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# ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS TO TOBACCO

APPROACHES & EXPERIENCES

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# INTRODUCTION

# 1

*Sonja von Eichborn, Laure Norger*

In March 2012, the 15th World Conference on Tobacco or Health (WCToH) convened in Singapore. More than 2,000 participants from 124 countries, delegates from governments, universities and other scientific institutions, civil society organisations, health facilities and drug prevention programmes discussed issues concerning the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

One major theme of the WCToH this year was human rights. Tobacco cultivation and consumption are associated with human rights violations: high child labour incidence on tobacco plantations, loss of food security for tobacco growers or threat to non-smokers' health are just some examples.<sup>1</sup> However, despite encouraging discussion on these topics, the WCToH failed to mention violation of human rights in tobacco production in its final declaration and did not include recommendations for FCTC articles 17 (economically viable alternative activities) and 18 (protection of environment and health of persons).<sup>2</sup> This reflects tobacco control activists' general lack of awareness regarding the conditions under which tobacco is grown and the implications this has for people and environment.

In order to tackle the ongoing violation of human rights in tobacco production, FCTC articles 17 and 18 can play a key role. In 2008, the Third Conference of the Parties (COP3) of the FCTC established a working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing.<sup>3</sup> Its task is to develop policy options and recommendations for the implementation of the said articles. The key facilitators are Brazil, Greece, India, Mexico and Turkey in partnership with 14 other countries. In 2010, at the COP4 in Uruguay, the working group presented an outline of policy options, which includes guidelines for involving tobacco growers in the development of policies for alternatives and for

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1 Violation of article 32 (protection from economic exploitation and hazardous work) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), violations of articles 25 (right to food) and 12 (right to health) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

2 See: [http://wctoh2012.org/15th\\_WCTOH\\_Declaration.pdf](http://wctoh2012.org/15th_WCTOH_Declaration.pdf)

3 Since 2006 a study group had been conducting research and consultations on these articles. It was replaced in 2008 by the working group. See: FCTC (2009): Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Geneva, decision FCTC COP3 (16). [http://apps.who.int/gb/fctc/PDF/cop3/FCTC\\_COP3\\_REC1-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/fctc/PDF/cop3/FCTC_COP3_REC1-en.pdf)

preventing the tobacco industry from interfering in this process. The working group has not yet agreed on a detailed definition of the term diversification. The COP4 outline suggests nine potential strategies for alternative crops and livelihoods. These include: removing barriers to diversification, and setting up information and support centres for alternative crops/livelihoods amongst others.

The study **Alternative Livelihoods to Tobacco** is written from a privileged (white) perspective shaped by living in an industrialised country. It hopes to contribute to the implementation of the FCTC and aims to

- 1) promote alternatives to tobacco cultivation by providing information on existing initiatives,
- 2) encourage discussions about future implications of the suggested alternatives and
- 3) lobby political decision makers to support successful implementation of the FCTC.

Starting with an insight into various initiatives and approaches to alternative livelihoods, the study then features three detailed examples: Brazil's *National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas*, the Kenyan *Bamboo as Alternative Crop and Livelihood to Smallholder Tobacco Farming Research Project* and the *efforts of UBINIG/ Nayakrishi Andolon in tobacco growing areas* in Bangladesh. With reference to these examples and research undertaken, the study then engages in a discussion of the issues related to the process of shifting out of tobacco cultivation: structural requirements, food security, environmental impact as well as social and economic consequences. In its final part, the study draws up some recommendations for the future development of alternative livelihoods to tobacco.

#### Article 17

Provision of support for economically viable alternative activities

Parties shall, in cooperation with each other and with competent international and national intergovernmental organizations, promote, as appropriate, economically viable alternatives for tobacco workers, growers and, as the case may be, individual sellers.

### PART V: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

#### Article 18

Protection of the environment and the health of persons

Parties shall, as their obligations under this Convention, the Parties agree to have due regard to the protection of the environment and the health of persons in relation to the regulation of tobacco cultivation and manufacture within their respective territories.

