



# Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index: A Tool to Protect Tobacco Control

**National & 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress on Tobacco and Health, IRAN**

**Panel 3: Tobacco and International Responsibilities**

Mary Assunta

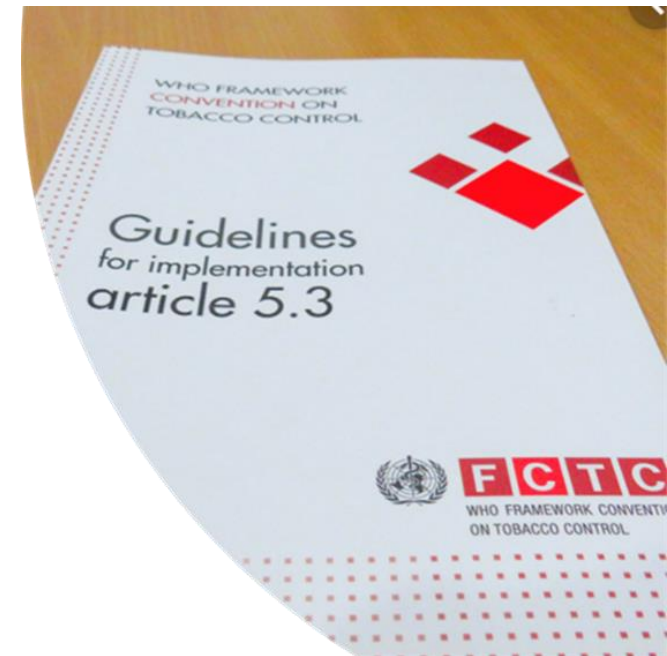
GGTC

22 February 2023

# WHO FCTC Article 5.3 - Obligation

“In setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law.”

