

Oxford Medical Publications

Tobacco control in developing countries

This volume is dedicated to the approximately 100 million people who have died in the twentieth century as a result of smoking. It is our hope that lessons learned from their deaths will help to avoid many of the 1 billion deaths expected to occur in the twenty-first century, on current smoking patterns.

# Tobacco control in developing countries

**Editors**

**Prabhat Jha and Frank J. Chaloupka**

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# Contributors

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## Editors

### *Prabhat Jha*

Prabhat Jha is a Senior Health Specialist at the World Bank, Washington, DC. He is currently on special assignment to the World Health Organization, where he is Senior Scientist in the Economics Advisory Service, Cluster on Evidence Information and Policy. Email: Pjha@worldbank.org or Jhap@who.ch

### *Frank J. Chaloupka*

Frank J. Chaloupka is Professor of Economics, University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and Research Associate, Health Economics Program, National Bureau of Economic Research. Professor Chaloupka is also Director of ImpacTeen: a Policy Research Partnership to Reduce Youth Substance Abuse, UIC Health Research and Policy Centers. Email: Fjc@uic.edu

## Authors

**Samira Asma:** *Senior Service Fellow/Visiting Scientist, Office on Smoking and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia, United States. Email: Sea5@cdc.gov*

**Martin Bobak:** *Senior Lecturer, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College, London, London, United Kingdom. Email: Martinb@public-health.ucl.ac.uk*

**Phyllida Brown:** *Scientific Editor, London, United Kingdom. Email: Pbrown@brixworks.freeserve.co.uk*

**Thomas C. Capehart:** *Economist, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Thomasc@econ.ag.gov*

**Likwang Chen:** *Assistant Investigator, Division of Health Policy Research, National Health Research Institutes, Taipei, Taiwan. Email: Likwang@nhri.org.tw*

**Jillian Clare Cohen:** *World Bank-PAHO Pharmaceuticals Liaison Officer, The World Bank, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Jcohen@worldbank.org*

**David Collins:** *Adjunct Professor of Economics, Division of Economic and Financial Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Email: Dcollins@efs.mq.edu.au*

**Michaelyn Corbett:** *Ph.D. candidate, Department of Economics, University of Illinois-Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States. Email: Mcorbe1@uic.edu*

**Joy de Beyer:** *Economist, Health, Nutrition, and Population, The World Bank, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Jdebeyer@worldbank.org*

**C. K. Gajalakshmi:** *Head, Division of Epidemiology and Cancer Registry, Cancer Institute, Tamil Nadu, India. Email: Gaja\_1@hotmail.com*

**H. Frederick Gale:** *Economist, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Fgale@econ.ag.gov*

**Michael Grossman:** *Director, Health Economics Research Program, National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, New York, United States. Email: mgrossman@gc.cuny.edu*

**Emmanuel Guindon:** *Economist, Tobacco Free Initiative, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. Email: Guindone@who.ch*

**Teh-Wei Hu:** *Professor of Economics, Department of Health Economics, University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States. Email: Thu@uclink2.berkeley.edu*

**Rowena Jacobs:** *Research Fellow, Centre for Health Economics, University of York, Heslington, York, United Kingdom. Email: Rj3@york.ac.uk*

**Martin Jarvis:** *Professor of Epidemiology, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College, London, London, United Kingdom. Email: Martin.jarvis@ucl.ac.uk*

**Luk Joossens:** *Consultant, International Union Against Cancer, Brussels, Belgium. Email: Joossens@globalink.org*

**Donald Kenkel:** *Associate Professor, Department of Policy Analysis and Management, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, United States. Email: Dsk10@cornell.edu*



**Helen Lapsley:** *Senior Lecturer, School of Health Service Management, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Email: H.Lapsley@unsw.edu.au*

**James Lightwood:** *Assistant Adjunct Professor of Economics, Department of Clinical Pharmacy, School of Pharmacy, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, California, United States. Email: Lighttwo@itsa.ucsf.edu*

**David Merriman:** *Associate Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, Loyola University, Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States. Email: Dmerrim@luc.edu*

**Philip Musgrove:** *Principal Economist, Health, Nutrition and Population, The World Bank, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Pmusgrove@worldbank.org*

**Son Nguyen:** *Young Professional, The World Bank, Washington DC, United States. Email: Snguyen@worldbank.org*

**Thomas E. Novotny:** *Deputy Assistant Secretary for International and Refugee Health, United States Department of Health and Human Services, Rockville, Maryland, United States. Email: Tnovotny@osophs.dhhs.gov*

**Fred Paccaud:** *Professor, Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, School of Medicine, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland. Email: Fred.Paccaud@inst.hospvd.ch*

**Richard Peck:** *Associate Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, University of Illinois-Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States. Email: Rmpeck@uic.edu*

**Kent Ranson:** *Ph.D. Candidate, Health Policy Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, United Kingdom. Email: K.ranson@lshtm.ac.uk*

**Henry Saffer:** *Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, New York, United States. Email: Hsaffer@gc.cuny.edu*

**Donald Sharp:** *Senior Medical Officer, Office on Smoking and Health, Atlanta, Georgia, United States. Email: Das8@cdc.gov*

**Emil M. Sunley:** *Assistant Director, Fiscal Affairs Department, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Esunley@imf.org*

**David Sweanor:** *Senior Legal Counsel, Non-Smokers' Rights Association, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Email: Dsweanor@nsra-adnf.ca*

