

GTSS Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS)



Data Dissemination Guidance



Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Data Dissemination Guidance for the Initial Release of Data

Version 1.1
August 2014

Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Comprehensive Standard Protocol

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GYTS Core Questionnaire with Optional Questions

GYTS Sample Design and Weights

GYTS Implementation Instructions

GYTS Analysis and Reporting Package

GYTS Data Dissemination Guidance

GYTS Data Release Policy

Acknowledgements

GYTS Collaborating Organizations

- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- CDC Foundation
- International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- RTI International
- World Health Organization
- World Lung Foundation

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this document are not necessarily those of the GYTS collaborating organizations.

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1. Introduction

Tobacco use is a major preventable cause of premature death and disease worldwide. Approximately 5.4 million people die each year due to tobacco-related illnesses -- a figure expected to increase to more than eight million a year by 2030. If current trends continue, tobacco use may kill a billion people by the end of this century. It is estimated that more than three quarters of these deaths will be in low- and middle-income countries¹. An efficient and systematic surveillance mechanism is essential to monitor and manage the epidemic.

The Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS) is a set of globally standardized surveys to monitor tobacco use and key tobacco control policies. It is comprised of both youth and adult surveys. Launched in 1999, the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) is a global standard for systematically monitoring youth tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) and tracking key tobacco control indicators. GYTS assists countries to enhance their capacity to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco control interventions. It is an important tool to assist countries in supporting WHO MPOWER, a package of six evidence-based demand reduction measures contained in the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

GYTS is one of the largest public health surveillance systems, and it has been active in more than 188 countries/sites. The survey is repeated every 4-5 years generating data that are comparable within and across countries.

1.1 Overview of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey

GYTS is a nationally representative school-based survey of students in grades associated with 13 to 15 years of age and is designed to produce cross-sectional estimates for each country. It uses a global standardized methodology that includes a two-stage sample design with schools selected with a probability proportional to enrollment size. The classes within selected schools are chosen randomly and all students in selected classes are eligible to participate in the survey. The survey uses a standard core questionnaire with a set of optional questions that permits adaptation to meet the needs of the country on tobacco use and key tobacco control indicators. The questionnaire consists of the following topics: tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), cessation, secondhand smoke (SHS), pro- and anti-tobacco media and advertising, access and availability to obtain tobacco products, and knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco. The questionnaire is self-administered; using scannable paper-based bubble sheets, it is anonymous to ensure confidentiality.

As a companion to GYTS, the seven-question School Policy questionnaire was developed to collect information about school policies related to tobacco use among staff and students. This self-administered questionnaire is completed by one of the school administrators.

To maximize the efficiency of the data collected from GYTS, a series of manuals has been created. These manuals are designed to provide countries with standard requirements as well as recommendations on the design and implementation of the survey at every step of the GYTS process. They are also designed to offer guidance on how a particular country might adjust features of the GYTS

¹ Mathers, C.D., and Loncar D. Projections of Global Mortality and Burden of Disease from 2002 to 2030. *PLoS Medicine*, 2006, 3(11):e442.

protocol to maximize the utility of the data within the country. Following the standard protocol and procedures in these manuals is strongly encouraged to maintain consistency and comparability across countries and for the successful implementation of GYTS.

1.2 Use of this Manual

In most countries, a government office such as the Ministry of Health (MoH) or Ministry of Education (MoE) will be responsible for the initial dissemination of GYTS data. Other organizations, such as national drug councils, may assist with these efforts and should be in collaboration with the leading agencies. This document is provided to assist government officials with its GYTS dissemination efforts.

Tobacco control and school health advocates will find many uses for the data as they work toward the adoption and implementation of effective tobacco control policies. Thus, they also have a heightened interest in ensuring that GYTS data is widely disseminated and understood. As partners, these advocates can play an important role in dissemination efforts following the initial release of data. Additional components of GYTS data dissemination that are well suited to partners are discussed in a companion document, ***GYTS Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control: Guidance for Advocates***.

The guidance and recommendations offered in this document should be considered general in nature. As individuals work to develop a data dissemination approach for their country, they are advised and encouraged to tailor this guidance to the cultures and contexts in which they work.

GYTS provides quantifiable evidence of the patterns of tobacco use within the youth population. Such information allows a country to make projections about tobacco-related health and economic consequences. The ability to use GYTS data to project tobacco-related problems makes GYTS a powerful tool for demonstrating the urgency for strong action to prevent and reduce tobacco use.

Because GYTS surveillance data also track the contextual factors that influence use, GYTS data can be used to guide decision-making about strategies to decrease use. Once interventions to decrease use have been implemented, GYTS can be used to track the effectiveness of these interventions and adjust strategies as needed. Having access to accurate and organized data will enhance tobacco prevention planning and maximize the overall effectiveness of efforts to reduce tobacco use and its negative consequences.

In addition to this guide, documents to assist in the dissemination process include:

- ***GYTS Country Fact Sheet***: The Fact Sheet provides an overview of the survey and key findings. It features highlights of survey results on prevalence, knowledge and attitudes about use, access and availability among current smokers, exposure to secondhand smoke, cessation, exposure to media and advertising, and school based tobacco use prevention classes.
- ***GYTS Country Report***: Details the country's tobacco burden in terms of prevalence of tobacco use, trends in use, the health and economic impacts of use, current tobacco control policies, GYTS methodology, results and key findings, and recommendations for action. This document contains all of the GYTS data from the country survey. Everyone involved with planning and disseminating the data should become familiar with the content of this report.

- **WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008 - The MPOWER Package:** Presents the first comprehensive worldwide analysis of tobacco use and control efforts and provides countries with a roadmap to reverse the devastating global tobacco epidemic that could kill up to one billion people by the end of this century. The report outlines the MPOWER package and can be found at: <http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/en/>.
- **GYTS Frequently Asked Questions: Appendix A** provides additional information about GYTS so may be helpful in answering questions you may receive from the media and others.

Finally, the GYTS results can supplement other available data, such as data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), to inform tobacco control advocacy efforts. Two other companion documents can assist in efforts to incorporate GATS data into GYTS dissemination efforts:

- **GATS Data Dissemination: Guidance for the Initial Release of the Data:** This document is written for the lead governmental agency or other agencies responsible for GATS data collection and analysis. The document provides guidance on the initial release of GATS through press conferences, media releases and other communication channels such as the Internet. The dissemination guide may also be a useful resource for tobacco control advocates using the media in their policy work. It can be found at: <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/gtssdata/Ancillary/DownloadAttachment.aspx?ID=935>.
- **Using GATS Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control Efforts: Guidance for Tobacco Control Advocates:** This document provides guidance to tobacco control advocates on how to use GATS data findings to draw attention to tobacco as an issue and advocate for effective tobacco control policy. The guide can be found at: http://tobaccofreecenter.org/files/pdfs/en/GATS_NGO_draftguide_en.pdf.