- **Article 5.3 Guidelines adopted in 2008**

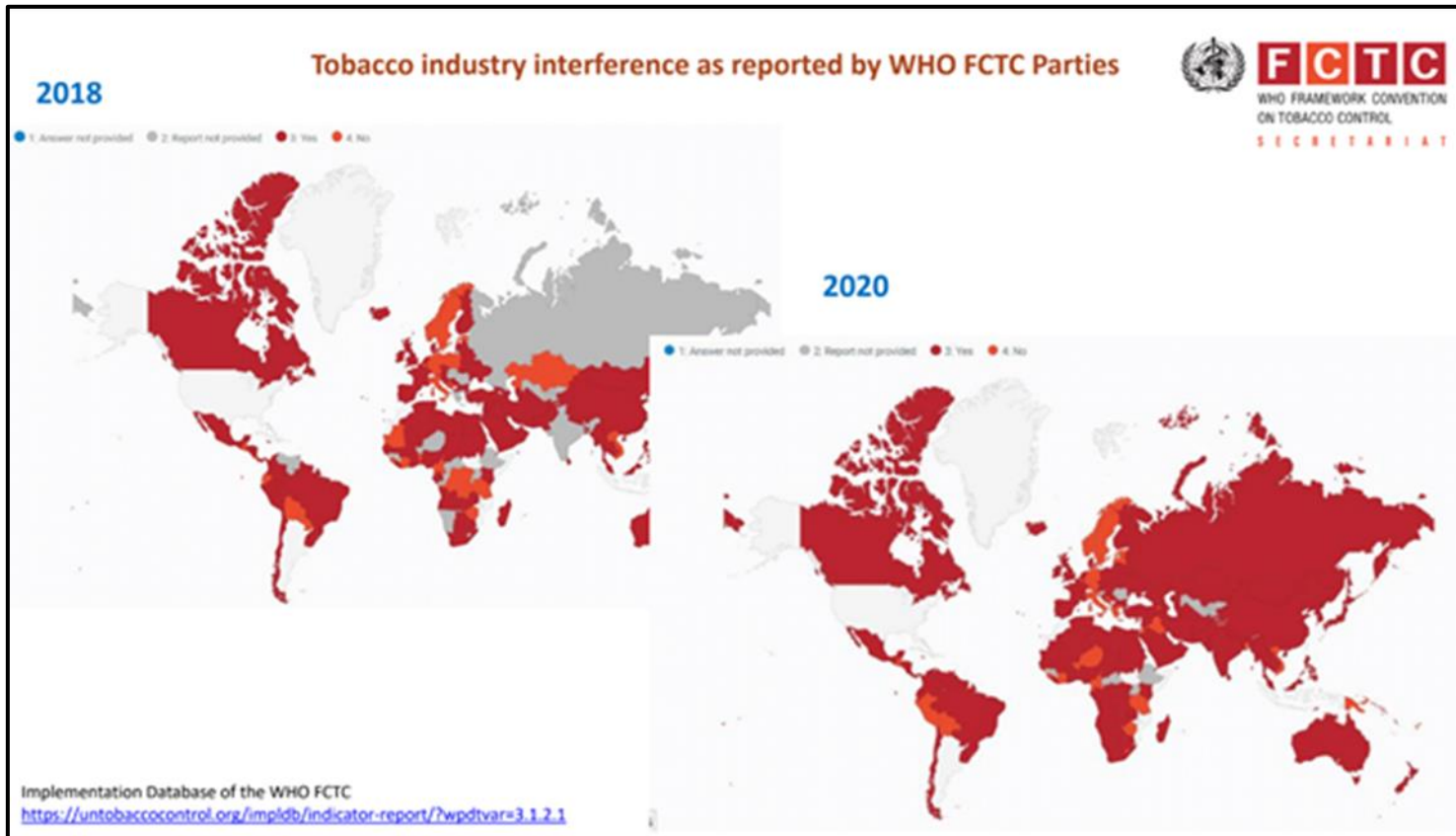


# Where are Parties after 14 years in implementation of Article 5.3?



Courtesy: SEATCA

# Convention Secretariat's report on Article 5.3 implementation



- Parties report industry interference as the biggest challenge to implementing tobacco control measures

