



CITIZENS IN ACTION SOUTHERN AFRICA

(CIASA)

COMMEMORATING WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2022

Citizens in Action Southern Africa (CIASA) joins the rest of the world in commemorating the World No Tobacco day which is a global campaign that aims to raise public awareness about the environmental impact of the entire tobacco cycle, from its cultivation, production and distribution to the toxic waste it generates. As we commemorate this day under the theme “Tobacco: Threat to our environment”, CIASA aims to expose the tobacco industry’s effort to green wash its reputation and to make its products more appealing by marketing them as environmentally friendly. This year’s theme highlights that through its lifecycle, tobacco pollutes the planet and damages the health of all people. One should have it in mind that the tobacco industry is contributing to the triple planetary crisis. Tobacco use is undeniably a major issue that impacts all communities and impedes the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for it has direct harmful effects on its consumers’ health and also affects the country’s economy, environment, women and youth’s health and childhood labor.

Of late, the tobacco industry has been targeting the young generation to replace the loss of consumers due to tobacco attributable deaths for statistics provided by Africa Health Organization (AHO) shows that tobacco kills 8 million people every year and 7 million of those death are the result of direct tobacco use. It should be noted that about 6% of the world’s adult smokers, about 77 million live in Africa hence if the tobacco industry as according to Africa Health Organization continues to operate largely unregulated, this could increase to 572 million by 2100. What is more alarming in Africa is that children and youth use tobacco twice as much as adults. It is imperative to note that one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets is to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by one third by 2030 hence to achieve this there is need for reduction in tobacco use globally, including Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Citizens In Action Southern Africa (CIASA) calls upon governments and policy makers to enact legislations including implementing and strengthening existing policies to make producers responsible for the environmental costs of dealing with tobacco waste products. NGO sector must use this day to advocate for effective tobacco control in low and middle income countries where 80% of the world's smokers live. CIASA also calls for low and middle income communities to support the implementation of cost effective measures to curb tobacco use and raise awareness about the efforts by the tobacco industry to expand and fight anti-smoking legislations. Countries must ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship including advertising CSR programs, in accordance with the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC). More significantly, governments and civil society must work jointly to implement mandates of Africa Health Organization Framework on Tobacco Control to protect citizens from tobacco and educate them about the dangers associated with the industry's manipulative tactics.

This year's commemorations came at a time when climate change and its devastating effects are taking a toll on the entire globe hence governments, partners and organizations must focus on the many ways in which tobacco threatens the environment people live in and work collectively to deal with that significantly. CIASA also recommends governments and policy makers to support tobacco farmers to switch to alternative, more sustainable livelihoods to reduce the environmental impact of tobacco growing, curing and manufacturing while continue to implement tobacco control measures. Governments must also work to protect the youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use.

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