2. Planning the Release of GYTS Data

Because of its potential to impact tobacco control efforts, dissemination strategies for GYTS data should be carefully planned. Prior to the initial release of GYTS data, the lead government agency should identify the goals of dissemination and identify tobacco control partners that may play important roles in the dissemination effort. The sections below are intended to provide a road map and guidance on these elements of GYTS data dissemination as well as suggestions and tools for launching the release of the data.

2.1 Step 1: Determine the Goal of GYTS Data Dissemination

Key Point: The overall goal of data dissemination is to highlight the extent of tobacco use among youth in a country and generate support for tobacco control policy among key audiences.

The dissemination of GYTS data is rooted in the belief that educating key audiences about the nature of tobacco use and its impact on long-term health will lead to the establishment or improvement of tobacco control policies that address these problems.

With this understanding, dissemination activities should focus on sharing information about:

- **Data on tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke** – This includes data on use patterns, cessation attempts, and exposure to second-hand smoke in public places and at home.
- **Data on attitudes, knowledge, and risk factors** – This includes data on attitudes about tobacco use, knowledge about harms, and exposure to other risk factors such as tobacco advertising and access to tobacco products.
- **Policy-based solutions to tobacco-related health problems** – Data dissemination efforts should include information about effective tobacco control policies to reduce tobacco use such as those recommended in the MPOWER technical package.

To optimally use GYTS data, it is critical that individuals involved in developing and implementing tobacco control goals and programs for their country become familiar with the data and key findings and think about how the data supports arguments for effective tobacco control. Findings that could be considered inconclusive or debatable should be treated carefully, and only strong or conclusive data should be highlighted during data dissemination. Inconclusive data, if disseminated, should be recognized as such.

GYTS data can be released in steps as part of both ongoing efforts to build support for tobacco control over time and to show the need for specific tobacco control efforts under consideration at a particular point in time. GYTS data can also be used to track trends in tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke over time. Indeed, as effective tobacco control policies are enacted and implemented, it will be very important to demonstrate policy effects on tobacco use and exposure through a data surveillance system that includes periodic GYTS data collection. To take full advantage of potential opportunities, a dissemination plan that covers a 12 to 24 month period and includes phased releases of data should be considered. This plan should include dissemination goals for the various phases of the release.

For example, the lead government agency may focus its initial dissemination efforts on prevalence data and key findings about each topic in order to present a clear picture of youth tobacco use, the status of

tobacco control in the country and the implications of the results for tobacco control policy. In this case, the initial goal may be to educate key audiences about the extent of the problem, changes over time if applicable, and the need for strong tobacco control policies such as those specified in the MPOWER model. Later, the lead government agency and/or its tobacco control partners might release more detailed data that supports the need for a specific tobacco control policy. For instance, if a smoke-free ban is under consideration, educating the policy makers about the extent of youth exposure to second-hand smoke should be identified as a data dissemination goal, and the data related to that topic would become the focus of the next phase of dissemination.

2.2 Step 2: Establish Partnerships

Key Point: Effective data dissemination requires partnerships with organizations and individuals that can broaden the reach of dissemination and improve the overall effectiveness of communication efforts.

In most countries, the primary agency responsible for dissemination of GYTS data is the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education. In a few countries, a non-governmental organization (NGO) is the primary disseminator. Regardless of who assumes the leadership role, dissemination efforts should engage the organizations and experts that helped to develop the GYTS instruments and data collection plan. The plan should also incorporate partnerships with other groups that share similar or related goals. These partnerships will enhance and extend dissemination efforts by “opening doors” for communication with their own constituents as well as key audiences.

Health-related advocacy groups are obvious potential partners since they are likely to be skilled at working to improve public health and possess a high level of credibility among anticipated target audiences. These groups may include cancer societies, and groups that focus on lung health. Because these partners understand the importance of tobacco control, they may be more inclined to participate in dissemination activities. Most governmental agencies and other health-related agencies have existing connections to health-related advocacy groups so reaching out to them should not be difficult.

School administrations, youth-serving organizations and those dedicated to the well-being of children would also be strong partners. Youth are powerful spokespeople and have been integral players in many successful advocacy campaigns around the world. Educating politicians, speaking to the media, and building community support are only some of the ways youth are able to contribute. Given the target population of GYTS, partnering with organizations that focus on youth leadership and also encourage youth advocacy would enable youth to be involved with dissemination and add credibility to these efforts.

As potential partners are identified, the lead government agency should identify the role each partner may play to support the dissemination goal(s). Effective or meaningful partnerships are defined by clear roles for each partner and that complement each other. For example, it may be inappropriate for the Ministry of Health (a government agency) to have a strong advocacy role. However, a partnering public health advocacy organization may assume the role of an

Potential Partners

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- National Drug councils
- Ministry of Finance
- Health Care Organizations & Professionals
- Health Care & Patient Advocacy Groups
- School leaders
- Youth serving groups
- Religious Leaders & Faith Groups
- Women’s Organizations

advocate and issue strong calls for action. It should also be expected that each partner will engage their own constituents and leverage their existing relationships and reputation to support tobacco control initiatives that result from the dissemination of GYTS data. For example, if a partner has considerable influence with a policymaker, the partner should participate in meetings with the policymaker. Or, if a partner is well known to the general public, it may be appropriate to engage the partner in generating public support for tobacco control.

Partners may also operate, have access to, or produce e-mail lists, websites, or publications that could be useful to dissemination efforts. Knowing how a partner will be engaged in dissemination work will indicate whether partners should receive training or other kinds of assistance to help them perform their tasks well or if they will need little or no assistance.

Once there is an understanding of how each potential partner can help achieve the dissemination goal(s), representatives of the Ministry should meet with potential partners to brief them on GYTS, request their involvement, and gain their commitment to partner in this effort. These briefings should include discussion of: i) the purpose of GYTS and its history in the country; ii) key GYTS data findings; iii) GYTS data dissemination goals and why they are important; iv) how a partnership would serve the organization's mission; and v) how the partner's role is envisioned. Of course, the meeting should include adequate time to address the potential partnering organization's questions, concerns, and suggestions.

Once a partnership is established, it is generally a good idea to publicize the partnership in future meetings and publicly recognize partners when appropriate.

Please refer to the companion document ***GYTS Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control: Guidance for Advocates*** for more information about potential roles for partners, planning tools and templates for dissemination materials.

2.3 Step 3: Officially Release GYTS Data

Key Point: GYTS data should be officially released in a manner that will gain the attention of media and policymakers.

