



ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.Introduction	Page 3
2.Word from the President	Page 4
3.Word from the Executive Secretary	Page 4
4.The Year 2020	Page 5
5.Conclusion	Page 15

Introduction

Being the principal vector of the tobacco epidemic, the tobacco industry has in the past few years, intensified initiatives and strategies to grow its business in Africa where it sees a huge market potential in the continent's youthful and vibrant population. The industry is engaging in initiatives to recruit new smokers, including through the organisation or sponsorship of talent competitions, the use of flavoured and novel tobacco products, aggressive marketing specifically targeting kids, as well as online. It has also employed



traditional tactics like litigation, lobbying, media manipulation, Corporate Social Responsibility, etc, to foster its business and clean its image, while also aggressively attacking and opposing attempts to protect the public from the devastating consequences of its products.

The COVID-19 pandemic heavily impacted economic activities in the continent, almost bringing tobacco control efforts to a standstill. Despite the pandemic having a huge impact on public health, the tobacco industry, true to its tradition of only caring about its profits and never about the health and well-being of the population, made desperate efforts to maximise its sale. The industry went as far as being deceitful of its products, claiming amongst other things that smokers have better protection to COVID-19. The industry fought fiercely against efforts by governments to protect the population of its citizens, such as temporarily banning the sale of tobacco products.

Activities of the African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) were in keeping with the Alliance's mission to guarantee the health and well-being of the African population. These activities are mainly composed of capacity building, knowledge and experience sharing, tobacco industry interference, and advocacy for policy adoption and implementation. A lot of effort was also invested in upgrading the functioning of the Alliance, its governance as well as its membership.

This report sheds light on ATCA's activities and initiatives in 2020. It highlights the Alliance's efforts to strengthen its institutional capacity while establishing itself as the major tobacco control coordination entity for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Africa. The report also details ATCA's strides in resource mobilisation for tobacco control in the continent, as well as its exploits in tobacco control communication, capacity building and advocacy.

Word from the President

In the past years, ATCA has recorded tremendous successes in the tobacco control landscape in Africa. From capacity building of tobacco control advocates to support for adoption and implementation of tobacco control policies, and active and responsive communication within the tobacco control community, ATCA has made great strides in establishing itself as the CSO tobacco control authority, and the tobacco control communication hub in the continent. These efforts are realised thanks to the confidence accorded the Alliance by global and regional partners. To these partners, ATCA expresses sincere gratitude.



2020 had high and low moments. The period recorded great successes like the setting up of tobacco industry monitoring and response (TIMR) teams in nine countries amongst others. But it is also a period when activities were almost brought to a standstill by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the pandemic however, ATCA remained resilient, undertaking campaigns that helped to keep the tobacco industry at bay.

The Alliance will not relent its efforts to monitor, expose and denounce tobacco industry interference. On the contrary, as the industry maps out new strategies to attract young people and maintain its sales, ATCA will fine-tune its operations and seek ways to adapt to the realities in the continent.

We extend our gratitude to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for financing tobacco control efforts which no doubt help to secure good health and the well-being of Africans. Our appreciation also goes to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and the African Capacity Building Foundation through whom ATCA grants are administered.

ATCA has grown to a veritable Pan African organisation with membership in 39 countries. The Alliance will continue to work hard to be able to achieve more tobacco control milestones in every country where the Alliance is represented.

Akinbode Oluwafemi
ATCA Board Chairperson

Word from the Executive Secretary

Faced with heavy tobacco industry interference and minimal resources, many African governments can barely do anything to foster the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control which their countries have signed and ratified. This situation, coupled with civil society that is in some cases, poorly equipped to deal with tobacco industry interference, has led to the tobacco industry penetrating governments and outrightly interfering in tobacco control policies.

The African Tobacco Control Alliance has in the past few years helped to raise the tobacco control standard in selected countries through capacity building for CSOs.

While some of these countries already had active tobacco control programs, ATCA helped elevate the status through initiatives that rendered them more visible and efficient in identifying and exposing tobacco industry interference.

The Alliance was able to train advocates in at least 10 countries, establishing functional tobacco industry monitoring (TIM) teams in all of them. ATCA has also evolved to be a major tobacco control communication force in Africa, and a leading source of technical support for CSOs in the continent. To be able to do this efficiently, the Alliance invested in training its staff in internationally acclaimed institutions like The University of Bath in the UK, and the Sefako Magkatho Health Sciences University in South Africa. More of such trainings are envisaged with other renowned institutions.

