Tobacco and poverty: A vicious circle

WHO has selected "Tobacco and poverty" as the theme for World No Tobacco Day 2004 to highlight how tobacco:

impoverishes individuals, households and families

diverts resources away from basic necessities

causes disease and premature death

has very high opportunity cost, particularly for the poor

can be curbed by ratifying and implementing the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Tobacco is the only legal consumer product that kills when used exactly as intended by the manufacturer. World No Tobacco Day will help to save more lives and to limit the damage caused by tobacco use.

The key messages of this year's World No Tobacco Day are:

Tobacco is bad economics all around.

Tobacco is inextricably linked with poverty.

Tobacco users are at much higher risk of falling ill and dying prematurely.

Tobacco consumption deprives families of much needed income and imposes additional health care costs.

Enormous economic losses result from tobacco consumption and cultivation.

Tobacco is a major impediment to development.

All countries have a moral obligation to ratify and fully implement the WHO FCTC to save lives.

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