



NATIONAL HIGH-LEVEL STAKEHOLDER ORIENTATION ON WHO FCTC RATIFICATION



Protecting present and future
generations through stronger
tobacco-control action

1-2 September 2026 Pyramid, JUBA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Sudan convenes national stakeholders to accelerate WHO FCTC ratification

JUBA, 31 August 2026 — The Ministry of Health, with support from the World Health Organization (WHO), will convene a high-level national stakeholder orientation on 1–2 September 2026 to accelerate South Sudan's ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).

The meeting will build a shared understanding of the Convention, review South Sudan's tobacco-control and health-legislation landscape and agree on coordinated actions toward ratification and effective implementation.

Approximately 50 representatives are expected to attend, including officials from the Office of the Vice President and Chairperson of the Service Cluster, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, line ministries, law-enforcement and revenue authorities, public health and research institutions, professional associations, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, development partners and the media.

Why this matters

The orientation will deepen stakeholders' understanding of South Sudan's tobacco burden and the public health benefits of ratifying the WHO FCTC. It will also help identify legislative and institutional gaps and establish a clear roadmap outlining responsibilities, priority actions and next steps toward ratification.

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CORE MESSAGE AND SUPPORTING MESSAGES:

- Ratifying the WHO FCTC will give South Sudan a stronger legal and policy foundation to protect present and future generations from tobacco-related harm, strengthen public-health governance and coordinate action across government and society.
- South Sudan is advancing the ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) to strengthen the country's legal and policy framework for tobacco control. Ratification will support coordinated, evidence-based action to protect people from tobacco-related harm, safeguard children and future generations, and strengthen public-health governance.

Urgency:

- Tobacco use causes preventable illness, deaths and economic losses. Delayed action increases future health and development costs.
- Tobacco use causes preventable illness and death; places pressure on families and health services and contributes to economic losses. Delaying effective tobacco-control action will increase the future health and development burden. South Sudan must act now to strengthen prevention, legislation and coordinated national action.

Children and young people:

- Strong measures on advertising, smoke-free environments, packaging, taxation and access can help prevent a new generation from becoming addicted.
- Children and young people must be protected from tobacco addiction and exposure to tobacco smoke. Strong measures—including restrictions on tobacco advertising and promotion, smoke-free public spaces, effective packaging and labelling requirements, and measures limiting young people's access to tobacco products—can help prevent a new generation from becoming addicted.

National leadership:

- Progress toward ratification demonstrates commitment to evidence-based public-health action and stronger health governance.
- Advancing WHO FCTC ratification demonstrates South Sudan's commitment to protecting public health through evidence-based laws and policies. It provides an opportunity to strengthen national leadership, reinforce health governance and establish a coordinated framework for reducing tobacco-related harm.

Shared responsibility:

- Effective tobacco control requires coordinated action by government, parliament, civil society, professional bodies, academia, communities and partners.
- Tobacco control is not the responsibility of the health sector alone. Effective action requires coordinated leadership from government, parliament, civil society, professional associations, academia, communities and development partners. Every institution has a role in protecting people's health and supporting the national ratification process.

Implementation:

- Ratification is a foundation, not an endpoint. It must be followed by aligned legislation, enforcement, financing, monitoring and accountability.
- Ratification is an important foundation, but it is not the endpoint. The WHO FCTC must be supported by aligned national legislation, effective enforcement, sustainable financing, public awareness, monitoring and accountability. Public health policymaking must also be protected from commercial and other vested interests.

Policy protection:

- Public-health policies must be protected from commercial and other vested interests in line with WHO FCTC Article 5.3.
- WHO and partners stand ready to support South Sudan with technical guidance, evidence, capacity-building and coordination. National institutions will continue to lead the ratification and implementation process, ensuring that tobacco-control measures respond to the country's priorities and context.

Partnership:

- WHO and partners stand ready to provide technical support while national institutions lead the process.
- All stakeholders are called upon to support a coordinated and time-bound roadmap toward WHO FCTC ratification. This includes clarifying institutional responsibilities, strengthening the required legal and regulatory framework, mobilizing resources and maintaining sustained action to protect present and future generations from tobacco-related harm.

Core demand-reduction and supply-reduction measures:

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) contains core demand-reduction and supply-reduction measures designed to curb the global tobacco epidemic. These legally binding policies are divided into two main categories: lowering the public demand for tobacco products and restricting how tobacco is supplied and sold.

Demand-Reduction Measures (Articles 6–14)

These articles focus on changing consumer behavior and reducing the overall consumption of tobacco:

Price and Tax Measures (Article 6): Implementing tax increases to make tobacco products less affordable, which is recognized as the most effective way to reduce consumption.

