

What we fund

Tobacco control

Since tobacco use is one of the most important risk factors for NCDs, tobacco control will be critical to the achievement of the global target to reduce NCDs by 25% by 2025 and remains a priority for our program. IDRC has recently increased the funding available to support LMIC researchers to develop the local evidence needed for tobacco control policies.



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Tobacco control research areas

It is important that the research be solution-oriented. The following graphic outlines the key themes and cross-cutting issues that research projects should address:

Understanding the policy environment

- Analysis of the influence of the tobacco industry’s direct and indirect activities on policy-makers, researchers, funding agencies, and opinion leaders
- Appraisal of the perceived economic value of the tobacco industry to national economies and those whose livelihoods include income from tobacco production, marketing, or sale
- Evaluation of the impact of trade agreements on national sovereignty in tobacco control policy adoption and on the determinants of tobacco consumption (price, availability, promotion)
- Analysis of barriers to implementation of tobacco control measures, including challenges posed by the tobacco industry

Predicting and evaluating policy impact

Impacts, or potential impacts of, especially:

- Tobacco taxation and other fiscal policies
- Product and package regulations
- Controls on marketing, access, and distribution of tobacco products
- Innovative strategies such as new supply-side interventions or policies needed to control non-cigarette and smokeless tobacco products
- Mechanisms for prioritising health in trade negotiations and other multilateral cooperation

Measures of impact include changes to:

- Tobacco consumption
- Affordability, availability, and promotion of tobacco products
- Government revenue and tobacco-related health costs
- Employment and livelihoods from tobacco production, marketing, or sale
- Population health and poverty
- Illicit trade

Cross-cutting issues

Equity: Understanding the value and impact of tobacco control policies on different social groups

Commercial influence: Understanding and addressing the industry-specific barriers to policy adoption and implementation

Intersectoral action: Understanding how best to engage the relevant sectors



Important cross-cutting issues

While these issues cannot be addressed in all projects, whenever possible researchers should take the following into account when designing research and dissemination strategies:

- **Equity:** Evidence about tobacco control interventions should also show the impact of policies on different social groups. In fact, as NCDs disproportionately affect poor and marginalized populations, inequity is an important issue to understand and address. As a key NCD risk factor, tobacco use may also show unique geographic and gender patterns in different regions.
- **Intersectoral action:** There is a need for policy research to examine various factors that enable or constrain the use of a holistic approach engaging multiple sectors of government to address health issues, including tobacco use. We invite research teams to generate evidence through case studies about the most effective coordination and accountability mechanisms to bring together different sectors of government and relevant and appropriate stakeholders to tackle the NCD epidemic.
- **Commercial influence:** Tobacco industry opposition can be a major barrier to the successful implementation of healthy public policies. Yet, policy dialogue can be strengthened by sound evidence that addresses misperceptions resulting from industry influence.

A variety of **research designs and approaches** can be used to generate rigorous evidence:

- Case studies and natural experiments: for example, to assess the outcome and impacts of fiscal policies for tobacco control
- Studies to identify “enablers” and opportunities leading to successful tobacco policy changes
- Research on promising small-scale interventions that could be expanded at a higher level
- The use of simulation models using local data to estimate the health and economic impact of tobacco tax increases and/or other tobacco policies
- Mixed-methods studies focusing on the relationships between tobacco use and household poverty (e.g. the opportunity costs of tobacco use)
- Systematic reviews of research evidence – including reviews of complex interventions designed to reduce the consumption of tobacco in LMICs
- Regional and cross-regional situation analyses of tobacco issues and responses in LMICs

Research projects that address **multiple NCD risk factors** are also welcomed and will be considered for funding. **Multi-country, regional, or sub-regional** research is encouraged, especially projects addressing policy issues that benefit from cross-border cooperation or where it may be helpful to compare the presence and absence of policy interventions in neighbouring countries or regions.

Knowledge translation and policy dialogue

The focus of NCDP funding is research but it is important that the research inform policy change. Therefore, every research project must include a strong communication strategy that creates opportunities to use and apply the evidence generated. In addition to the usual intent to publish, researchers are encouraged to outline how they will engage with policy makers and key stakeholders to encourage the use of their results in informing the adoption and effective implementation of tobacco control policies. Engaging stakeholders early in project development is a good practice that strengthens relations and the uptake of results.