Data dissemination work should begin with an official release of GYTS data. This official release should be oriented primarily toward media, policymakers, and decision-makers. Preparing for such an event will require careful attention to pre-event planning as well as event follow-up. It should involve strategic engagement of partners to ensure that policymakers' attention to tobacco use, tobacco health consequences, and the need for better tobacco control continue in the weeks and months following the release.

The MoH and/or MoE should consider hosting a press conference to announce GYTS findings. Press conferences have the potential to reach a large audience because reporters from many media outlets are invited to attend. Since GYTS is a multi-country, international initiative and one of the few surveys that provides data on tobacco use among youth, a GYTS press conference is likely to be considered newsworthy by journalistic standards and draw reporter attendance.

Press Conference Preparation

Preparing for the GYTS data release press conference will involve focusing on conference content and conference execution. This includes developing messages, identifying speakers, notifying the press, preparing information for the press, and posting information on the Internet.

- **Messages and Statements** – The most important audience for the GYTS press conference will be policymakers and decision-makers. Consequently, careful consideration should be given to the overall messages and specific statements delivered during the event. GYTS and, if available and appropriate, other data such as city- or provincial-level data should inform key messages about the problem of tobacco use. However, messages should not just highlight a problem; they should also draw attention to its solution. As a “call to action,” press conference statements should be clear and concise, connect with the target audience, and compel action. All of the statements for the press conference should convey a common theme and consistent messages. Of course, prepared statements should be shared with speakers well in advance of the event so that they can become more comfortable delivering the information.
- **Presenters** – Presenters should be knowledgeable about GYTS and have credibility among policymakers. In some countries, it may be a good idea for partners to speak at the press conference to underscore the “call to action” message with perspectives and credibility that are rooted in first-hand experience dealing with tobacco-related illnesses. Presenters should be encouraged to remain focused and “on point” during the press conference. When responding to questions they should be vigilant about stating and restating key messages as well as redirecting off-point questions back to the main messages.
- **Notifying the Press** – It is important to alert the media well in advance of the upcoming event and briefly include the purpose, speakers, time, and place. Two weeks before the GYTS data release press conference, a media advisory should be forwarded to media outlets by fax, email, or postal mail. The text box on the following page provides a template for writing a media advisory. It is a good idea to follow-up the media advisory with a telephone call to media outlets within a couple of days before the event to encourage attendance.

A media release should be issued on the day of the event that includes background information about GYTS, key findings, and quotes. **Appendix B** is a media release template developed specifically for a country initial release of GYTS data. Template users need only fill in their country’s relevant details.

- **Media Kits** – For the GYTS press conference, the media kit should include basic information about the survey, relevant fact sheets, the press conference press release, brief biographies of speakers, copies of speakers’ remarks, statistics and graphics, information about effective tobacco control policy, and contact information for follow-up information (see text box on the following page).

**Media Advisory Template for
GYTS Data Release Press Conference**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

(Name)

(Today's Date)

MEDIA ADVISORY

(HEADLINE: KEEP IT SHORT, ALL IN UPPER CASE LETTERS)

WHAT: (2-3 sentences on what is happening)

WHO: (Names of people or organization involved)

WHY: (2-3 sentences that highlight why this event is important and newsworthy)

WHEN: (Date and time)

WHERE: (Address)

###

**GYTS Press Conference Media Kit
Contents**

- GYTS Country Fact Sheet
- GYTS Topic Fact Sheet
- 1-page bullet list of GYTS key findings related to event focus
- Copies of prepared remarks from speakers
- Brief biographical information about speakers (1 paragraph)
- Contact information for GYTS

Internet Posting of Information

The GYTS press conference should occur in conjunction with a web-based release of GYTS data. The lead government agency is well positioned to post information about survey findings on its Internet website. At minimum the lead government agency website should contain the Fact Sheets and Country Report, the WHO FCTC, and the 2008 WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic that introduces the MPOWER model. All information should be ready to post on the lead government agency's website the day of the event.

Finally, when preparing for the press conference, planners should attend to logistical, visual, and practical details. Planners should be sure to:

- Schedule the event for a time, location, and duration that is convenient for reporters.
- Include interesting visuals that would work well on television such as background logos, props, and banners or enlarged photographs.
- Have in place a media kit table and a press sign-in sheet.
- Instruct participants and staff to arrive at the press conference location well before the scheduled start time.

The press conference planning tool below will help to organize and manage all of the main details that contribute to a successful event.

Planning Template for Press Conference		
Data Release Tasks	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Determine key messages for the press conference		
Determine time and location of press conference		
Identify and secure speakers (no more than 4)		
Work with partners to determine series of post-press conference follow-up activities		
Draft statements and share with speakers and provide speakers with opportunity to rehearse statements/practice fielding questions		
Determine and create press conference visuals		
Prepare GYTS data findings and other information for posting on the internet		
Prepare and send media advisory two weeks before the press conference		
Prepare media kits		
Prepare and send media release one day before press conference		
Inform speakers and staff when to arrive at press conference location		
Post GYTS findings on the Internet		
Designate media liaison to address questions that surface after		
Conduct press conference		

Press Conference Follow-up

The press conference is only the beginning of GYTS data dissemination. It is important that policymakers and decision-makers continue to hear about the problems of tobacco use and tobacco health consequences and be reminded about what they can do to prevent these problems.

After releasing GYTS data, the lead government agency should repeatedly follow-up with the media, tobacco control partners, and policymakers. Such follow-up is important even when the release of GYTS has not included a formal press conference.

- **Media** – For its part, the lead government agency should be prepared to respond to questions about GYTS findings or tobacco control after the press conference has concluded. It is a good idea to have a designated individual within the lead government agency assigned to either respond to questions that may be asked in the future or link reporters to individuals within the lead government agency who can respond to questions. As always, whenever questions are addressed, the presenter should try to respond with answers that keep the audience focused on the main messages of the dissemination effort.
- **Tobacco Control Partners** – In some countries it may be inappropriate for government agencies and officials to advocate for stronger tobacco control measures. However, it may be quite appropriate for partnering organizations to do so. Consequently, it is a good idea to include partners not only in the planning and execution of the initial press conference, but also in press conference follow-up activities. The companion document *Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control: Guidance for Advocates* addresses what partnering organizations can do as part of the follow-up activity for the GYTS data dissemination press conference; some of those activities could include writing letters to the editors of news media outlets, attending editorial board meetings at newspapers to encourage ongoing coverage of tobacco control issues, and writing opinion articles about tobacco control.
- **Policymakers** – Lead government agency representatives should also set up meetings with officials in other government agencies after the press conference in order to provide more in-depth briefing on the GYTS findings. Decisions about which agencies/individuals to meet with should be based on whether they exercise power or influence over tobacco control policy. The lead government agency should consider whether dissemination partners should also be invited to participate in these briefings. The companion document *GYTS Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control: Guidance for Advocates* addresses how to prepare for these meetings.

