

10.3

Recommendations for Civil Society

Sections of civil society who are committed to the goals of tobacco control represent the bulwark of the anti-tobacco coalition in any country. In India too, the civil society has played a major role so far in advancing the agenda of tobacco control and would be a key contributor to the success of the NPTC in the future. It is recommended that civil society should

1. Increase public awareness about the disease and environmental consequences of tobacco use, using all possible channels of communication for mass education as well as for influencing target groups (such as children and women's groups).
2. Promote tobacco cessation through educational efforts to motivate tobacco smokers to quit and create community-based cessation facilities to assist them in doing so.
3. Pursue informed advocacy with policy-makers for advancing tobacco control policies and strengthening tobacco control programmes.
4. Perform a 'watchdog' function to monitor the implementation of tobacco control laws (such as bans on advertising, smoking in public places and sale to minors). Violations should be reported to the concerned authorities and followed up to check for the actions taken.
5. Monitor the marketing and promotion tactics of the tobacco industry and counter them in every legally possible manner.
6. Demand withdrawal of support for the tobacco industry by the government, public financing institutions, insurance companies, public sector corporations and, whenever possible, responsible sections of the private banking and corporate sectors.
7. Not accept financial or other forms of support offered by the tobacco industry to any civil society organization and oppose such support being received by universities, research institutes and other academic institutions.
8. Work in a unified, organized and coordinated manner to advance tobacco control in the country.
9. Interact and liaise with international counterparts to understand the global strategies of tobacco companies to expose the tactics employed by them in the country and advance tobacco control globally.