**John A. Tauras:** *Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Department of Health Management and Policy, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States. Email: tauras@sph.umich.edu*

**Allyn Taylor:** *Advisor, Tobacco Free Initiative, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland; Adjunct Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland, United States. Email: altaylor@jhsph.edu*

**Kenneth E. Warner:** *Professor of Economics, Director of University of Michigan Tobacco Research Network, Department of Health Management and Policy, School of Public Health, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States. Email: Kwarner@umich.edu*

**Trevor Woollery:** *Economist, Office on Smoking and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia, United States. Email: Tgw2@cdc.gov*

**Ayda Yurekli:** *Economist, Health, Nutrition and Population, The World Bank, Washington, DC, United States. Email: Ayurekli@worldbank.org*

**Ping Zhang:** *Assistant Professor of Economics, Department of Agricultural Economics, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, United States. Email: Pzhang@loki.agecon.ksu.edu*

# Foreword

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Tobacco is rapidly becoming one of the single biggest causes of death worldwide, and by 2030 it is expected to kill about 10 million people per year. Until recently, this epidemic of chronic disease and premature death mainly affected rich countries. But by 2030, some 70% of tobacco deaths will be in low-income and middle-income countries. And in rich countries, smoking is increasingly concentrated among the poor, and is responsible for much of their ill health and premature mortality.

For both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, increased action to reduce this burden is a priority, as part of their missions to improve health and reduce poverty. Such action must clearly take place within countries, involving governments and civil society. As knowledge-based institutions, the World Bank and the WHO can enable action at local levels by providing sound evidence for policy-makers. This book is the result of a partnership between the two organizations.

Tobacco is different from many other health challenges. Cigarettes are demanded by consumers and form part of the social custom of many societies. Cigarettes are extensively traded and profitable commodities, whose production and consumption are part of the economies of developed and developing countries alike. The economic aspects of tobacco use are, therefore, critical to the debate on its control. However, until recently, these economic aspects have received little global attention.

This book is intended primarily to fill that gap. It covers key, and often complex, economic issues that most societies and policy-makers face when they think about tobacco or its control.

The world saw unprecedented health gains in the twentieth century. As we enter the twenty-first, both our organizations are committed to helping governments to sustain these gains and to extend good health to the poorest of the world. It is our hope that the impressive evidence base presented in this book will enable early action with control policies that are simple, cost-effective, and available now. Without such action, the world can expect about 1 billion people to be killed by tobacco in the twenty-first century.

James D. Wolfensohn, President, the World Bank  
Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director General, World Health Organization  
May 2000



James D. Wolfensohn  
President  
The World Bank



Gro Harlem Brundtland  
Director General  
World Health Organization



# Preface

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More than 40 years' worth of epidemiological studies in high-income countries, and a growing number in developing countries, have removed any doubt that smoking is damaging global health on an unprecedented scale.

In contrast, there is continuing debate on the economics of tobacco control, including the costs and consequences of tobacco-control policies. In the 1950s, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer (Pollock 1996) warned of:

... the enormous contribution to the Exchequer from tobacco duties and the serious effect on the Commonwealth. . . . that a campaign against smoking would have.

Forty years later, an Asian health minister made similar claims (*Australian Financial Review* 1996) in stating that:

... cigarette producers are making large contributions to our economy. . . . We have to think about workers and tobacco farmers.

This volume aims to fill the analytic gap around the economics of tobacco control. Its aim is to address key questions such as: What is the economic nature of addiction? What is the rationale for governments to intervene in the tobacco market? Which interventions are effective and which are not? Does tobacco control harm the economy? What are the costs and cost-effectiveness of tobacco-control policies? The book is primarily intended for technical staff within governments and international agencies, and academic economists and epidemiologists.

We made a deliberate decision to recruit as many economists working on tobacco as possible for this volume. At the outset we sought to ensure that analyses were robust and critical. The volume builds on earlier analytic work, including an international conference on the economics of tobacco control held in Cape Town, South Africa in February 1998. The proceedings of this conference, the first of its kind, have been published elsewhere (Abedian *et al.* 1998).

To help meet the needs of our audience, we have aimed to provide a high level of critical peer review. There have been four types of review. First, a panel of external, anonymous, peers reviewed nearly every chapter at least twice. Second, authors, selected experts and potential users reviewed each chapter at Technical Review Meetings in November 1998 in Lausanne, Switzerland and in June 1999 in Antalya, Turkey. Third, a panel convened by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided anonymous reviews of most chapters prior to the Lausanne meeting. Finally, the key messages from most chapters were reviewed in the World Bank on three

occasions. Earlier drafts of the papers in this volume formed the basis for a World Bank summary report (Jha and Chaloupka 1999). This report aims mainly to meet the needs of policy makers. The Bank report has been disseminated widely, and has been translated into about a dozen languages.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence base on the economics of tobacco control is nascent. Yet, even at this early stage, economics provides a powerful tool for tobacco control. We hope that this volume will help to increase the numbers of countries who apply economics to tobacco control, to improve the quality of the economic analyses in all countries, and to spur further research. It is our firm belief that on-going analytic work is the basis for public health action worldwide.

PJ  
FJC  
April 2000

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<sup>1</sup> This volume does not represent official views of the World Bank or the World Health Organization. Authors of individual chapters take responsibility for factual content.

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