Out of scope

The following research areas are not a funding focus for the NCDP program:

- Testing and evaluating primary health care interventions (e.g. smoking cessation trials and evaluation of the integration of cessation support into primary health care)
- Epidemiology and surveillance of tobacco consumption or prevalence; primary data collection for “global surveys”
- Air quality surveillance for monitoring smoke free policy compliance
- Testing and evaluating community and school-based education; awareness-raising campaigns and stand-alone media campaigns focused on individuals’ behaviour change
- Trials of alternatives to tobacco farming and other tobacco production-related livelihoods.

Eligibility criteria

IDRC’s mission is to support LMIC institutions in undertaking rigorous research on important development issues. Government ministries, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations are eligible for funding.

Eligibility criteria to be met:

- A principal investigator must be a citizen or permanent resident of a low- or middle-income country and have a primary work affiliation in a LMIC institution.
- The recipient institution must be a recognized legal entity in a LMIC and capable of entering into contractual arrangements and assuming legal and financial obligations. Up to three LMIC institutions may administer the funds.
- The applicant(s) must demonstrate that they work in an environment that supports research through the administration of funds, provision of space and equipment, etc.
- Principal investigators from LMICs may, if necessary, work in partnership with co-investigators or collaborators from high-income countries.

IDRC recognizes the OECD list of developing countries and territories eligible for Official Development Assistance. However, please note that we do not currently support research in developing countries or territories in Eastern Europe, Oceania, countries of the former Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, the Democratic People’s Republic of



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Korea, and some countries in Central Africa.

Funding scope and duration

Applications for grants over **CA\$100,000** are encouraged. Grant duration can be a maximum of five years. Grant sizes can vary significantly depending on duration, geographic scope, and methodologies.

We recognize that significantly smaller project grants play a valuable role in advancing evidence for tobacco control. We are seeking to support small grant initiatives that would be administered through LMIC organizations. We therefore invite ideas from LMIC organisations that could manage a small grant initiative aligned with NCDP’s themes.

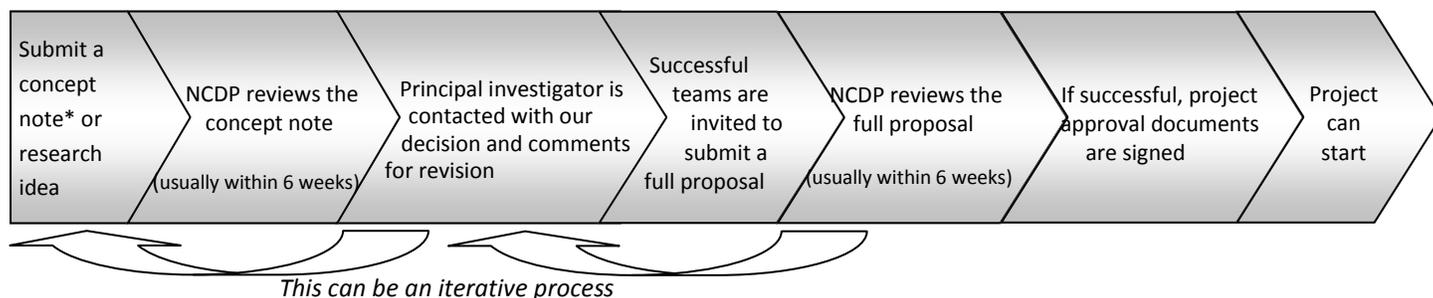


“You achieve more in tobacco control by working in partnership—principled engagements that are focused on results (...) It’s a multi-sectoral thing.”

—Vincent Kimosop, Civil Society, Kenya, in IDRC video series *Tobacco in Africa: The Road Ahead*

NCDP research idea review process

In general, the process for soliciting, reviewing and awarding grants follows this timeline. **Please note that we welcome research ideas and concept notes at any time.**



*please refer to the concept note form and its general guidelines on our website

About NCDP

IDRC's Non-Communicable Disease Prevention (NCDP) program funds research with the goal to inform and enable the adoption and effective implementation of policies and programs that prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in low- and middle-income countries. Our focus is on the "best-buys" that reduce NCD risk factors: strategies that are low-cost for countries but have a high impact on improving population health.

Non-Communicable Disease Prevention (NCDP)

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For further information, please visit www.idrc.ca or www.idrc.ca/ncdp

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