3. Conclusion

Effective tobacco control efforts around the globe have resulted from carefully crafted strategies and campaigns designed to spur that action. GYTS data dissemination will play a critical role in any effort to change tobacco control policy in the countries in which data is collected. But data alone will not be enough to improve tobacco control. Effective data dissemination is rooted in having clearly stated goals and requires rallying partners to help communicate important messages to key audiences that have the power, authority, or influence to change tobacco control policy.

GYTS data dissemination by a lead government agency (e.g., Ministries of Health and/or Education) is essential to changing tobacco control policies around the world. It is hoped that the information and guidance provided in this document will help to inform the initial release of GYTS data and provide a basis for further dissemination tasks.

Appendix A: GYTS Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS)?

The GYTS is a nationally representative school-based survey that collects data on students aged 13–15 years using a standardized methodology for constructing the sample frame, selecting schools and classes, and processing data. The GYTS surveillance system is intended to enhance the capacity of countries to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco control and prevention programs.

2. What topics are covered in GYTS?

The questionnaire consists of the following topics: tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), cessation, secondhand smoke (SHS), pro- and anti-tobacco media and advertising, access and availability to obtain tobacco products, and knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco.

3. Why monitor tobacco use among youths?

Tobacco is a major preventable cause of premature disease and death worldwide. Effective tobacco control requires efficient, systematic surveillance systems to monitor trends in consumption and other key indicators. Surveillance data can be used to strengthen program and policies and to evaluate their effectiveness. GYTS will provide each country with the data it needs to monitor and measure the public health impact of tobacco control interventions over time.

4. When will GYTS data become publicly available?

GYTS data will be released one year after the country report is finalized and released by the national governments (Ministry of Health).

5. What can be accomplished with GYTS at a country level?

Countries will have nationally representative data on youth tobacco use and key tobacco control measures for monitoring tobacco control policy and programs. In addition, GYTS data in one country can be compared with other countries undertaking the survey.

6. How does GYTS link with the World Health Organization's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and the WHO MPOWER package?

GYTS data will be used to monitor and track key articles of the WHO FCTC and will enable countries to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive national tobacco control programs, policies, and action plans. Countries that are parties to the convention can respond to the reporting and evaluation requirements using GYTS data. In addition, WHO FCTC, article 20 calls for countries to monitor tobacco use through surveillance, monitoring, and exchange of information.

GYTS data serve as a tool to monitor the WHO MPOWER technical package. The data assist countries to:

- Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies that include:
- Protect people from tobacco smoke
- Offer help to quit tobacco use
- Warn about dangers of tobacco
- Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship
- Raise taxes on tobacco

7. What's next after the release of GYTS data?

Following the initial release of the data, partners have a tremendous opportunity to influence tobacco control. Wider, strategic dissemination of the data can inform both the general public and policy makers, and provide a platform for advocacy efforts to implement effective tobacco control programs.

8. How does GYTS fit with existing national surveillance?

GYTS is a stand-alone and an in-depth tobacco survey using a standard international protocol (questionnaire, survey design and data collection). GYTS not only measures tobacco use, but also monitors key tobacco control policies.

9. When will GYTS be repeated?

It is recommended that GYTS be routinely repeated every 4 to 5 years.

10. Who are the national partners and international partners in GYTS?

National Partners: The Ministry of Health (MoH) and/or the Ministry of Education (MoE) are the lead coordinating agencies for GYTS.

International Partners: The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Appendix B: Media Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **DATE**
CONTACT: **NAME, NUMBER, EMAIL**

COUNTRY'S Survey of Youth Tobacco Use Shows That **[insert key finding]**

Tobacco's Economic and Health Toll Can be Reduced by Implementing the Proven Measures in International Health Treaty

CITY, COUNTRY – **ORGANIZATION** today released **COUNTRY'S** Global Youth Tobacco Survey, a surveillance tool aimed at understanding tobacco use and trends in **COUNTRY**. The survey found that tobacco use and its toll in **COUNTRY** are significant, with more than **NUMBER** smokers in **COUNTRY**, and **INSERT ADDITIONAL STATISTIC ON USE**.

The report revealed additional important data that should guide policymakers in implementing measures to reduce tobacco use, including:

- **Include 3 or 4 bullet points highlighting the most interesting results from the report for your country.**

Tobacco use among youth is a major public health problem around the world. Most people start smoking before the age of 18, and almost a quarter of these smokers began smoking before the age of 10. Every day, some 80,000-100,000 young people around the world become addicted to tobacco. If current trends continue, 250 million of today's children will die from tobacco-related diseases.

Yet there are proven methods to reduce tobacco's impact on **COUNTRY'S** citizens, and more than 170 nations, including **[COUNTRY – if applicable]** have committed themselves to doing so by ratifying the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the world's first international treaty devoted entirely to public health. This treaty provides a road map for successfully reducing tobacco use if rigorously and fully implemented.

The World Health Organization released a report that identified a set of six cost-effective solutions that are mandated by the provisions of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, have been proven to reduce tobacco use and should be implemented in every nation. Called the WHO MPOWER package, these solutions require countries to:

- **Monitor** tobacco use and assess the impact of tobacco prevention and cessation efforts;
- **Protect** everyone from secondhand smoke with laws that require smoke-free workplaces and public places;
- **Offer** help to every tobacco user to quit;
- **Warn** and effectively educate every person about the dangers of tobacco use with strong, pictorial health warnings and hard-hitting, sustained media campaigns to educate the public;
- **Enact** and enforce comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorships and on the use of misleading terms such as "light" and "low-tar;" and
- **Raise** the price of tobacco products by increasing tobacco taxes.

“With **INSERT MOST HARMFUL STATISTIC FROM REPORT**, it is critical that our government places a priority on strong tobacco control legislation” said **NAME, TITLE, ORGANIZATION**. “We join the international health community in calling for **COUNTRY** to take action and effectively **IMPLEMENT OR ACCEDE TO** the international tobacco control treaty and reduce the deadly health and economic impacts of tobacco.”