As the Alliance continues to be approached for partnerships and solicitations, ATCA will continue to build its human and institutional capacity. It will continue to be handy to serve the tobacco control community in Africa and around the world, so that just as is portrayed in this report, future records of ATCA's activities will document great successes recorded in its drive to protect the African population for the devastating consequences of tobacco.

SESSOU Leonce
ATCA Executive Secretary



The year 2020

1. Tobacco Industry Monitoring and Response
2. Enhanced communication
3. Tobacco control and COVID-19
4. World No Tobacco Day
5. Strengthened institutional capacity
6. Governance
7. Partnerships
8. Supporting tobacco control globally

2020 Overview

Several activities inaugurated in 2019 were accomplished in 2020, while several other initiatives were initiated and completed. Activities were impacted with the coming of the COVID-19 pandemic but ATCA devised new strategies to forge ahead, making strides in efforts to keep the tobacco industry at bay and advance implementation of the WHO FCTC.

Keeping the tobacco industry at bay was done through the following:

- Multiple campaigns to expose the tobacco industry's exploitation of intermediaries for the growth of its business. This was supported by the CTFK-Administered project
- The TIMR program of the ACBF-administered project
- Rapid response to cases of tobacco industry interference

The administrative and technical staff of ATCA was enhanced with the recruitment of two technical and two support staff.

Engagement with the media was also upgraded with initiatives like:

- support provided to media professionals for the production of investigative reports exposing tobacco industry interference
- a video production contest

The Alliance's communication, as well as information and knowledge sharing credentials were boosted through initiatives like:

- the launch of *The ATCA Tribune*, a bi-annual newsletter of the Alliance's activities and achievements
- the organisation of webinars
- accelerated social media initiatives

A special World No Tobacco Day campaign dubbed "Turn Down Tobacco" ensured that many countries commemorated the day with a unified message.

All of these led to improved visibility for ATCA, which was then utilised to secure partnerships for the Alliance, including with the following organisations:

- Framework Convention Alliance (FCA)
- Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa (CTCA)
- Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA)
- Global Centre for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC)
- The Union
- Vital Strategies

Through the ACBF-administered project, capacity building workshops were organised in nine countries (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and The Gambia) followed by the establishment of functional and multi-sectorial TIM teams in these countries. These teams did an excellent job identifying and exposing cases of tobacco industry interference in their respective countries.

The Alliance launched multiple communication campaigns to denounce and sensitise the public and authorities on the maneuvers of the tobacco industry which profitted from the COVID-19 pandemic to clean its image and boost its sales. ATCA expressed support to the South African government, for taking the bold step of temporarily banning the sale of tobacco products to safeguard public health during the pandemic. A special tobacco control and COVID-19 resource centre produced by ATCA, provided useful resources for advocates to undertake denunciation campaigns.

Governance-wise, the Alliance made some considerable strides, engaging a process to establish internal rules and regulations that are approved by the Togolese government. A resource mobilisation strategy was developed and a study undertaken to guide the membership contribution mechanism of the Alliance.

As is the case every year, new Board members were elected. The Executive Bureau of the Board was also elected and the Alliance witnessed the admission of two new members; one from Nigeria and the other from Guinea Bissau.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY MONITORING AND RESPONSE (TIMR)

Denouncing Tobacco Industry Use of Intermediaries

Three countries; Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia were part of this campaign. The campaign comprised of a survey to identify cases of tobacco industry exploitation of intermediaries followed by the elaboration of an advocacy report. Data collectors were selected from amongst tobacco control partners in the country and trained by ATCA.

Collated and coded by ATCA these data was formed the basis for the elaboration of advocacy reports, dubbed “The Big Tobacco Allies”. They provided evidence of the tobacco industry using intermediaries to foster their corporate social responsibility initiatives to promote their image and grow their business.

Rapid Response: Halting BAT’s Battle of Minds Competition

BAT planned to hold the regional finals of its Battle of Minds competition in Kenya. The competition encourages young graduates in selected countries to submit creative project ideas, the winners receiving cash prizes, an all-expenses paid trip to BAT’s headquarters, and a chance to undertake internship in any of BAT’s regional offices.

