

Funding sustainable tobacco control

Tobacco Prevention Fund. Since autumn 2004, 2.6 centimes of the purchasing price of every single packet of cigarettes – or some 18 million francs a year – has been paid into a Tobacco Prevention Fund set up to finance measures contributing to an efficient and sustainable reduction in smoking. 20 to 30% of the money is earmarked for tobacco control projects in the field of sport. 53 of the 106 funding proposals submitted by the end of 2005 have been approved.

The Tobacco Prevention Fund was set up particularly to finance measures to stop people from starting to smoke, make it easier to give up smoking and protect non-smokers against passive smoking. The fund receives 2.6 centimes from every packet of cigarettes sold. This makes some 18 million francs a year available for tobacco control measures (though this sum is declining).

Reducing long-term consumption

The purpose of the Tobacco Prevention Fund is to finance prevention measures that help bring about an efficient and sustainable reduction in smoking. Money from the Fund is used in the following areas:

- preventing people from starting to smoke;
- helping people to stop smoking (kicking the habit);
- protection against passive smoking;
- sensitizing and informing the general public;
- networking organizations active in the field of tobacco control and creating a general setting to underpin prevention efforts;
- promotion of research;
- tobacco control in sport and physical activity.

Projects supported by the Tobacco Prevention Fund have to satisfy high quality requirements and make a contribution to the national tobacco control strategy. The current strategy is set out in the National Tobacco Prevention Programme (NPTP) 2001–2007. The future strategy, which will supersede the NPTP, is currently being drawn up in a participatory process that includes all stakeholders.

Special unit at the FOPH

The Fund is administered by a special unit in the Health Policy Directorate of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH).



The Basel Lung League uses computer simulation to show young women what they might look like in 30 years' time as smokers and non-smokers.

Funding proposals are sent to the unit, which is responsible for overall coordination of the evaluation process. Since coming on stream on 1 April 2004, the Fund has received about 150 proposals to date. Of the 106 proposals submitted by the end of 2005, 53 have been approved (see box for examples). The Tobacco Prevention Fund Unit at the FOPH is administered by a staff of two and receives support from the Legal Affairs, Communication, Human Resources, Finance and Controlling units.

Procedure for evaluating proposals

The Tobacco Prevention Fund evaluates the proposals it receives with the support of an independent external consultation group. According to unit head Peter Blatter, the establishment of this group in autumn 2005 significantly reduced the burden on the unit, and proposals can now be processed much faster. Since the consultation group is convened three times a year, the proposals are geared to arrive in time for these dates (which are also announced on the website).

The Tobacco Prevention Fund Unit is responsible for preparing the dossiers (fitness for purpose, quality, commissioning of expert opinions) and for coordinating the overall eval-

uation process. In addition it provides secretarial services for the consultation group. The Group examines the proposals and then drafts recommendations for the FOPH's Director, commissioning two external expert opinions for any proposal in excess of CHF 100,000. The decision on the proposals is taken by the Director of the FOPH.

Communication

The Tobacco Prevention Fund's main communication channel is the website, www.tabak-praevention.ch, which gives access to all the necessary framework documents, information and tools. It also provides details of approved projects, the organizations behind them and the level of funding granted. In addition, it publishes the Fund's annual reports.

High social costs

Although the harmful effects of smoking are known and scientifically proven, the habit continues to enjoy great popularity in Switzerland, with smokers accounting for 30% of the population. Our country has one of the highest tobacco consumption rates per capita in Europe. Smoking has a significant impact on society: each year, more than 8,000 people die prematurely in Switzer-

land and thousands contract serious illnesses as a result of smoking. The direct costs incurred by smoking amount to about five billion francs a year.

Tobacco is a serious health threat not only to smokers but also to people exposed to passive smoking. Passive smoking can cause a wide range of disorders in non-smokers and causes one fatality a day in Switzerland.

The Federal Council has therefore set itself the target of reducing the proportion of people who smoke in Switzerland to 20–25% of the population. The required strategy is set out in the National Tobacco Prevention Programme for 2001–2007. The successful broad implementation of this strategy would be virtually inconceivable without resources from the Tobacco Prevention Fund. Consequently, only tobacco-control projects that support the strategy can be supported with money from the Fund.

Contact: Peter Blatter,
Tobacco Prevention Fund Unit, FOPH,
CH-3003 Berne,
tél.: +41 31 323 87 66,
peter.blatter@bag.admin.ch

www.tabak-praevention.ch

Smoke-free at work, on public transport and in sport

arbeitsplatz.rauchfrei

With their «arbeitsplatz.rauchfrei» campaign for a smoke-free workplace, the FOPH, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs and santéuisse (association of Swiss health insurers) are seeking to motivate companies in Switzerland to protect their employees from passive smoking and involve them in the «arbeitsplatz.rauchfrei» process and competition. Contribution from the Tobacco Prevention Fund: approx. 600,000 francs.

Rauchfreier ÖV

To coincide with its new timetable, the Swiss Association of Public Transport Operators introduced smoke-free enclosed public spaces in public transport throughout Switzerland on 11 December 2005. All enclosed spaces and all trains were transformed into no-smoking zones. This measure will protect

public transport employees and passengers from the harmful effects of passive smoking. Contribution: one million francs

«cool and clean»: tobacco control project in Swiss sport

«cool and clean» is the tobacco-control and health-promotion programme of the three backing organizations Swiss Olympic, Federal Office of Sport and the FOPH. Using organized sport as channels, «cool and clean» aims to make a large part of the Swiss public more aware of the issue of tobacco control. Contribution: five million francs

«Beobachter KOMPAKT» issue on «stop smoking»

To mark the «World No Tobacco Day» on 31 May 2006, the «Beobachter» magazine published a special issue – «Beobachter KOMPAKT» – on stopping smoking. In addition to the print-

ed version, the contents in the form of PDF files, a list of links to counselling services for smokers and an online forum on the subject are available on the Internet. Contribution: 99,000 francs.

«smoke-effects – make up your mind»

In the framework of this project, the Basel Lung League shows young women what they might look like in 30 years' time as smokers and non-smokers. The effects of smoking on ageing and beauty are shown using a special software for digital image processing. Female smokers receive encouragement and support to give up the habit. «smoke-effects» is presented at public events such as the «Gesund 2006» health fair in Basel. Contribution: 240,000 francs.

World Aids Conference Time to deliver

The XVI International AIDS Conference will take place from 13 to 18 August 2006 in Toronto. The theme of the Conference will be «Time to Deliver». It has been chosen because it emphasizes the urgency of effective prevention and treatment and calls on all decision-makers to pay even greater attention to their responsibility in this field.

With 20,000 participants from all around the world, this year's Conference looks set to be the biggest yet. The Federal Office of Public Health is sending a delegation to the Conference and will be presenting various projects there.

Further details of the FOPH's contribution can be found at: www.bag.admin.ch/aids by clicking on «International»

www.aids2006.org