[IF FCTC IS RATIFIED:] As one of the countries that has ratified the **FCTC**, **COUNTRY** has an international commitment to continue to implement and enforce the health treaty. **[INSERT COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON SUCCESSES OR CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTATION AND SPECIFIC PRIORITIES IN YOUR COUNTRY.]**

[IF FCTC IS NOT RATIFIED:] As one of the few nations in the world that has not ratified the **FCTC**, **COUNTRY** is lagging behind the world in ensuring its citizens live healthy lives. As the government considers new legislation, it must place the health of its citizens over the interest of the tobacco industry. **[INSERT COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON CHALLENGES TO FCTC RATIFICATION AND SPECIFIC COUNTRY CHALLENGES.]**

Methodology:

GYTS in **[COUNTRY]** was a representative (national, regional, city) school-based survey among students ages 13 to 15 years conducted in **20XX** by **XXX**. The GYTS uses a consistent and standard protocol across countries. The questionnaire consist of the following topics: tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco, secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure, pro- and anti-tobacco media and advertising exposure, desire for cessation, access and availability to obtain tobacco products, and having been taught in school about the harmful effects of tobacco use. It is intended to enhance countries’ capacity to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco control and prevention programs. In addition, it aims to assist countries in tracking the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and the WHO MPOWER Technical Package.

Additional Information:

IF YOU HAVE WEB SITE, PLEASE INSERT

Full Report: **INSERT LINK TO COUNTRY SPECIFIC GATS REPORT**

###

INSERT PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

**Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS)
Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco
Control: Guidance for Advocates**

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- RTI International
- World Health Organization
- World Lung Foundation

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this document are not necessarily those of the GYTS collaborating organizations.

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1. Introduction

Tobacco use is a major preventable cause of premature death and disease worldwide. Approximately 5.4 million people die each year due to tobacco-related illnesses -- a figure expected to increase to more than eight million a year by 2030. If current trends continue, tobacco use may kill a billion people by the end of this century. It is estimated that more than three quarters of these deaths will be in low- and middle-income countries¹. An efficient and systematic surveillance mechanism is essential to monitor and manage the epidemic.

The Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS) is a set of globally standardized surveys to monitor tobacco use and key tobacco control policies. It is comprised of both youth and adult surveys. Launched in 1999, the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) is a global standard for systematically monitoring youth tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) and tracking key tobacco control indicators. GYTS assists countries to enhance their capacity to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco control interventions. It is an important tool to assist countries in supporting WHO MPOWER, a package of six evidence-based demand reduction measures contained in the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

GYTS is one of the largest public health surveillance systems, and it has been active in more than 188 countries/sites. The survey is repeated every 4-5 years generating data that are comparable within and across countries.

1.1 Overview of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey

GYTS is a nationally representative school-based survey of students in grades associated with 13 to 15 years of age and is designed to produce cross-sectional estimates for each country. It uses a global standardized methodology that includes a two-stage sample design with schools selected with a probability proportional to enrollment size. The classes within selected schools are chosen randomly and all students in selected classes are eligible to participate in the survey. The survey uses a standard core questionnaire with a set of optional questions that permits adaptation to meet the needs of the country on tobacco use and key tobacco control indicators. The questionnaire consists of the following topics: tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), cessation, secondhand smoke (SHS), pro- and anti-tobacco media and advertising, access and availability to obtain tobacco products, and knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco. The questionnaire is self-administered; using scannable paper-based bubble sheets, it is anonymous to ensure confidentiality.

As a companion to GYTS, the seven-question School Policy questionnaire was developed to collect information about school policies related to tobacco use among staff and students. This self-administered questionnaire is completed by one of the school administrators.

To maximize the efficiency of the data collected from GYTS, a series of manuals has been created. These manuals are designed to provide countries with standard requirements as well as recommendations on the design and implementation of the survey at every step of the GYTS process. They are also designed to offer guidance on how a particular country might adjust features of the GYTS

¹ Mathers, C.D., and Loncar D. Projections of Global Mortality and Burden of Disease from 2002 to 2030. *PLoS Medicine*, 2006, 3(11):e442.

protocol to maximize the utility of the data within the country. Following the standard protocol and procedures in these manuals is strongly encouraged to maintain consistency and comparability across countries and for the successful implementation of GYTS.

1.2 Use of this Manual

In most countries, a government office such as the Ministry of Health (MoH) or Ministry of Education (MoE) will be responsible for the initial dissemination of GYTS data. In this guide, the government office is referred to as the lead governmental agency. Readers are advised to identify, contact and coordinate with the agency that is responsible for GYTS in their country.

Two documents have been developed to assist with the dissemination of GYTS.

The first, ***GYTS Data Dissemination Guidance for the Initial Release of Data***, is written for the lead governmental agency or other agencies responsible for GYTS data collection and analysis. The document provides guidance on the initial release of GYTS through press conferences, media releases and other communication channels such as the Internet. The dissemination guide may also be a useful resource for tobacco control advocates using the media in their policy work.

This document, ***GYTS Using Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control: Guidance for Advocates***, provides guidance to tobacco control advocates on how to use GYTS data findings to draw attention to tobacco as an issue and advocate for effective tobacco control policy. The dissemination strategies described here should be considered general in nature. As organizations work to develop a data dissemination approach for their country, they are advised and encouraged to use strategies that complement and extend their policy campaigns, and to tailor them to the cultures and contexts in which they work.

In addition to this guide, documents to assist in the dissemination process include:

- ***GYTS Country Fact Sheet***: The Fact Sheet provides an overview of the survey and key findings. It features highlights of survey results on prevalence, knowledge and attitudes about use, access and availability among current smokers, exposure to secondhand smoke, cessation, exposure to media and advertising, and school based tobacco use prevention classes.
- ***GYTS Country Report***: Details the country's tobacco burden in terms of prevalence of tobacco use, trends in use, the health and economic impacts of use, current tobacco control policies, GYTS methodology, results and key findings, and recommendations for action. This document contains all of the GYTS data from the country survey. Everyone involved with planning and disseminating the data should become familiar with the content of this report.
- ***WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008 - The MPOWER Package***: Presents the first comprehensive worldwide analysis of tobacco use and control efforts and provides countries with a roadmap to reverse the devastating global tobacco epidemic that could kill up to one billion people by the end of this century. The report outlines the MPOWER package and can be found at: <http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/en/>.

The GYTS results provide an opportunity to engage and involve youth advocates to discuss results and call for action to address tobacco use by youth. The following document provides useful information on how to work with youth in tobacco control campaigns:

- **Best Practices User Guide: Youth Engagement–State and Community Interventions** – This report focuses on the role youth play in advancing policy as part of a comprehensive tobacco control program. The document provides guidance on how to identify, engage, and support youth advocates for tobacco control campaigns. It can be found at:
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/bp_userguide_youth/index.htm.