# TI remains a problem and has stepped up its interference



2019 – 33 countries



2020 – 57 countries

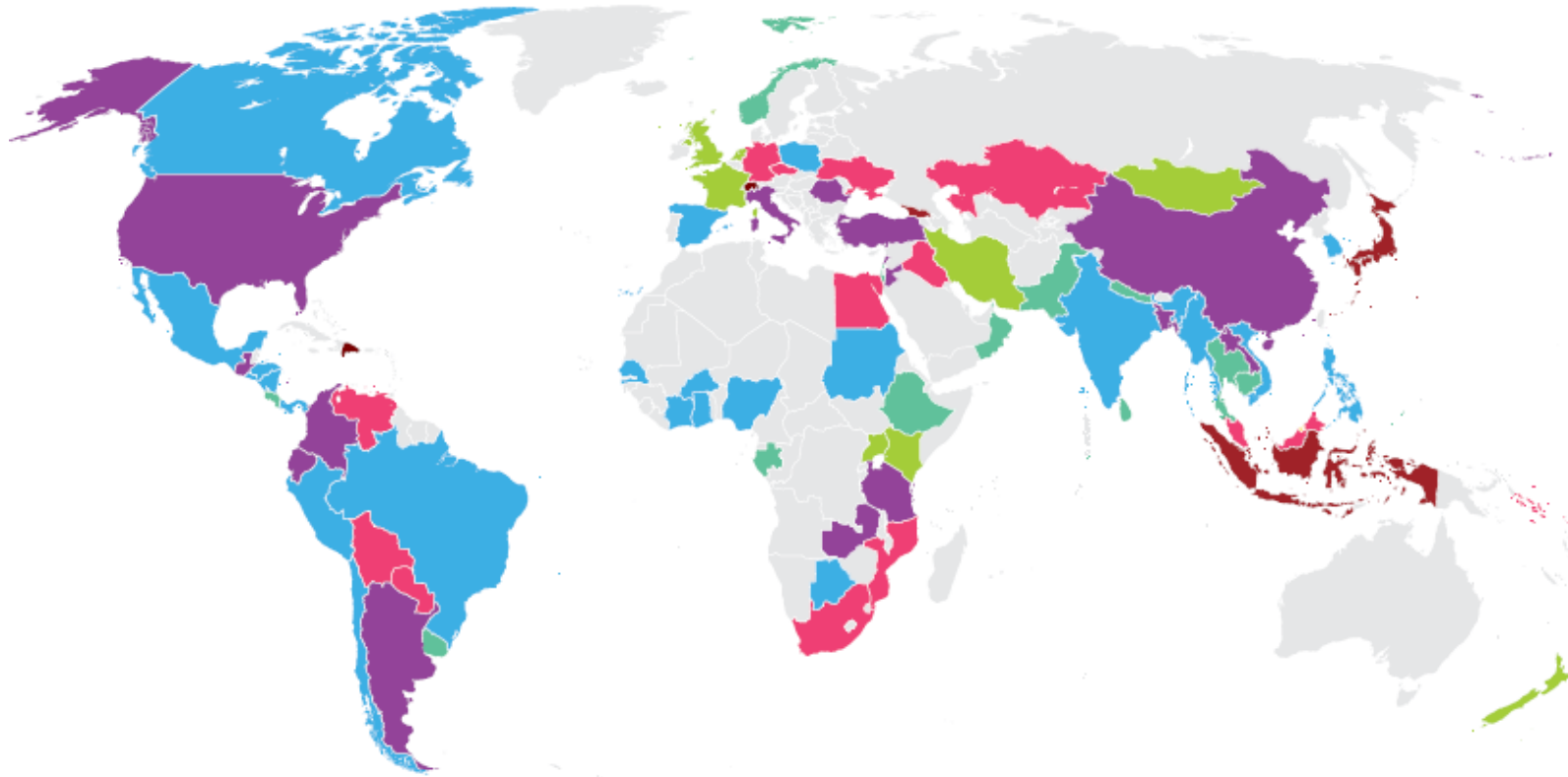


2021 – 80 countries

## Civil Society report on governments' response to TI interference:

1. Industry's participation in policy dev
2. Tobacco-related CSR activities
3. Benefits given to the tobacco industry
4. Unnecessary govt-industry interaction
5. Transparency
6. Conflicts of interest
7. Measures to prevent industry influence

# 2021: No country has been spared from Interference



#GlobalTobaccoIndex

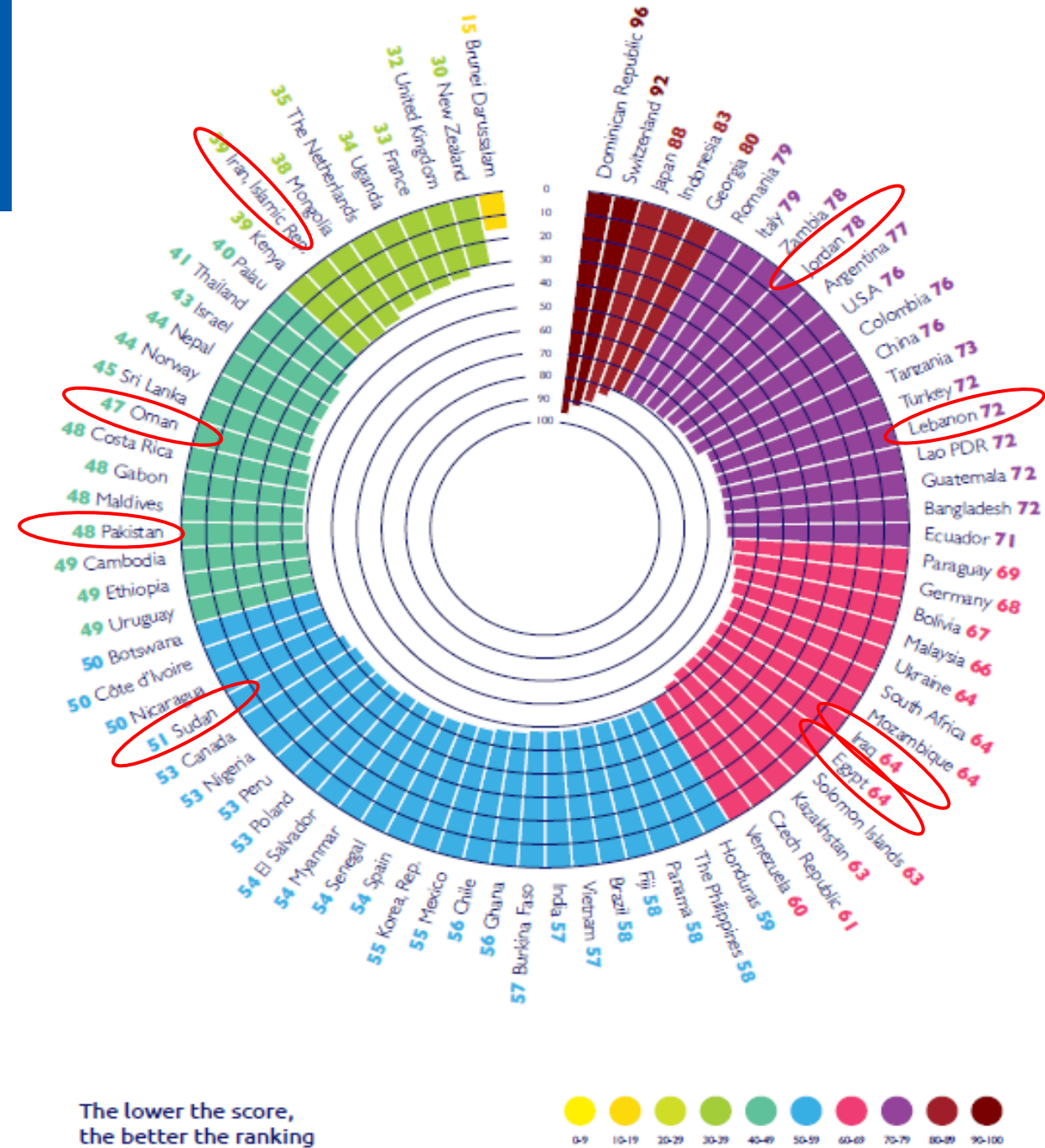
The lower the score, the better the ranking