# EFFORTS TO DATE: AN INSIGHT

# 2

*Sonja von Eichborn, Laure Norger*

*Over the past decade, projects and programmes for alternative livelihoods to tobacco growing have been initiated around the world. The geography of these projects shows, that most of them are located in areas of extensive tobacco cultivation within countries like Brazil, Malawi or Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup> Other countries where the issue is addressed include India, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Taiwan, and Tanzania. This chapter provides an insight into a variety of approaches. It features government-supported actions, civil-society led initiatives and individual efforts.*

## 2.1 GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED ACTIONS

After ratifying the FCTC in 2005, Brazil subsequently launched its Programa Nacional de Diversificação em Áreas Cultivadas com Tabaco<sup>2</sup>, which represents one of the most comprehensive state-led initiatives specifically developed to address FCTC articles 17 and 18. The programme adopts an integrated approach to diversification, not solely aiming at replacing tobacco with a single other cash crop but also exploring possibilities for small-scale farmers to improve self-reliance and food security through the provision of technical training and assistance in poultry farming, aquaculture, beekeeping and dairy farming.<sup>3</sup>

Rather focusing on merely replacing tobacco by alternative crops, the Ministry of Health in Mexico has worked in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture (SAGARPA) to pilot research into viable substitution strategies for tobacco farmers in the states of Chiapas, Nayarit and Veracruz. Alternative crops such as tomato, green chilli pepper, papaya,

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1 Brazil is the second largest tobacco producer worldwide. Malawi is highly dependent on tobacco exports, which account for 70% of the national export revenue. In Bangladesh 0.31% of agricultural land is occupied by tobacco.

2 National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas. See: Ministry of Agrarian Development (2010): Actions of the Ministry of Agrarian Development for the Diversification of Production and income in Areas of Tobacco Cultivation in Brazil. Brasilia.

3 See chapter 3.1 for Brazil's approach.

corn, sorghum and rice have been identified for diversification.<sup>4</sup> In 2009 SAGARPA helped finance the conversion of 1,900 ha of tobacco-cultivated land,<sup>5</sup> and since 2010, a special fund in the SAGARPA household budget has been dedicated to the conversion of tobacco-cultivated areas.<sup>6</sup>

On the other side of the globe, the Malaysian government launched the Tobacco Industry Restructuring Plan (RPSIT) in 2005<sup>7</sup>, in order to meet its commitment to the FCTC and to anticipate the negative impact expected from the AFTA agreement.<sup>8</sup> In an effort to reduce tobacco cultivation, the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities has undertaken research into potential alternatives such as kenaf, jatropha, sago and dragon fruit.<sup>9</sup> Of all these crops it is kenaf that has received the strongest governmental support,<sup>10</sup> leading to the re-structuration of the National Tobacco Board in 2009 into the National Kenaf and Tobacco Board (NKTB).<sup>11</sup> Cash incentives of 2,300 Ringgit (€ 573) per hectare have been provided for tobacco growers wishing to switch to kenaf.<sup>12</sup> 50 million Ringgit (nearly € 12.5 million) have been invested in crop research and the development of a coherent market structure for farming, processing and commercialising kenaf in Malaysia,<sup>13</sup> aiming to foster an entirely new industry around kenaf cultivation in the country.<sup>14</sup>

Another Southeast Asian country that has adopted a set of policies conducive to the conversion of tobacco-farmed land is Taiwan.<sup>15</sup> Its 2009 amendment of the Tobacco Hazards Prevention and Control Act<sup>16</sup> explicitly states that funds raised through the Tobacco Health and Welfare Surcharge are to be used to provide assistance for tobacco growers affected by tobacco control measures.<sup>17</sup> The Taiwanese government has also

4 SAGARPA (2008): Reconversión del cultivo de tabaco en México. Powerpoint Presentation.

5 Fundación InterAmericana der Corazón México (2010): Situación del campo mexicano en torno al cultivo del tabaco, programas alternativos.