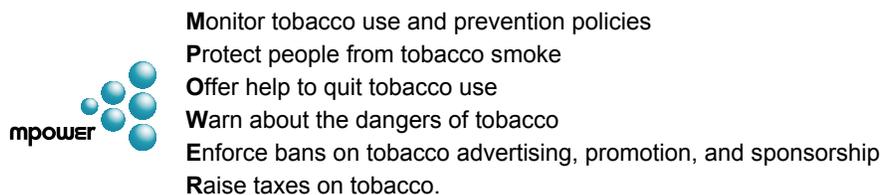
Finally, the GYTS results can supplement other available data, such as data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), to inform tobacco control advocacy efforts. Two other companion documents can assist in efforts to incorporate GATS data into GYTS dissemination efforts:

- **GATS Data Dissemination: Guidance for the Initial Release of the Data:** This document is written for the lead governmental agency or other agencies responsible for GATS data collection and analysis. The document provides guidance on the initial release of GATS through press conferences, media releases and other communication channels such as the Internet. The dissemination guide may also be a useful resource for tobacco control advocates using the media in their policy work. It can be found at:
<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/gtssdata/Ancillary/DownloadAttachment.aspx?ID=935>.
- **Using GATS Data to Strengthen Tobacco Control Efforts: Guidance for Tobacco Control Advocates:** This document provides guidance to tobacco control advocates on how to use GATS data findings to draw attention to tobacco as an issue and advocate for effective tobacco control policy. The guide can be found at:
http://tobaccofreecenter.org/files/pdfs/en/GATS_NGO_draftguide_en.pdf.

2. Using GYTS Data to Advocate for Strong Tobacco Control Policies

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is the world's first international health treaty and provides a foundation for countries to reduce the devastating health and economic impact of tobacco. As of August 2012, the FCTC had more than 170 Parties covering almost 90 percent of the world's population.

In 2008, the WHO introduced the MPOWER package to assist country-level implementation of six effective measures contained in the FCTC. GYTS materials are organized to provide information on each of the six measures. The MPOWER measures to reduce the demand of tobacco are:



GYTS is a global standard to systematically monitor youth tobacco use and track key tobacco control indicators. It is intended to generate comparable data within and across countries. This data can be used to demonstrate the need for tobacco control policies included in MPOWER and generate support for them among the public and policymakers.

Tobacco control advocates worldwide have learned that successful advocacy results from carefully crafted campaigns designed to stimulate that action. GYTS data can be used in these campaigns to:

- Demonstrate to policymakers and the public that tobacco use is a serious problem;
- Communicate the extent of exposure to factors which increase use; and
- Build support among policymakers and the public for policies that work to reduce tobacco use.

Campaigns using GYTS data also provide a unique opportunity for tobacco control groups to engage youth advocates in their policy efforts. Worldwide, youth advocates have been an integral part of successful tobacco control campaigns, contributing in a variety of ways, such as:

- Educating policymakers and garnering media support. Youth are able to capture the attention of political leaders and the media.
- Providing generational insight. Involving youth in tobacco control efforts ensures the design of effective, population-specific policies.
- Using social media to spread campaign messages. Youth are able to use the variety of online social networks in which they participate to mobilize their peers and community.²

To effectively use GYTS data, the data must be understood and interpreted for policymakers and other advocates. The findings and key messages about their relevance and use must then be disseminated to the right audiences through effective communication vehicles. This requires the identification of target audiences, key messages, and clear modes of dissemination and communication.

2.1 Step 1: Understand the Data

Key Point: The use of compelling data often stimulates policy action; identifying and understanding the data is essential for generating support for tobacco control policy among key audiences.

To optimally use GYTS data, it is important to become familiar with it, to identify key findings, and to think about how the results can be used to advocate for effective tobacco control policy. The lead governmental agency responsible for GYTS will prepare and release a Country Report containing the GYTS survey results and a Country Fact Sheet summarizing the key findings from the survey. Tobacco control advocates seeking to use the GYTS data should obtain copies and review them to gain an understanding of the data.

When GYTS is initially released, the lead governmental agency responsible for its release will conduct a press conference or informational session to discuss the data. Ideally, tobacco control advocates will attend any press conferences or orientation sessions that are held to discuss the results.

2.2 Step 2: Build Partnerships

Key Point: Effective data dissemination requires partnerships that can broaden the reach of dissemination and improve the overall effectiveness of communication efforts.

Typically, tobacco control advocates come from and work with multiple organizations that have similar or complementary goals. In order to ensure that the use of GYTS data will be coordinated, it is important to consider partnerships among organizations with similar goals, including youth advocacy groups, and with the lead governmental agency. These types of partnerships can broaden the reach of dissemination and improve the overall effectiveness of communication efforts. Partnerships may also bring added credibility to dissemination efforts and “open doors” for communicating with a broader range of audiences.

An initial workshop or meeting might be planned for NGOs and partner organizations to educate participants about GYTS and to strategize on how this new information might be of use in advocacy work. Representatives from the lead governmental agency and other researchers familiar with the GYTS data could be invited to conduct an in-depth review of GYTS and the country’s findings.

TIP: Identifying and Recruiting Youth Advocacy Groups

The best way for agencies and tobacco control groups to recruit young people is to go where they naturally gather. Many schools and community and faith-based organizations already have active youth groups dedicated to making a difference in young peoples’ lives. Educate the youth groups about GYTS results, how they are being targeted by the tobacco industry, and what they can do help advocate for change.

2.3 Step 3: Identify Target Audiences

Key Point: To effectively use GYTS data to drive tobacco control efforts, you must know your audience.

Specific audiences for GYTS data dissemination fall into four main categories:

1. **Policymakers and decision-makers** who have the authority or responsibility to set policies related to tobacco and health.
2. **Individuals and groups that have influence with policymakers.** These key opinion leaders can be particularly effective advocates for tobacco control because policymakers are more open to hearing from them and willing to accept that what they say is important.
3. **The general public.** The general public possesses a level of knowledge about tobacco-related health problems that could either limit their willingness to support tobacco control efforts or spur them to support efforts to reduce tobacco use.
4. **Media.** The media provides ongoing information and opinion to policymakers and the public that can dramatically shape their willingness to support tobacco control efforts or spur them to support efforts to reduce tobacco use.

Each of these audiences has different information needs for decision-making. It is important for advocates to be knowledgeable about each target audience before beginning to draw attention to GYTS data. This knowledge includes:

- The role the audience plays in reducing tobacco use.
- The type of information the audience needs to make decisions and take action.
- Particular attitudes or concerns that the audience may have about tobacco.
- Questions the audience is likely to have.
- The most effective ways to reach the audience.

Advocates should also anticipate that as data is released about specific tobacco-related topics, the audiences for receiving main messages may differ. For example, policymakers responsible for making decisions about treatment and cessation services may not be the same policymakers responsible for setting tobacco tax policy. Thus, the tasks of identifying target audiences and developing a firm understanding about them will be ongoing.