To prevent this BAT CSR activity from taking place, ATCA supported partners in Kenya to mobilise advocacy against the holding of the competition in the country. The media was engaged and a petition was launched, as well as a social media campaign #StopBattleOfminds. A press conference was organized where a joint Statement was issued by the Kenya Tobacco Control Alliance (KETCA), the Non-Communicable Disease Alliance of Kenya (NCDAK) the Kenya Network of Cancer Organizations (KENCO).

To engage the youth, a play board was developed with a call to action, calling for the cancellation of the competition. Young people took pictures with this board and were encouraged to post them on their social media platforms to exhibit their disapproval of the BAT initiative.

In February, the competition’s website announced that winners of the regional competition; a candidate from Kenya and another from Nigeria, had been selected to participate in the global competition. The announcement was noticeably silent on the procedure used to select these candidates, an indication that BAT probably changed its strategy, engaging the regional competition online, contrary to what [this advert](#) from the multinational’s service in the DRC indicates was BAT’s original plan.

TIMR Capacity Building

TIM coaching sessions for country partners

Coaching sessions on TIM were organised and facilitated by ATCA in nine countries. Four countries; Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya and Mauritania had physical trainings, while the other five; Gabon, Nigeria, Senegal, The Gambia and Uganda had virtual trainings due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The trainings touched on introduction to the tobacco epidemic, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and its guidelines. Participants were also engaged on the tobacco industry interference tactics, before being introduced to monitoring tools. Participants at these trainings, who were comprised of government officials, MPs, CSO representatives, the media, religious authorities, formed the TIM teams for their various countries.



Training for TIM teams

ATCA, in collaboration with the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU) organised a virtual training for members of the TIM teams in all target countries of the ACBF-administered project. The training which focused on tobacco industry interference in Africa through new technology products, had as resource persons Pr. Lekan Ayo-Yusuf, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research, Postgraduate studies & Innovation at SMU and Director of ATIM, Dr Boli Francis, Executive Secretary of the network of NGOs active in tobacco control in Cote d'Ivoire (RCOTA-CI), and Celine Awuor, CEO of the International Institute for Legislative Affairs (IILA) in Kenya. During the training, a study conducted in Cote d'Ivoire on the evolution of novel products was presented, as well as the Kenya case study of civil society reaction to British American Tobacco announcing that it was in communication with the government to request tax holidays and eventual tax cuts for its novel oral nicotine pouch known as Lyft.

Documentation and exposure of tobacco industry interference

Four ACBF target country partners; CLUCOD (Cote d'Ivoire), AMALUTS (Mauritania), LISTAB (Senegal) and MWECS (Ethiopia) produced mapping reports of the tobacco industry in their countries. Country partners also submitted monthly reports of their TIM activities to ATCA. These reports revealed several important tobacco industry interference cases that necessitated actions. Some of them are as follows:

Mauritania

The mapping report revealed that tobacco products are being advertised, promoted, and sold in single sticks. ATCA assisted AMALUTS in developing a communication and advocacy campaign and supported the elaboration of a user-friendly advocacy booklet titled; « Comment les Compagnies du tabac sèment la Maladie, la Mort et la Misère en Mauritanie » The booklet was used to expose the issue to authorities and call for action.

Ethiopia

Thanks to the TIM Team which made the identification, Mathiwos Wondu Ethiopian Cancer Society (MWECS) was able to stop the recognition of Japan Tobacco International as a faithful and high tax payer. The information on Ministry of Revenue's (MoR) intention to recognize the tobacco multinational was revealed during a TIMR quarterly virtual meeting. MWECS initiated actions with the Ethiopia Food and Drug Administration (EFDA). This resulted in total withdrawal of the tobacco industry from the list for recognition of high taxpayers.

Kenya

The TIM team in Kenya identified a press article where British American Tobacco mentioned that it was in talks with the government, seeking a 3-year tax holiday for its nicotine pouch LYFT. ATCA mobilised tobacco control partners in the region to advocate against this move. A press conference was held to denounce the BAT initiative. Advocacy visits and letters were addressed to the relevant government authorities explaining how the move violates Kenya's tobacco control policies. In the course of investigating the origin of the product, it was discovered that it was illegally registered under the Pharmacy and Poisons Board, instead of the Tobacco Control Board. This led to the government banning the product and asking that it be correctly registered before it can be allowed for commercialisation. Should that happen, the product will undergo the very strict regulation accorded tobacco products in Kenya.



