

VALUE HEALTH AFRICA ACTIVITY/MISSION REPORT

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Theme: Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use

Background:

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing more than 8 million people a year around the world. More than 7 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while around 1.2 million are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

Smokeless tobacco use is highly addictive and damaging to health. Smokeless tobacco contains many cancer-causing toxins and its use increases the risk of cancers of the head, neck, throat, oesophagus and oral cavity (including cancer of the mouth, tongue, lip and gums) as well as various dental diseases. Every cigarette one smoke cuts five to eleven minutes from one's life. Over a lifetime, that can reduce one's life expectancy by as much as 12 years.

Over 80% of the 1.3 billion tobacco users worldwide live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest. Tobacco use contributes to poverty by diverting household spending from basic needs such as food and shelter to tobacco.

The economic costs of tobacco use are substantial and include significant health care costs for treating the diseases caused by tobacco use as well as the loss of human capital that results from tobacco-attributable morbidity and mortality.

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) carried out in 2014 in Cameroon showed that 26.3% of youth aged 13-15 years have tried tobacco products and 10.1% of these youths are actually using tobacco products. With respect to passive smoking, 28.5% of youth are exposed to tobacco smoke in their homes and 42.1% in public place

Activity date: 31st May, 2020



Objectives:

- ✓ Equip young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries' intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products; and
- ✓ Empower influencers (in pop culture, on social media, in the home, or in the classroom) to protect and defend youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco.

Activities

- ✓ Sensitization and education campaigns on dangers of use of tobacco products among youths, manipulation tactics employed by tobacco companies targeting youths,
- ✓ Stickers/posters campaign in bus stops, market places, taxis, main junctions, motorbikes among others



Outcome

- ✓ Over 5000 youths became conscious of the health hazards involve in tobacco use, new manipulation tactics of tobacco manufacturing companies
- ✓ More than forty-one youths contemplate quitting smoking



Some Reactions from Participants

- ✓ A- *“Why can’t the government shutdown the tobacco manufacturing companies?”* – says a Bike man
- ✓ B- *“We need the grace of God to stop smoking. When I was a smoker, I could get up at any time of the night in search of a stick of cigarette whenever I feel the urge to light one”*—a Bike man says
- ✓ C- *“I cannot stick any sticker on my bike because I am afraid of stopping smoking. When I smoke, I feel like all my problems are taken away”*—says an Okada Rider
- ✓ D- *“Upon knowing all this, I don’t think I can smoke again”*—student

Conclusion

More than five thousand people benefitted from the health talk, one or more messages, with forty-one youths contemplating quitting