behind the conduct of a needs assessment on the protocol with the requesting government, Ghana, was to:

- Identify the objectives to be accomplished under the Protocol
- The resources available to the party concerned for implementation
- identify any gaps

The proposed exercise was based on all substantial articles of the protocol to establish a baseline of needs



PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES TOWARDS MISSION



Preparatory Meetings were held to clearly set out objectives of the needs assessment, identify key stakeholders relevant to the implementation of various aspects of the protocol, and detail the agenda for the entire mission



Development of concept note and background on the Needs Assessment to provide stakeholders better understanding on how the institutions they represent can contribute to the set-out objectives



The identified stakeholder institutions were contacted, and line of communication established for future correspondence. These included non-health organizations such as Economic and Organized Crime Office, Financial Intelligence Center, Crime Investigation Department, OSP, Ghana Airports Company Ltd, CHRAJ, NIB, Registrar of Companies, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, GRA and MoTI



Follow ups were carried out to ensure that all stakeholders were on the same art and queries clarified



The offices of the Minister of health, WHO WR and key parties were reached out to book the necessary appointments for deliberations



Working closely with community persons in the key institutions to confirm participation in needs assessment including bilateral engagement



NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS- STAKEHOLDER MEETING AND BILATERAL MEETINGS

Opening meeting with the Minister of Health

- A WHO FCTC Secretariat -led team briefed Ghana's Deputy Health Minister on a needs assessment for implementation of the Protocol. The Minister welcomed the support and emphasized the need for stronger enforcement against illegal tobacco, which harms public health by increasing access and funding criminal activities.

Meeting with all relevant government agencies and other stakeholders

- The purpose of the meeting was to ensure involvement of all relevant agencies in the needs assessment process and collect information from stakeholders on their current involvement in implementation of the Protocol, including their relevant programmes, areas of work, strategies and plans, priorities, challenges, and opportunities, needs and gaps in implementation of the Protocol, in a form of open discussion

Bilateral Engagements

- The team held crucial meetings with multiple agencies, including law enforcement, financial regulators, tax authorities, and anti-corruption agencies to discuss specific aspects of tobacco control treaty implementation. They assessed progress, explored ongoing systems, and facilitated expert advice from the international team to their Ghanaian counterparts.

Closing Meeting/ Debriefing

- The needs assessment team shared key findings and recommendations with Ghana's health leadership. Critical steps for fulfilling protocol obligations, stakeholder awareness and a dedicated sub-committee within the existing tobacco control body were highlighted. Ghana expressed gratitude for ongoing WHO and UNDP support in tackling tobacco challenges.



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Mission Team with the Honourable Deputy Minister of Health of Ghana



Meeting with the Executive Director, Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO), Ghana



Meeting with the Food and Drugs Authority and the WHO Focal Person for Tobacco Control



Meeting with the Office of the Special Prosecutor, Ghana



Meeting with the Registrar General's Department, Ghana

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MISSION

Strengthening control over the tobacco supply chain by fully implementing Article 6 of the Protocol, including stricter licensing, monitoring, product tracking, and enforcement in free zones and throughout the value chain.

Establishing a dedicated information exchange platform with key enforcement agencies and expanding collaboration with existing anti-corruption bodies while strengthening the FDA's coordination and developing a rapid implementation roadmap.

Strong inter-agency coordination across FDA, tax authorities, law enforcement, and financial intelligence entities to establish a Protocol-compliant track-and-trace system, tighten pre-licensing information exchange, and fortify border controls against illicit tobacco.

Tighten the grip on illicit tobacco through amplified law enforcement collaboration, widespread legal framework awareness, tougher penalties, proactive investigations, and leveraging special investigative techniques.

bolstering international cooperation against illicit tobacco by building stronger law enforcement ties, expanding extradition agreements, and setting a clear threshold for mutual legal assistance, all in line with the Protocol's requirements.

comprehensive awareness and training offensive against illicit tobacco, targeting law enforcement, government agencies, and the public, while offering specialized technical assistance to bolster anti-smuggling, judicial, and financial crime fighting capabilities.

Wider engagement with international organizations like the World Bank, WCO, UNODC, and Interpol to complement domestic efforts and bolster successful Protocol implementation through enhanced intersectoral and international collaboration

Leverage on existing expertise in transparency, anti-corruption, and money laundering from NGOs for stronger civil society engagement and improved governance, as encouraged by Article 4.7 of the FCTC.

CONCLUSION OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Ghana's 5-day tobacco control needs assessment yielded crucial recommendations to guide future efforts, thanks to the unwavering commitment of FCTC Secretariat, government, WHO, agencies, NGOs, and all stakeholders.

There was wide stakeholder consultation leading to the outline of 8 recommendations.

Stakeholders, including civil society organizations were able to indicate their specific contributions towards the implementation of the WHO FCTC and tobacco control laws.

United against the "tobacco menace", they remain resolute in protecting Ghanaian health through tackling tobacco use and illicit trade.



Drafting of the final report and the request for post needs assessment support



Following the needs assessment, key stakeholders involved put together the preliminary recommendations.



These recommendations were drafted into a detailed report by the Consultant and presented to the mission team, FDA, WHO Country Office, UNDP and relevant stakeholders for review



Discussions were held on phone and through email to clarify any discrepancies.



MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE POST NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUPPORT

1

Enforcement, regulatory and relevant stakeholders have undergone training **on the protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products across the country**

2

A **draft roadmap for implementation of the protocol** has been developed in consultation a technical committee comprised of key stakeholders in control of illicit tobacco trade

3

Various **stakeholders** have been brought on board as **part of strengthening mechanism**





MAIN OUTCOMES POST NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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LESSONS LEARNED AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THIS EXERCISE IN THE FUTURE

The fight against tobacco demands collective action. Ghana's recent needs assessment revealed the power of multisectoral involvement in tackling this complex issue.

- **Leveraging Civil Society:**

Engaging passionate individuals in NGOs, youth groups, and communities mobilizes vital support from politicians, the public, and key influencers. Their voices amplify the call for action and hold decision-makers accountable.

- **Building a Strong Foundation:**

Clarity is Key, having a clear roadmap with defined objectives ensures efficient use of resources and keeps all stakeholders aligned in the fight against tobacco. A well-communicated plan inspires confidence and attracts wider participation.

- **Cooperation, Not Competition:**

Recognizing the crucial role of diverse sectors, from health to finance to education to enforcement, fosters effective collaboration. Breaking down silos and fostering coordination amplifies the impact of tobacco control efforts.



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