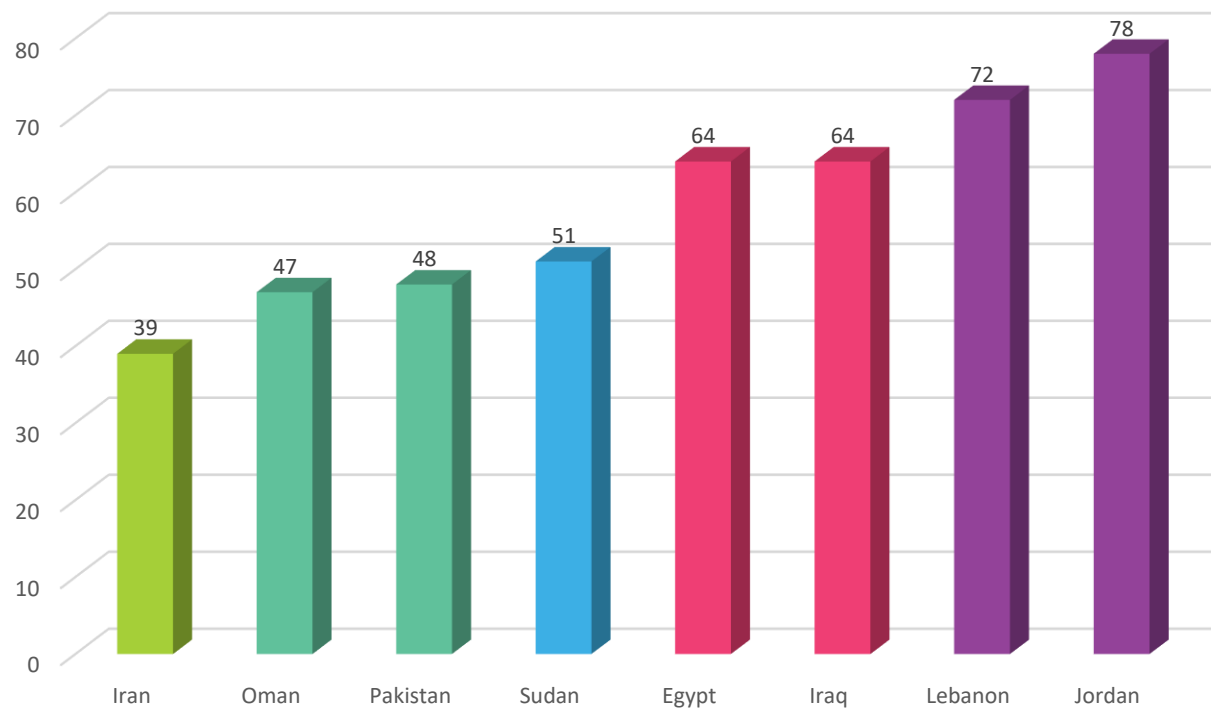
# 2021 Tobacco Industry Interference Index