2.4 Step 4: Develop Key Messages

Key Point: Messages should be clear and concise, connect with the target audience, and increase their knowledge of the problem and the need for a solution. Key messages should motivate audiences to take action in support of tobacco control policies being advocated.

Key messages are at the foundation of the effective use of data to drive policy change. Once you have determined what the GYTS data says about tobacco in your country, these findings must be turned into key messages to be communicated to targeted audiences. Key messages should be tailored to each audience so the information is easily understandable, relevant, and tied to action.

An effective message should:

- **Be Clear and Concise** – Most audiences may have little time to read or listen to all the facts and information demonstrating that tobacco use is dangerous. As a result, it will be important to develop powerful messages that are clear and concise. For example, if advocates want to generate policy action to reduce smoking initiation among youth, then three succinct but substantive messages should be conveyed to policymakers (a target audience):
 - *Example: GYTS data indicate X% of youth ages 13 to 15 currently smoke cigarettes. Among youth who have never smoked, X% are likely to initiate smoking in the next year. Raising the price of tobacco through tobacco tax increases prevents youth from starting to smoke.*
- **Connect** – A message should focus on connecting with the target audience and speaking to its interests. This is why it is important to know the audience. For instance, if information about exposure to second-hand smoke is being directed toward schools that allow smoking on campus (a target audience), then the following linked messages could be compelling:
 - *Example: GYTS found that X% of youth are exposed to tobacco smoke in public places. Children are more heavily exposed to second-hand smoke than any other age group. More than X% of youth think smoking should be banned in public places. Comprehensive smoke-free laws protect the health of everyone, especially children.*
- **Compel** – When developing messages, make sure you use information that will motivate your audience to support your tobacco control policies. One way to do this is to use a story or a comparison that makes the story “real”, versus only using facts and statistics. Personalizing data through a story or relating it to what is familiar to the audience can be a very effective way of gaining the audience’s attention and support. If support for a ban on tobacco advertising and promotion is needed, then highlighting data that indicate that large segments of the population are being reached by advertising and marketing, especially youth, and linking this to rates of tobacco use can be used to make a compelling reason to ban advertising.
 - *Example: The Global Adult Tobacco Survey indicates that X% of people age 15 or older have seen tobacco product advertisements and promotions. Youth reported even higher levels of exposure. GYTS found that X% of youth ages 13 to 15 reported having seen tobacco ads and promotions in the last month. Research from around the world shows that youth that are exposed to higher levels of tobacco advertising are more likely to smoke.*

Messages can and should be repeated over and over again. A strong campaign should be focused on a few key messages that can be repeated again and again.

2.5 Step 5: Package GYTS Data

Key Point: GYTS data and key messages must be synthesized and presented in easy-to read materials.

Most audiences like short, condensed, easy-to-read materials. Consider the ways in which each target audience uses information. Most people have limited time and limited knowledge of tobacco control so aim to share your messages in plain language and in a user-friendly format.

The lead government agency or other governmental agencies will release a comprehensive country report containing all the data findings from the GYTS survey as well as a country fact sheet that summarizes the key findings.

Key findings can be pulled from the country report, interpreted, and presented in brief policy-oriented materials. Such materials could include fact sheets or short issue-specific reports. Data should also be incorporated into existing tobacco control materials that organizations already have developed.

GYTS fact sheets can be prepared with GYTS data related to each of the five evidence-based policies for reducing tobacco use in the MPOWER package (smoke-free environments, cessation and treatment, warning labels, advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, and tax). These topic specific fact sheets provide data and information to support the need for a particular policy. These fact sheets note current country policies, cite numerous research studies confirming why specific stronger policies are effective, and include key messages about tobacco use and tobacco control policies.

Advocates need to fully understand the GYTS results in order to develop reports and fact sheets and discuss the results with key audiences. Advocates should discuss the results with the lead government agency or other agencies involved in conducting the GYTS survey in order to ensure they fully understand the results. Advocates will need to be strategic in what data they highlight in fact sheets and other reports and highlight data that is clear and compelling.

2.6 Step 6: Disseminate and Communicate GYTS Data

Key Point: A multi-faceted approach to data dissemination and communication should be employed over time to effectively reach the variety of audiences.

The use of GYTS data for advocacy purposes should not be seen as a discrete, one time effort. The process of creating new fact sheets and incorporating GYTS data into existing materials will allow advocates to develop a good understanding of how GYTS data can be used most effectively over time to achieve tobacco policy goals in their country.

Ultimately, the timing of the efforts to highlight different aspects of GYTS data is a strategic one that must consider specific policy goals and timing within a country.

The initial release of GYTS data provides immediate opportunities to disseminate, promote and discuss the data and tobacco control-related policies. Once the data is released, advocates should begin to incorporate the data into all relevant policy activities. For example, advocates should consider timing the release of topic specific fact sheets as part of their advocacy campaigns for specific policies. For instance, if a campaign is being launched to secure a comprehensive ad ban in 6 months, the tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship fact sheet could be released as a part of such a campaign. Sequencing the release of the fact sheets over several months will ensure that public discussion on tobacco control policy is ongoing.

To effectively use GYTS data to influence policy decisions, advocates will need to use a range of strategies to communicate their utility and promote their use. A brief discussion of potential strategies is included below.

2.6.1 Internet-based Communication

It is likely that the lead government agency or other governmental agency will post information about the GYTS survey, data, and findings on its website. Many tobacco control groups maintain a presence on the Internet, and these websites should also post GYTS materials as they are developed and released. Also

remember to update any data, factsheets, or other materials already posted on a website to include the most recent GYTS findings.

Social networking sites established specifically for individuals and organizations with an interest in tobacco control or country health issues could also be an effective way to disseminate information about GYTS and generate interest and support for changes in tobacco control policies. Youth advocacy groups are also a great resource for Internet-based dissemination. Many youth advocacy groups use social networking sites, such as Facebook or Twitter, as their main method of communication. Partnering with youth groups enables campaign messages to be disseminated quickly to large and diverse online networks.

2.6.2 Direct Advocacy to Policymakers

Partner organizations often talk directly to policymakers. The effectiveness of such communication for producing a desired action on the part of the policymaker is dependent on two factors -- the context in which the information is delivered as well as who would be the best person(s) to deliver the information (the spokespeople).

Face-to-Face Meetings

Face-to-face meetings, often called briefings, are perhaps the most effective way to provide policymakers and other key decision-makers with substantive information about tobacco use and strategies for reducing use.

First, identify the policymakers you wish to brief. Be clear about why each policymaker has been selected (e.g., past history of support of tobacco control), and what you would hope to achieve in a briefing (e.g., obtaining agreement that policymaker will support a particular policy or introduce new legislation if none exists).