6 In 2010 an amount of 400 million Pesos (ca. € 23,100,000) was allocated, for 2012 it will be 325 million Pesos. (ca. € 19,000,000). See: The Mexican budget of expenditures (2010): Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2011. México, p.63. and SAGARPA (2011): PEF 2012. Aprobado. Powerpoint presentation.

7 The official media release of the launch: <http://www3.pmo.gov.my/WebNotesApp/tpmmain.nsf/f0d8126d117745db4825674f00069cba/17490a19d9bbef904825705700196e02?OpenDocument>

8 The ASEAN Free Trade Area Agreement (including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) came into force 1st January 2010 and implied a radical market opening. The Malaysian government expected a lower demand for raw tobacco and, therefore, a loss of income for tobacco farmers.

9 Tan Yen Lian, Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) (2011): The Tobacco Trap: Cycle of Poverty in ASEAN countries. Documentary.

10 Kenaf is a fibrous plant; uses vary from paper and bio-plastics to animal feeding. See: <http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/Crops/Kenaf.aspx>

11 See the official website of the NKTB: <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?4>

12 Bernama: "Kenaf as alternative to tobacco: Gov't". In: Business Times, 28 Mar 2012. <http://www.btimes.com.my/articles/20120328131812/Article/>

13 JEC composites (2011): Kenaf, a fibre for the future: the Harusmas experience. <http://www.jeccomposites.com/news/features/biocomposites/kenaf-fibre-future-harusmas-experience>

14 Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui (2009): Increased Production Efficiency in Smallholder Kenaf Production Systems for Specific Industrial Applications.

15 Taiwan cannot ratify the FCTC, as it is not a member of the WHO or UN. The Taiwanese government nevertheless implements tobacco control policies and reports to the WHO regarding the FCTC.

16 [http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/news/news\\_detail.aspx?id=4279](http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/news/news_detail.aspx?id=4279)

17 Chang-fa Lo et. al. (2010): Reducing Tobacco Growing in Taiwan and Government Intervention. In: Asian Journal of WTO & International Health Law and Policy, Vol. 5, No. 1, p.231.

provided financial incentives for tobacco growers to switch to alternative crops (amongst other banana, red beans, papaya, Chinese herbs) and has announced the use of agricultural contracts for tobacco farmers wishing to grow alternative crops thus providing a guaranteed market for their products.<sup>18</sup> Through technical workshops the government has provided training for the cultivation of the new crops as well as techniques for marketing organic products. Tobacco growers have also been encouraged to attend secondary skills training courses relevant for work in the trade and services sector, thus opening up possibilities for non-agricultural employment.<sup>19</sup>

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SHIFTING

*Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Argentina have made official commitments to allocate funds to help farmers wishing to switch away from tobacco growing.*

**Bangladesh** The 2005 Tobacco Control Act explicitly states that government will establish comprehensive guidelines for discouraging the production of tobacco products and that it would provide loans on easy terms for tobacco cultivators wishing to grow alternate crops.<sup>1</sup>

**Philippines** Changes to excise tax laws in 2004 have designated funds for farmers wishing to shift away from tobacco cultivation.<sup>2</sup> 15% of revenues collected through the tax are to be used to provide greater income security for tobacco farmers by funding cooperative and alternative farming projects.<sup>3</sup>

**Argentina** Although it primarily aims to optimise the tobacco-growing sector, Argentina's Reconversion Programme for Tobacco Growing Areas (Programa de Reconversión de las Áreas Tabacaleras - PRAT)<sup>4</sup> also allocates funds to support diversification in the domains of beekeeping, fruit farming and yerba mate.<sup>5</sup>

1 National Tobacco Control Cell (2010): Tobacco Control Law and Rules and Related Government Orders. Dhaka, pp. 15-17.

2 Collas-Monsod, Solita (2011): "Higher tobacco taxes needed". In: Business World online. Posted on June 22, 2011. See also: <http://tobaccocontrol.ph/archives/346>

3 Republic Act No. 9334, Section 8. [http://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2004/ra\\_9334\\_2004.html](http://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2004/ra_9334_2004.html)

4 See website of PRAT: [http://www.instrumentos.mecon.gov.ar/mensajes-ver-mensajes.php?id\\_prog=104&order=fecha%20desc&cantidad=3](http://www.instrumentos.mecon.gov.ar/mensajes-ver-mensajes.php?id_prog=104&order=fecha%20desc&cantidad=3)

5 Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca (2011): Programa de Reconversión de áreas tabacaleras.