80 countries surveyed



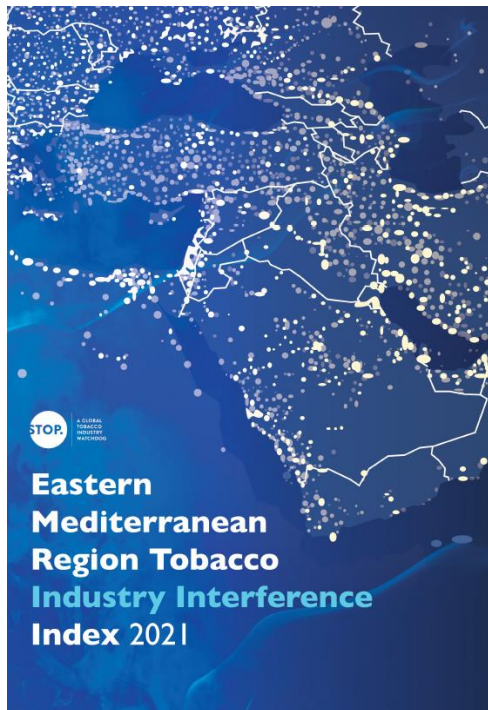
# Rank of Eastern Mediterranean Countries

Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2021 -  
Eastern Mediterranean Region Ranking



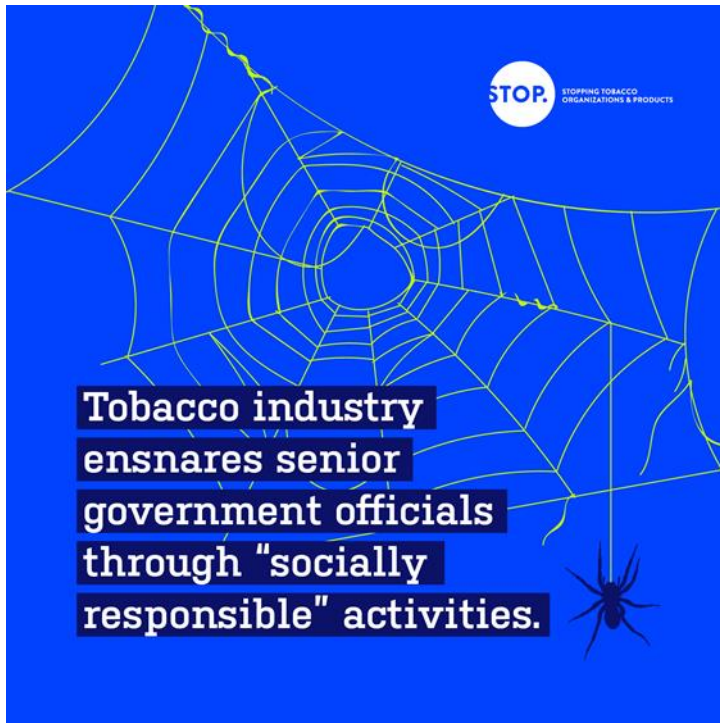


# TI interfered with policy in many governments, a few made progress protecting their policies



- **Iran, Oman, Pakistan** and **Sudan** do not allow the tobacco industry to have a seat in their multisectoral committee that decides on tobacco control policy.
- **Jordan** – waterpipe industry influenced the Ministry of Interior to have the ability to transfer shisha license from one location to another.
- **Iraq** - tax on the imported cigarettes is low, keeping cigarette prices low, considered among the cheapest in the region.