Many people (and especially policymakers) have a limited amount of time to devote to learning about any issue. Consequently, it is important that the people involved in data dissemination develop presentations for policymakers that are highly focused and succinct. Policymakers are unlikely to be interested in reading through long reports or hearing about all the details of the GYTS survey data. Key messages should be derived from the data based on what you hope to achieve in the meeting.

Briefings should also include succinct, well-written materials that can be left with audiences after completing the presentation or briefing. These materials could include one or more of the fact sheets, briefing papers that include the information, key messages and recommendations that are provided during the briefing or presentation, and paper copies of an electronic presentation.

Policy Workshops/Meetings

GYTS data should be incorporated into all policy workshops or meetings with policymakers regarding tobacco control to highlight the burden of tobacco use in the country. Advocates can consider developing a GYTS presentation highlighting key data points that can be adapted and used at a variety of policy sessions. While no policymaker wants to see the same presentation over and over again, repetition of key messages is an essential part of good communication. Presentations can be adapted to meet the specific context of meetings and workshops over time.

TIP: Training Youth as Spokespeople

Many politicians and key opinion leaders enjoy hearing from young people, especially if it concerns youth-related issues. To be effective policy advocates, young people should be educated and trained in tobacco control and policy advocacy. Training should focus on providing: a) knowledge of tobacco use statistics; b) education about tobacco control policy issues; c) practice in how to approach and influence local leaders, business owners, and community members; and d) media literacy.

2.6.3 Using the Media to Disseminate GYTS Data and Advocate for Policy Change

GYTS data dissemination via the news media should be driven by strategic thinking. Every step of the process – from the decision to use the media in the first place to how to answer a specific question from a reporter – should be determined by what makes the most strategic sense given the dissemination goal. Decisions about media outreach efforts should be made from the target audience’s perspective, e.g. how newsworthy is the information.

Effective use of the media entails more than just responding to reporters. At its core, it is about echoing your key messages in the media to help drive policy change. A good media strategy aims to generate news coverage of an issue through a variety of activities, and create a positive environment for enacting strong tobacco control legislation. Activities should be tailored to local norms and circumstances. Types of media coverage include:

- **Press Releases/Media Statements** – A press release or media statement should be a one- to two-page document that highlights the main messages and timely, relevant news that an organization would like to distribute to the media. A press release provides reporters with the basics they need to develop a news story about GYTS, while at the same time explaining how the data supports specific policy goals. Most press releases follow a specific format, including a headline, contact information and introduction paragraph, which highlights the main news of the press release. Reporters are familiar with this format and it allows them to find the information they need quickly.
- **Direct Communications with Journalists: Persuade them to write a story** – Once a press release or media statement has been drafted, an organization may begin to contact the media to persuade them to write a story on the GYTS data and its implication on the policy goals advocated by the organization. Contact can be made through email and phone calls. Before contacting the media, it is necessary to have a strong story and pitch to provide them that can either supplement a story the reporter is already working on or provide them the basis for a new story. Also, it is helpful to provide them with the press release and background materials they can

reference as needed for additional information. It is best to have a media list to work off of when contacting the media, and to have already established contact with the reporter before asking them to write a story.

- **Media Events** – A media event is a public occasion or happening that is carefully planned and executed in order to attract the attention of multiple media outlets. A press conference is one example of a media event. A press conference should only be considered when there is significant or breaking news to present, and the decision to execute a press conference should be considered carefully. Factors to consider include the news value of the event, the number of available spokespeople, and the timing of the event. For example, it should not take place on a day when there is already important planned national news taking place.
- **Editorial Board Meetings** – In some countries, newspaper editorial boards determine what the paper will cover and how extensive the coverage should be. They often get their ideas for the subjects of their editorials from individuals or groups that meet with them to share their perspective on an issue. A meeting with an editorial board would provide an opportunity to educate influential decision makers within the media and possibly lead to the newspaper writing an editorial highlighting the problems caused by tobacco use or calling for actions to reduce use. Advocacy organizations that join forces for the purpose of securing or participating in an editorial board meeting might encounter greater success than if they sought participation on their own.
- **Letters to the Editor** – Letters to the editor are an excellent way to respond to a news article or local event, allowing the writer to frame or reframe a story to serve GYTS-related interests. Good letters are short, focused, and timely, and reference the original news article or event that you are responding to. Credentials for the letter writer should be included, whether the writer is an expert or simply a concerned citizen. Many newspapers have specific requirements for their letters to the editor; in particular the time frame in which a letter can be published after the original article appeared in print. Check each outlet for their specific requirements and make sure submitted letters meet those requirements.
- **Opinion Articles** – Newspapers in some countries will often accept opinion articles that take a different approach than their own editorial pages. Opinion articles can be a good way to communicate messages that help further your advocacy goals. They allow authors to have much more control over the message than the author would have if they were interviewed for a news story – as the news story will most likely have more than one point of view. Although opinion articles usually discuss a topic more in-depth than letters to the editor do, they still tend to keep to one theme and two to four main message points.

Opinion articles can be particularly effective at influencing the views of policymakers and other decision-makers who are more likely than the general public to read the editorial page. Opinion articles about GYTS should be authored by well-known individuals because this will garner the attention of media gatekeepers and increase the likelihood that the article will be published. Such individuals may be more willing to agree to author an article if it is drafted for them. Newspapers may have specific requirements for the format and length of their opinion articles, so check prior to drafting.

3. Conclusion

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) represents a comprehensive examination of youth tobacco use patterns and related issues in each of the countries in which it is administered. As such, survey findings should be shared with the individuals and entities that have the power and authority to act to reduce tobacco use. However, simply providing data to policymakers and key decision-makers will not be enough.

In order to make the most effective use of GYTS data for strengthening tobacco control policy it will be necessary to integrate the data, as well as other available data on tobacco use, into ongoing tobacco control advocacy efforts long after the initial release of the GYTS Fact Sheet and the Country Report. GYTS data should be used to develop a variety of messages about the policy areas being addressed, with each message tailored to key audiences.

This guide advises that GYTS data be used to develop messages that will be communicated over time. Use the GYTS data in the topic fact sheets and companion messages that are delivered via the Internet, in briefings with policymakers and partner organizations, and through various media communication strategies. These strategies will serve to facilitate discussion on the problem of tobacco use and its consequences among those with the power and authority to enact better tobacco control policy (policymakers) and those who support policy change (the general public, key opinion leaders, and the media).

Advocates should also remember that GYTS data is available for use at any time to counter harmful or untruthful messages about the value of enacting better tobacco control policy. Regardless of what the plan may be concerning the release of topic fact sheets, GYTS data can and should be used whenever it can be useful for informing public discussion and debate about tobacco control.



GLOBAL TOBACCO SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (GTSS)