"Research and training on alternate crops and livelihoods" is one of the five core components of India's National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) launched in 2007.<sup>20</sup> The programme primarily aims to reduce production of non-FCV tobacco (i.e. beedi/hukka/chewing tobacco).<sup>21</sup>

18 Chang-fa Lo et. al. (2010): Reducing Tobacco Growing in Taiwan and Government Intervention, p.229. and Department of Health, Taiwan (2007): The FCTC in Taiwan.

19 Chang-fa Lo et. al. (2010): Reducing Tobacco Growing in Taiwan and Government Intervention, p.231.

20 Kaur, Jagdish (2012): "The National Tobacco Control Programme: Critical Review and Next Steps". In: Voluntary Health Association of India: Health for the Millions, Vol.38, No. 1& 2, 2012, pp.8-16..

21 FCV = Flue Cured Virginia. FCV tobacco is supported and regulated by the Tobacco Board under the Ministry of Commerce. FCV tobacco is exported, thus contributing to the government foreign exchange budget. Non-FCV tobacco

Under the auspices of the NTCP the Indian Health Ministry commissioned the Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI) to conduct a three-year pilot study into alternative cropping systems to beedi and chewing tobacco,<sup>22</sup> leading to the identification of six potential alternative crops<sup>23</sup>. Field demonstrations for generating awareness amongst farmers about these crops are yet to start.<sup>24</sup> In the light of the research conducted, the Indian government recently announced plans to start phasing-out the production of non-smoking tobacco (and thus non-FCV) starting in December 2012.<sup>25</sup> This is hoped to reduce the current production of tobacco from 750,000 t to 250,000 t by 2020. In order to achieve this reduction, the plan foresees the provision of financial assistance for tobacco farmers and tenants for a two to three year transition period.<sup>26</sup>

## 2.2 CIVIL SOCIETY LED INITIATIVES

### International aid

In countries, where efforts for diversification are contrary to the interests of the government, international funding is essential to bring forward alternative livelihoods to tobacco. Therefore, foreign organisations have been particularly active in Malawi, where most attempts at diversification on the part of the government have been blocked by the local tobacco industry lobby<sup>27</sup> and by the involvement of parliament members in the tobacco sector.

**Putting Farmers First**, an initiative run by the Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR), aims to help small-scale farmer families attain greater food security, by providing training on aspects such as crop diversification, beekeeping and rabbit farming.<sup>28</sup> Through training in intercropping and conservation agriculture methods, CPAR has helped tobacco farmers like Ester Kadzkalowa in Khangale village obtain better yields from her bean crop, providing her family with an extra source of cash income and food. Two

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varieties are not as lucrative as FCV tobacco for the farmers. See: Kaur, Jagdish (2012): "The National Tobacco Control Programme: Critical Review and Next Steps", p. 12.

22 Press Information Bureau Government of India (2009): Health Ministry engages CTRI for Alternative crops for Bidi and Chewing Tobacco. <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=46867>

23 The crops are potato, maize, sunflower, moringa, mustard and groundnut. See: Central Tobacco Research Institute (2011): Vision 2030. Rajahmundry, p.13.