# CSR: Tobacco industry increased charities to health sector & law enforcement agencies during COVID-19 pandemic



- **Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan** - the tobacco industry used CSR activities during COVID-19 pandemic to gain public endorsement and access senior government officials.
- **Lebanon** – Regie met with the Ministers of Health and Finance offering to donate \$1 million to bring back Lebanese students stranded abroad

**Iran** has banned tobacco-related CSR activities

# Several governments deemed TI and cigarettes “essential” during pandemic



Photo: WHO facebook

- **Sudan** deemed cigarettes as “essential” items to be sold during lockdowns.
- In **Iraq** – Ministry of Trade distributed local Samar cigarettes together with free food ration for the poor

TI convinced lawmakers to treat new tobacco products differently and favorably

**Why is this issue important for Eastern Mediterranean Region?**



**Egypt- FDA authorises marketing of IQOS  
as modified risk tobacco product**

**July 2020 – Egypt is first IQOS market in EMR**

# TI convinced lawmakers to treat new tobacco products differently and favorably



Photo: WHO facebook

- TI in **Egypt** and **Lebanon** persuaded lawmakers to regulate ENDS and HTPs differently from cigarettes

E-cigarettes allowed in Egypt (April 2022), Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE

In 2022 Milo Vapes Global (MVG) launched two brands, 'Milo Vapour' and 'Sahara Mist' exclusively for the Middle East market



Photo: Milo Vapes Global

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# Unnecessary interaction between the government & industry



- In **Egypt** Philip Morris received a certificate of appreciation from the Minister of Finance just for paying taxes on time.
  - The United Tobacco Co. (UTC) has started manufacturing cigarettes in the Egyptian market, for PMI
- In **Pakistan**, BAT's subsidiary, Pakistan Tobacco Company, received endorsement from the Prime Minister's Office during its inauguration ceremony which was used to launch a new tobacco product



# Transparency and accountability deteriorated



- **None** of the countries in the survey in the EMR have a **procedure** to disclose meetings/ interactions with the tobacco industry to the public.
- They do not have a **register** of the tobacco industry's affiliate organizations and lobbyists acting on behalf of the tobacco industry.

# Conflict of interest – State owned tobacco enterprise

- Egypt, Iran, Iraq and Lebanon have state-owned tobacco enterprises
- the governments will be conflicted when implementing the WHO FCTC and simultaneously facilitating growth of the industry.



- **Iraq**: the Baghdad tobacco factories come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals.
- **Iranian Tobacco Co. (ITC)** signed an agreement with Zimbabwe's Agriculture Ministry in Jan 2023 to build a cigarette factory in Zimbabwe.

**Demand for local tobacco products has increased**, enabling ITC to start exporting to West and Central Asia. Industry will **grow from US\$1 billion to US\$5 billion** in 2025

From 36 factories in 2022, will increase to **43 factories**

# How can governments protect themselves?



- Be **transparent** when interacting with the tobacco industry,
- Firewall government officials through rules of engagement with the industry or a **code of conduct**;
- Require **information** on production, **marketing** and revenue from tobacco industry;
- Increase awareness **across government departments** about tobacco industry tactics.