Tobacco control partners in Kenya denouncing BAT's request for a tax holiday

Technical Assistance to Country TIM teams

Development of Handbook for TIM Teams

To assist TIM teams in the effective implementation of their tasks, a customised handbook was produced for each country. It was composed of three parts:

- Generic information on tobacco industry interference tactics with case studies from around the world
- Country specific cases of tobacco industry interference and local efforts to deal with them
- A roadmap of the adoption and domestication of the WHO FCTC in the country.

ATCA developed the generic part of the document, as well as a template to capture country specific interference cases and the country FCTC roadmap. The template was filled by country partners and returned to ATCA which then developed the text for the document and undertook its graphic design. The handbook was printed and distributed to all TIM team members.

Assistance in Advocacy and Communication

ATCA was in regular communication with country partners and provided strategic guidance each time major tobacco industry interference initiatives were identified.

In Ethiopia for example, the Alliance assisted MWECS with the development of a communication plan to enlighten government agencies on the importance of not recognising the tobacco industry as a "high tax payer" and to prevent this from happening in the future. In Mauritania, an advocacy booklet was produced and used to support calls for full implementation of the provisions of the law banning tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. In Kenya, ATCA members were supported in the elaboration of a communication and advocacy plan to respond to BAT's request for a tax holiday for its Lyft product.

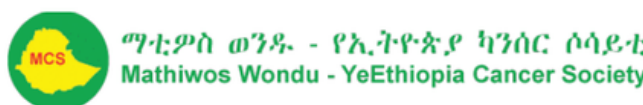
Coordination Meeting on TIM

ATCA and SMU held a coordination meeting of country CSOs involved in tobacco industry monitoring in the context of the ACBF-administered project. The meeting provided an opportunity for partners to discuss the challenges they face in undertaking tobacco industry monitoring. ATCA provided an overview of, and an update on the level of implementation of TIM activities. An evaluation of TIM coordination interventions by ATCA and SMU was undertaken.



Tobacco Industry Interference in Tobacco Control

ETHIOPIA



Cover page of handbook for Ethiopia TIM team

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

ATCA enhanced both its institutional and tobacco control communication. Institutionally, the Alliance launched *The ATCA Tribune*, its bi-annual Newsletter. It also started work on the development of a new and more user-friendly website planned to be an online resource centre for tobacco control in Africa.

The Alliance engaged several tobacco control communication initiatives, including supporting media professionals for the production of investigative reports, a video production contest for members of its continental tobacco control journalist network, and its social media activities.

Launch of an ATCA Newsletter

Two editions of *The ATCA Tribune*, a biannual Newsletter of the Alliance were published. They highlight major tobacco control successes in the continent and the role played by ATCA in the achievement of these successes. The newsletter also portrays ATCA's activities on the field and recognises members and partners with tobacco control accomplishments, either individually, or as an organisation. The Newsletter greatly helped to boost ATCA's image in the global tobacco control community.

Support for the production of investigative reports

Three of the nine journalists from ATCA's tobacco control media network that were supported for the production of investigative reports published their investigations in 2019, The other six productions were published in 2020. The journalists were selected based on the following criteria:

- They work for or are affiliated to an influential media organization
- They have a proven interest in public health and tobacco control
- Their country has need for investigative report to support adoption and/or implementation of a tobacco control policy

All the nine reports published during this campaign are as follows:

Video reports

- [Journée Mondiale Sans Tabac en Afrique: Sauver la jeunesse des tactiques de manipulation de l'industrie du tabac](#) by Claire Stephane Sacramento, Benin based correspondent of Sikka TV (regional TV station).
- [Exposing tobacco industry tactics to lure youths in Africa into tobacco intake \(documentary\)](#) by Nkoli Omhoudu of AIT in Nigeria.
- [Video report on e-cigarettes in South Africa](#) by Lorde Owakhe.
- [Exposed: Tobacco Industry Tactics in Uganda](#) by Cliff Abenaitwe from Uganda

Press articles

- [More Nigerian youth at risk as gov't fails to tackle illicit tobacco trade](#) by Benjamin Ezeamalu of The Guardian Nigeria.
- [SA's Teen Vapers Totally Lit In Regulatory Abyss](#) by Kerry McKay, a specialist writer from South Africa.
- [Journée Mondiale Sans Tabac : Les Jeunes Sénégalais Sont Ils Suffisamment Protégés ?](#) by Baba Gallé Diallo from Senegal.
- [Upping the ante against the silent killer](#) by Samuel Getachew from Ethiopia .
- [New tricks used by tobacco firms to evade tough advertising regulations](#) by Jeckonia Otieno from Kenya.