24 Das, Sandip (2012): "As tobacco loses its sheen, farmers go back to basics". In: The Financial Express, 19 Feb 2012. <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/as-tobacco-loses-its-sheen-farmers-go-back-to-basics/913923/0> There does not however appear to be have been a concrete follow up policy directly derived from these research results. Farmers in Cooch Behar District have complained they haven't been involved or informed about this research. See: Basu, Soma (2011): Smoke Screen. <http://deshlai.wordpress.com/tag/central-tobacco-research-institute/>

25 Central Tobacco Research Institute (2011): Vision 2030. Rajahmundry, p.vii. see also: Centre for Tobacco Control and Health Promotion (2011): India aims to reduce tobacco production by 33%. [http://ctchp.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=337:india-aims-to-reduce-tobacco-production-by-33&catid=132&Itemid=154](http://ctchp.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=337:india-aims-to-reduce-tobacco-production-by-33&catid=132&Itemid=154)

26 Ibid. and Dey, Anindita (2011): "Agri ministry plans elimination of non-cigarette tobacco crop". In: Business Standard, 17 Nov 2011. <http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/agri-ministry-plans-eliminationnon-cigarette-tobacco-crop/455717/>

27 Otanez, Marty; Mamudu, Hadii; Glantz, Stanton (2007): "Global leaf companies control the tobacco market in Malawi". In: Tobacco Control 2007;16, S. 261-269.

28 <http://www.puttingfarmersfirst.ca>

central aspects promoted by the Canadian organisation are conservation agriculture and the pay-it-forward principle. Conservation agriculture helps restore soil fertility through the use of self-produced organic manure instead of chemical fertilisers. The pay-it-forward principle means that farmers who have received help and training in establishing a livestock base (such as pigs and rabbits), will themselves provide the same service to selected smallholder families in return, once their own enterprise has become lucrative.

Also in Malawi, **Ana A Topa**, a project run by the anti-smoking NGO GASP in Guernsey, incorporates a similar idea to the pay-it-forward principle.<sup>29</sup> The organisation has provided financial means for farmers to buy seeds and fertiliser to grow maize instead of tobacco. The project is designed so that excess profits made by individual farmers in one harvest season, can be passed on to another smallholder family, allowing them in turn to purchase seed and fertiliser for maize. Ana a Topa has also helped improve working conditions for smallholder farmers by funding the construction of boreholes in two villages, thus preventing farmers from having to walk long distances to fetch water. The project is implemented with the help of TOTAWUM, the Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union of Malawi.

Receiving funding from the Danish government, **ADRA Malawi**, a religious motivated non-profit organisation, has recently helped facilitate the formation of 18 interested farmers' groups who are currently working on identifying marketable alternatives to tobacco such as groundnuts and soybeans.<sup>30</sup>

Not only in Malawi but also in Bangladesh and Kenya, the **International Development Research Center** (IDRC) has played a key role by administering funds<sup>31</sup> for research into the development of alternative livelihoods to tobacco.<sup>32</sup> In Bangladesh, the focus is on diversifying food and market crop production under ecological and cooperative principles.<sup>33</sup> In Kenya, a university-based project is researching ways of replacing the tobacco monocrop with giant bamboo as a more environmentally friendly alternative.<sup>34</sup> In Malawi, the main aim is to support farmers in scaling off the total reliance on tobacco, not dropping it entirely.<sup>35</sup>

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29 Ana a topa means 'the children are tired'. It is an initiative started in 2008 run by the Guernsey Adolescent Smokefree Project. . <http://www.gasp.org.gg/ana-a-topa.htm>

30 The Adventist Development and Relief Agency Malawi is a non-governmental organisation present in 125 countries. <http://adramalawi.blogspot.de/2012/01/post-titlegroundnuts-soybeans-can.html>

31 Funds were received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to be allocated to the Research for International Tobacco Control (RITC) programme, run by the IDRC. Despite the success of the RITC programme, the role of the IDRC in tobacco control issues is rather unclear due to an incident of tobacco industry interference that emerged in 2010. See: <http://www.canada.com/business/gates+foundation+cuts+support+canadian+agency+over+tobacco+connection/2875590/story.html> See chapter 4.4 on Tobacco Industry's Interest.