# 5 Regional Indexes



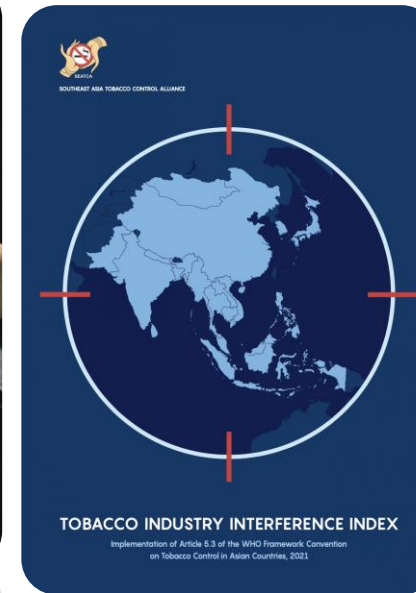
1<sup>st</sup> African Index



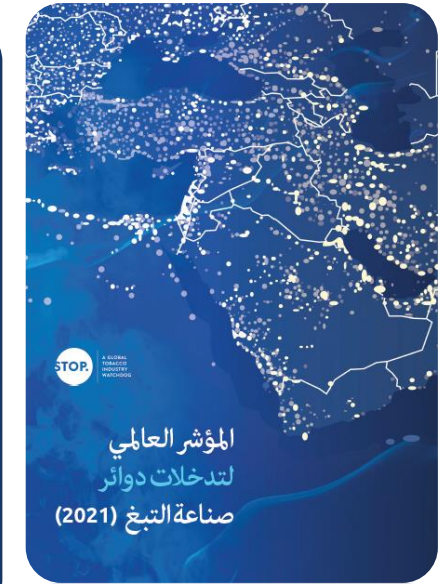
1<sup>st</sup> European Index



2<sup>nd</sup> Latin American Index

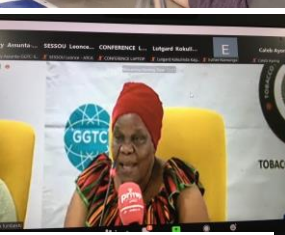
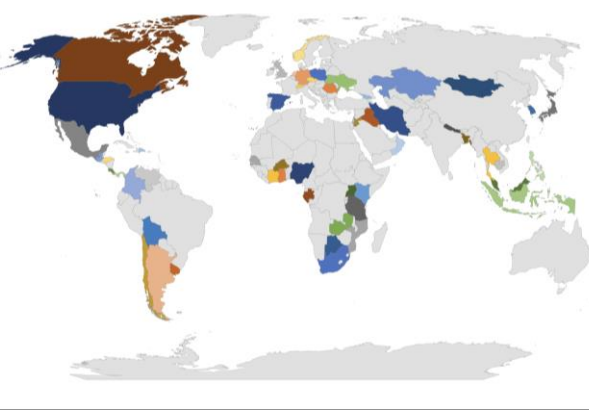


3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Index



1<sup>st</sup> Eastern Mediterranean Index







# Countries shared their experience in advocacy with the index

15	CASE STUDY 1 Côte d'Ivoire	
18	CASE STUDY 2 Mexico	
21	CASE STUDY 3 Sri Lanka	
24	CASE STUDY 4 Bangladesh	
27	CASE STUDY 5 Kenya	
30	CASE STUDY 6 Bolivia	
33	CASE STUDY 7 Argentina	
36	CASE STUDY 8 Mongolia	
39	CASE STUDY 9 Zambia	
42	CASE STUDY 10 Egypt	
44	CASE STUDY 11 Lao PDR	
47	CASE STUDY 12 Uganda	
50	CASE STUDY 13 Palau	
52	CASE STUDY 14 Brazil	
55	CASE STUDY 15 France	
58	CASE STUDY 16 Kazakhstan	
61	CASE STUDY 17 Ukraine	
64	CASE STUDY 18 Nigeria	
66	CASE STUDY 19 Switzerland	
69	CASE STUDY 20 Solomon Islands	

## 1. Support national tobacco control law

- Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Zambia

## 2. Advance Article 5.3 implementation

- Lao PDR, Palau, Uganda

# Media advocacy



**Cote d'Ivoire:** CLUCOD team met with Technical Advisor in charge of Health to the PM



**Mexico:** Presentation of Index in Senate Chamber



**Egypt**– CASTLE



**Zambia** – presenting Index to government

**Nigeria:** Press Interview





# Engagement with non-health sector



**Solomon Islands:** GYLN presenting findings and recommendations of their Index before provincial and Honiara city commanders of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force