A handbook which summarizes in 250 to 300 words, each of the media productions, was produced.

Video Production Contest

This contest was launched for the ATCA network of media professionals targeting the production of thought-provoking investigative reports centred on the theme of World No Tobacco Day 2020; **“Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use”**. Eligible video productions were to focus on investigating and exposing key tactics of tobacco multinationals aimed at undermining the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), specifically targeting youth manipulation and initiation to smoking.

Two entries were received for the contest; one, “[Grands cigarettiers, petites cibles au Cameroun: Appel à l'action](#)” produced by a Cameroonian based journalist, and the other, “[Tobacco growers transiting from tobacco to alternative crops](#)” produced in Uganda.

A panel of 4 judges was constituted, comprising renowned tobacco control and communication experts in the continent. None of the entries scored high enough to win the competition which had a cash prize of 2000 USD. Given the difficult COVID circumstances under which the journalists worked on their entries, however, the two journalists were offered an encouragement token of 150 USD each.

Active and Responsive Network Communication

Several alerts and statements were disseminated within the global tobacco control community as follows:

- An alert and a Statement on the tobacco industry taking opportunity of the COVID-19 pandemic to clean its image through corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities
- An alert on the PMI-funded FSFW proposing to finance research on COVID-19, nicotine and smoking
- An alert on the tobacco industry manipulating the media to promote its new technology products
- An alert informing the tobacco control community of the tobacco industry's use of the All Africa Media group to manipulate the media in a bid favour acceptance of new technology tobacco products in Africa
- A Statement following the court victory against the Fair-trade Independent Tobacco Association (FITA) in South Africa during the COVID – 19 pandemic.
- A statement calling on governments to ensure protection of the youth from tobacco industry interference on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day.
- A statement following the launch of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) Botswana. The statement advocated for the quick adoption of the country's tobacco control bill

All ATCA statements are available on the Alliance's website.

Following the launch of the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2020, an Africa factsheet was produced by ATCA in collaboration with the Africa Centre for Tobacco Industry Monitoring and Policy Research (ATIM), and the STOP partnership, through the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC). ATCA's Executive Secretary disseminated an opinion piece, which was published on media outlets in several countries.

Information and Knowledge Sharing

After engaging in research to upgrade its information and knowledge sharing initiatives to enable simultaneous interpretation, ATCA organised a series of webinars as follows:

- Exposing tobacco industry interference during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Africa Tobacco Control Talks: Tobacco Control from the point of view of World No Tobacco Day 2020 awardees
- Africa Tobacco Control Talks: Making Tobacco Control Policies Work for Africa
- Africa Tobacco Control Talks: COVID-19 and Tobacco Control – Findings from a rapid response project
- Africa Tobacco Control Talks: Overcoming challenges of tobacco control implementation in Africa
- Tobacco Industry Interference in Africa Through New Technology Products

Thanks to ATCA's efficacy in the organisation of these webinars, institutions of international repute like the University of Edinburgh began approaching the Alliance for collaboration in the organisation of webinars.

The **Africa Tobacco Control Talks** grew to become a brand for ATCA webinars. A brand logo was designed and has since been used in promotion materials for all ATCA webinars related to Africa.

Details of [ATCA webinars](#), as well as their recordings are available on the ATCA website.



Brand logo for
**Africa Tobacco
Control Talks**

TOBACCO CONTROL & COVID-19

True to its nature, the tobacco industry was found to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic for its benefit. In Madagascar for example, the industry used a medical doctor to manipulate the population into consuming its products through a video misleadingly stating that smokers are less likely to get COVID-19. This prompted ATCA to run a tobacco control and COVID-19 campaign.