Message:

- *The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control promotes proven measures that reduce the demand for tobacco products. These include effective taxation, smoke-free environments, health warnings, restrictions on advertising, public education and support for people who want to quit. Together, these measures can prevent addiction, reduce tobacco-related illness and protect future generations.*
- *Increasing taxes on tobacco products is one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use. Higher prices discourage young people from starting, encourage current users to quit and generate public revenue that can support national health and development priorities.*

Protection from Exposure (Article 8): Creating 100% smoke-free public spaces, workplaces, and public transport to protect people from secondhand smoke.

Message:

- *Everyone has the right to breathe clean air. Creating completely smoke-free workplaces, public spaces and public transport protects workers, families and children from second-hand smoke. Smoke-free environments also help make tobacco use less socially acceptable and encourage people to quit.*

Regulation of Contents (Articles 9 & 10): Testing and regulating tobacco product ingredients and emissions, while requiring public disclosure of toxic constituents.

Message:

- *People have a right to know what tobacco products contain and the harm they can cause. The WHO FCTC supports the testing and regulation of tobacco-product ingredients and emissions, together with public disclosure of toxic substances. Strong regulation helps governments protect consumers and hold manufacturers accountable.*

Packaging and Labeling (Article 11): Mandating large, clear health warnings (ideally pictorial graphic warnings) that cover 50% or more of the principal display areas.

Message:

- *Clear and prominent health warnings on tobacco packaging help people understand the serious risks of tobacco use. Large pictorial warnings are especially effective because they communicate health information quickly, including to people with limited literacy, and can encourage tobacco users to quit.*

Education and Public Awareness (Article 12): Launching public communication campaigns about the health risks, addictive nature, and environmental harms of tobacco.

Message:

- *Accurate information enables people to make informed decisions about their health. Sustained public-awareness campaigns can explain the health, economic and environmental consequences of tobacco use, counter misleading claims and encourage individuals and families to choose tobacco-free lives.*

Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (Article 13): Enacting a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS).

Message:

- *Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship can make harmful products appear attractive and socially acceptable, particularly to young people. Comprehensive restrictions are essential to prevent the tobacco industry from recruiting new users through traditional media, digital platforms, events, promotions and sponsorships.*

Tobacco Dependence and Cessation (Article 14): Developing national guidelines to help users quit, including behavioral counseling and access to affordable cessation medications.

Message:

- *People who use tobacco should have access to practical and affordable support to quit. National cessation services—including counselling, advice from trained health workers and appropriate treatment—can help people overcome nicotine dependence and reduce their risk of tobacco-related disease.*

Supply-Reduction Measures (Articles 15–17)

These articles target the production, distribution, and commercial sales of tobacco:

Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (Article 15): Eliminating smuggling, counterfeiting, and illegal manufacturing through tracking systems and international cooperation.

Message:

- *Illicit trade makes tobacco products cheaper and more accessible, undermines public-health measures and deprives governments of revenue. Strong tracking systems, customs enforcement and cross-border cooperation are needed to prevent smuggling, counterfeiting and illegal manufacturing.*

Sales to and by Minors (Article 16): Prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the legal age, banning tobacco vending machines, and stopping the sale of single cigarettes.

Message:

- *Children and adolescents must be protected from access to tobacco products. Effective measures include prohibiting sales to minors, stopping the sale of single cigarettes and restricting vending methods that make tobacco easily accessible. Preventing early experimentation can help stop lifelong addiction before it begins.*

Provision of Support for Economically Viable Alternatives (Article 17): Assisting tobacco growers and workers in transitioning to sustainable, alternative livelihoods.

Message:

- *Tobacco-control policies should consider the needs of growers, workers and communities whose livelihoods may be affected. Supporting sustainable and economically viable alternatives can protect household incomes while enabling communities to transition toward healthier and more resilient sources of livelihood.*

General Obligations & Governance (Article 5.3)

A foundational pillar of the treaty is **Article 5.3**, which requires all Parties to protect their public health policies from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry.

Message:

- *Decisions on tobacco control must place public health above commercial interests. Transparent procedures and strong conflict-of-interest safeguards are essential to protect policies from tobacco-industry interference and ensure that national decisions are guided by independent evidence and the health of the population.*
- *Effective tobacco control requires action on both the demand for and supply of tobacco products. Government institutions, parliament, law-enforcement agencies, customs authorities, health professionals, civil society, communities and partners must work together to strengthen prevention, regulation, enforcement and support for affected populations.*

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