# Close engagement and communication with advocates through:



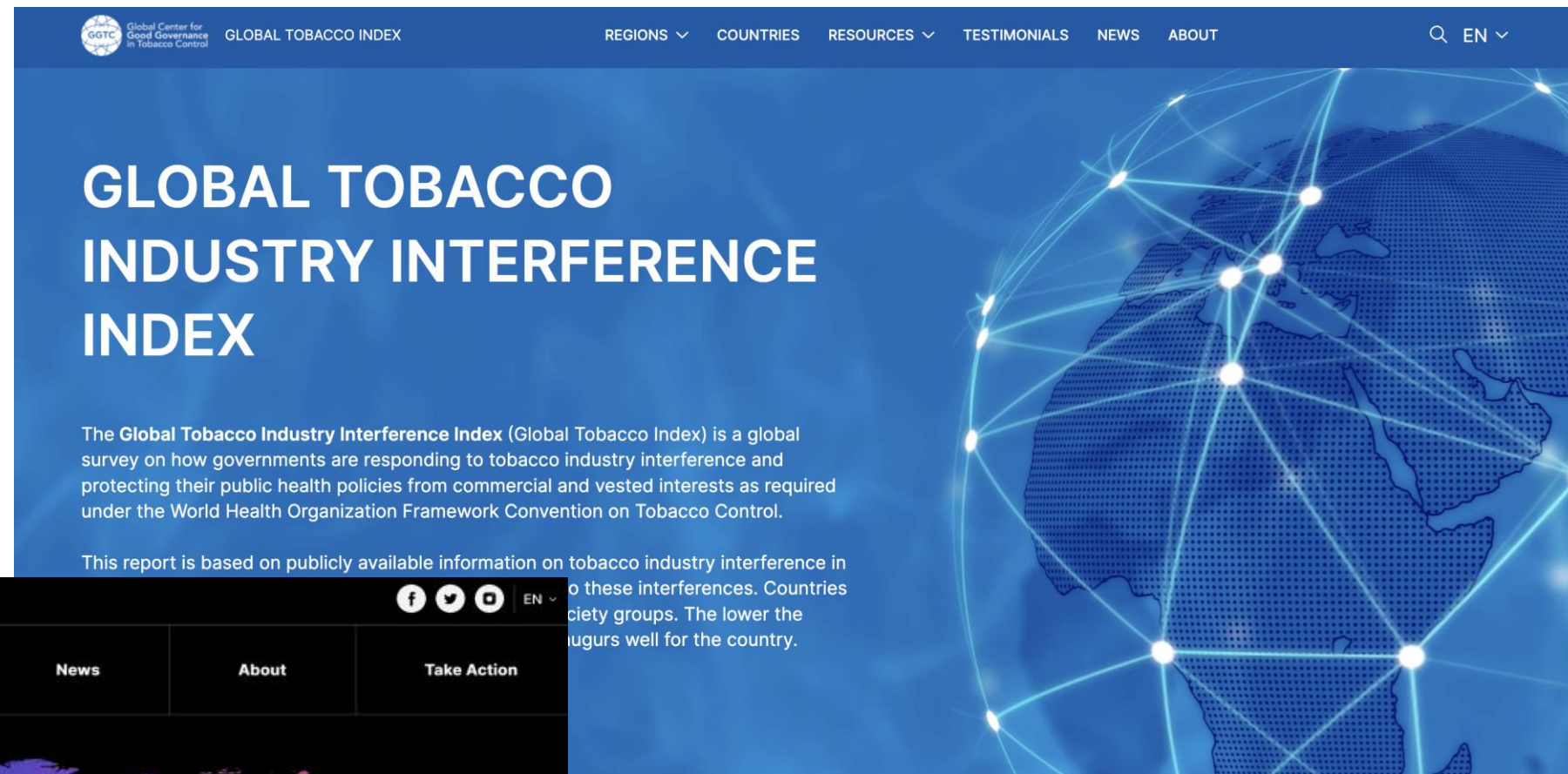
- Regular **GTI** mail updates (global, regional and country)
- Updating of **GTI website** with latest information
- **Country-to-country engagement**



# GTI is a global community

Global Tobacco Index is a community of active tobacco control advocates from **80 countries**, to become **90 countries**, shining the light on industry interference in tobacco control.

Please visit



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Global Tobacco Index. The header includes the GGTC logo (Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control), the title 'GLOBAL TOBACCO INDEX', and navigation links for REGIONS, COUNTRIES, RESOURCES, TESTIMONIALS, NEWS, and ABOUT. A search bar and language selector (EN) are also present. The main content area features the title 'GLOBAL TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE INDEX' in large white letters. Below it, a paragraph explains that the index is a global survey on government responses to tobacco industry interference. A second paragraph states that the report is based on publicly available information. To the right of the text is a large graphic of a globe with glowing blue lines connecting various points, representing global connectivity. At the bottom of the page, there is a dark navigation bar with a 'STOP.' logo and the text 'A GLOBAL TOBACCO INDUSTRY WATCHDOG', followed by buttons for Issues, Resources, News, About, and Take Action. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are also visible.

GLOBAL TOBACCO INDEX

# GLOBAL TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE INDEX

The **Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index** (Global Tobacco Index) is a global survey on how governments are responding to tobacco industry interference and protecting their public health policies from commercial and vested interests as required under the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

This report is based on publicly available information on tobacco industry interference in

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STOP. A GLOBAL TOBACCO INDUSTRY WATCHDOG

Issues Resources News About Take Action

The tobacco industry is trying to block life-saving policies during a pandemic, when health should be the number one priority.

[www.globaltobaccoindex.org](http://www.globaltobaccoindex.org)

Thank you!

[www.exposetobacco.org](http://www.exposetobacco.org)