Tobacco Control & COVID-19 Online Resource Centre

A [microsite](#) was produced to provide tobacco control advocates with information and campaign materials related to tobacco industry interference during the COVID-19 pandemic. It contained resources ranging from Press Releases/Statements to Research/Reviews, Factsheets, Briefs/Information Notes, Webinars, Videos, Infographics and press articles on tobacco and COVID-19.

Sensitisation on tobacco industry manoeuvres

A campaign was launched with the ATCA membership to denounce and discredit, as well as alert and sensitize the population and authorities on tobacco industry manoeuvres during the COVID-19 pandemic. ATCA members from nine countries including: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Togo and Zambia participated in the campaign. The country partners were provided seed grants of up to 2000 US dollars for this campaign. Activities comprised mainly of press conferences and sensitisation activities. These activities were highlighted in the COVID-19 and tobacco control resource centre produced by ATCA.

Online campaign materials

30 infographics for social media, 15 in English and 15 in French were produced and uploaded to the tobacco control & COVID-19 online resource centre. Country partners exploited these infographics during the execution of their campaigns.

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

ATCA launched the **“Turn Down Tobacco”** campaign, the official World No Tobacco Day campaign proposed for Africa in collaboration with CTFK. The online campaign had a regional scope but it was implemented in Togo as well.

Regional Activities

The campaign provided tobacco control advocates with the following:

- a merch pack for the production of caps, T-shirts and stickers for face mask
- a poster pack of factsheets and other informative pieces
- a social media pack containing profile images and banners for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- customisable email signature templates
- Infographics of selected tobacco control heroes in some African countries
- Informative videos

The resources were uploaded to a specially designed [World No Tobacco Day 2020 microsite](#) and widely used by tobacco control advocates across the continent.

Activities in Togo

The Alliance organized a symbolic event involving the following:

- The production of a [sensitisation music video clip](#) produced by three Togolese artists of national and international repute, and the 2017 winner of the Miss Togo contest. The [audio version](#) was also made available.
- The holding of an [online musical concert](#) to mobilise the youth for awareness raising.



STRENGTHENED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Recruitments

ATCA's staff capacity was boosted with the recruitment of a Project Officer and an Associate Communication Officer. After a selection process of suitable candidates and two rounds of interviews, the two staff members were recruited as follows:

- Project Officer: Mrs. DJOKOTO AYITE Farida Bénédicte Akossiwa. She assumed duty on the 1st June, 2020.
- Associate Communication Officer: Mr. DJAHANOU-AYIKOUMA Dovénam Déodatus. He assumed duty on the 25th May, 2020.

ATCA's staff was also enhanced with two interns, one assisting the Finance Officer, and the other, assisting the Administrative Assistant. The two interns assumed duty on the 2nd March, 2020 and their internship lasted 3 months.

Trainings

Tobacco Industry Monitoring, Research and Accountability (TIMRA)

ATCA's Executive Secretary participated in this seven-week course organized by the University of Bath. It covered a wide range of subjects including:

- Hot topics in tobacco control
- Effective research techniques and how to apply these to the tobacco industry
- Tobacco industry monitoring models
- Writing for diverse audiences and effectively disseminating your findings
- Keeping yourself safe and managing risk.

The course provided insights to conducting effective tobacco industry monitoring, and specific investigations of the tobacco industry. It provided an understanding of the broader context of tobacco industry behaviour.

Resource Mobilisation

The entire ATCA team received a virtual training on resource mobilisation following the completion of its Resource Mobilisation Strategy. The training enlightened the staff on major aspects like project proposal writing and crowd funding. It also dwelled on several funding areas ATCA can engage in and proposed strategic approaches on how to go about these.

GOVERNANCE

Development of a Governance Manual

To foster ATCA's governance, an agency was recruited for the development of an ATCA Governance manual. The manual was presented to the Board which requested further review. The manual will be finalised in 2021.

Two Board Meetings

In the first of two Board meetings held virtually in 2020, the Board of Directors reviewed the Alliance's Resource Mobilisation Strategy, the report on membership financial contribution, the Terms of Reference for the development of a governance manual, and a new ATCA website that was being developed. During the second meeting, the Board requested a deeper review of the Governance manual. Project documents (workplans and budgets) for 2021 were also reviewed and approved.

Two New Alliance Members

Requests from two Civil Society Organisations to join ATCA were reviewed and approved by the Board. One of the organisations is from Nigeria (West Africa - Anglophone) and the other is from Guinea Bissau (Lusophone Africa).

Development of a Resource Mobilisation Strategy

A Resource Mobilisation Strategy highlighting the tobacco control situation in Africa and how it relates to the need for resource mobilisation for ATCA, was developed. Accompanied by a list of potential ATCA funders, the document portrays potential funding areas for ATCA and proposes strategic approaches to win projects from potential donors.

A Survey to Guide a Membership Contributions Mechanism

A consultant undertook a survey on possible financial contributions of ATCA's members to the growth of the organisation. Quantitative and qualitative analyses questionnaires were sent to selected ATCA members for the study. A report produced from this survey was reviewed and approved by the Board. The report will help guide ATCA's membership contribution mechanism.

PARTNERSHIPS

ATCA's principal funder has been the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through grants administered by Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and the African Capacity Building Foundation. With multiple success stories recorded in its mission to guarantee a healthy and tobacco-free Africa, and effective communication on these successes, the Alliance began gaining the interest of new partners and potential donors. In 2020, ATCA secured the following partnerships:

Campaign With The Union

A grant agreement was finalised with The Union on behalf of the STOP initiative to run a campaign to document activities of China National Tobacco Cooperation in Africa. The grant, amounting to 16 800 USD aimed at conducting desk and field research for the production of an investigative story on CNTC's activities in Zambia and the DRC.

Collaboration With the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC)

Following the publication of the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2020, ATCA, in collaboration with the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC) and SMU, produced an Africa factsheet which was widely disseminated within the African and global tobacco control communities. The factsheet was highly appreciated by tobacco control advocates who saw it as a great advocacy tool. ATCA also successfully negotiated a grant for the coordination and production of an Africa Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2021.

Collaboration With Vital Strategies

ATCA collaborated with Vital Strategies to amplify tobacco-related reports and issues from the Stopping Tobacco Organisations and Products (STOP), the global tobacco industry watchdog, across Africa. ATCA also served as a trusted spokesperson on STOP publications for media in Africa.

In September, ATCA collaborated with the University of Edinburgh to organise a webinar that presented findings from a multi-country study on tobacco use during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The webinar discussed steps to better integrate responses to infectious disease epidemics and tobacco control interventions across the continent.

SUPPORTING TOBACCO CONTROL GLOBALLY

The force of a Pan African tobacco control network of CSOs like ATCA, with membership in 39 countries, cannot be underestimated. The Alliance exploited this influence to support tobacco control initiatives in Africa and beyond.

Some of these were as follows:

Support letter to the government of South Africa

Following its resolve to maintain the tobacco sale ban during the COVID-19 lockdown despite immense pressure and threats of lawsuits from the tobacco industry, to overturn it, ATCA sent a letter of congratulations and support to the government of South Africa. The letter, signed by the President of ATCA's Board of Directors, was addressed to Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs – CoGTA Minister, and copied His Excellency Dr Zweli Mkhize, Minister of Health of South Africa.

Support to Ukraine

Requested by partners in Europe, ATCA addressed a letter to the government of Ukraine to support efforts to adopt the country's tobacco control bill. The letter was signed on behalf of the entire membership of the Alliance, by the Executive Secretary. It was sent to the Chairperson of the Health Committee in the parliament of Ukraine and to the Minister of Health.



CONCLUSION

At a time when tobacco control is facing numerous challenges, notably diminishing resources and the tobacco industry with its ever-innovating tactics and strategies, there is need for constant capacity building of tobacco control advocates, and resource mobilisation to ensure sustainability of tobacco control efforts. In 2020, ATCA made significant progress in building the capacity of young advocates in at least 10 countries. These countries now boast of teams whose members are well equipped with the skills and motivation to monitor and expose tobacco industry interference. But there is absolute need for resources to sustain these efforts.

The Alliance will continue to seek opportunities to identify potential youth advocates, arouse interest and motivation in them, and build their capacity in tobacco control. Efforts will also be consecrated to resource mobilisation for tobacco control sustainability in Africa, and diversification of tobacco control interventions to other sectors like sustainable development, gender, environment etc. Ultimately, ATCA will explore every avenue possible that helps in the attainment of its mission of securing a healthy and tobacco-free Africa.