32 IDRC: Non-Communicable Disease Prevention. [http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Global\\_Health\\_Policy/Non-Communicable\\_Disease\\_Prevention/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Programs/Global_Health_Policy/Non-Communicable_Disease_Prevention/Pages/default.aspx) and RITC: Research. <http://archive.idrc.ca/ritc/en/activities/research.html>

33 See chapter 3.3 on UBINIG's efforts, as well as [http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-109250-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-109250-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

34 See chapter 3.2 on Tobacco to Bamboo, as well as [http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-83049-201\\_105791-1-IDRC\\_ADM\\_INFO.html](http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-83049-201_105791-1-IDRC_ADM_INFO.html)

35 Funding went to NASFAM, see below. [http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-66791-201\\_103772-1-IDRC\\_ADM\\_INFO.html](http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-66791-201_103772-1-IDRC_ADM_INFO.html)

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*Some tobacco companies have invested in Corporate Social Responsibility schemes that aim to help improve living standards for people in tobacco growing regions. It is however not always clear to what extent these programmes explicitly target tobacco farmers or not. Generally, these efforts are used to whitewash the companies in order to divert public attention away from the real costs of tobacco farming (child labour, environmental destruction, poverty, serious health risks) in the respective countries.*

**Philip Morris International (PMI/Altria)** PMI has been funding the Enhancing Rural Livelihoods programme<sup>1</sup> run by the non-profit organisation Total Land Care (TLC) in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. Actions in Malawi have included reforestation projects, the construction of schools and the improvement of access to clean water. Crop diversification strategies are also supported, through training on the application of “environmentally friendly methods”.<sup>2</sup>

**Souza Cruz** The subsidiary of British American Tobacco (BAT) in Brazil has invested in rural extension services to advise farmers in the States of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul to plant corn and beans after the tobacco harvest season.<sup>3</sup> These measures are expected to help improve soil health as well as provide an extra source of income for small farmers.

**British American Tobacco Kenya** has donated around £ 250,000 (€ 300,000) over the years to fund the Kerio Trade Winds Company, an initiative that aims to improve living standards in the Rift Valley Province, through market-oriented agricultural activities. According to BAT, their funding has helped 784 farmers grow 16 hectares of French beans and sell some of the harvest to canners. They are currently planning to help Kerio Trade Winds expand its activities into planting fruit trees, tea production, dairy farming, tourism and mining.<sup>4</sup>

**Imperial Tobacco (ITG)** has provided £ 313,000 (€ 380,000) worth of funding to support a micro-credit scheme for smallholder tobacco farmers in Malawi. This has helped finance the Opportunity International Bank’s activities, which include training in agricultural methods as well as access to credit. In Morocco, ITG has funded a project for farmers who grew dark tobacco to switch to olive groves.<sup>5</sup>

**Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco-growing Foundation (ECLT)** is an organisation setup by tobacco companies.<sup>6</sup> It is currently running a project, which aims to improve the livelihoods of tobacco-growing communities in Tanzania by training young people (12 to 17 years old) on crop diversification methods.<sup>7</sup>

1 TotalLandCare: Enhancing Rural Livelihoods (ENRL). <http://www.totallandcare.org/Projects/EnhancingRuralLivelihoodsENRL/tabid/73/Default.aspx> TLC has strong relations to the Washington State University, where additional funds are raised through their ripple effect programme. The description does not refer to tobacco growing as a main source of income in Malawi. It does not even mention the fact that tobacco is an important agricultural product in Malawi and the country’s economic dependency on the crop. See: <http://rippleeffect.wsu.edu/learn.asp>

2 PMI: Enhancing Rural Livelihoods, Malawi. [http://www.pmi.com/eng/about\\_us/charitable\\_giving/environmental\\_sustainability/pages/malawi\\_total\\_landcare\\_2.aspx](http://www.pmi.com/eng/about_us/charitable_giving/environmental_sustainability/pages/malawi_total_landcare_2.aspx)

3 Souza Cruz: Sustainable agriculture and environment. [http://www.souzacruz.com.br/group/sites/SOU\\_7YKDBY.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO7V9P7F?opendocument&SKN=1](http://www.souzacruz.com.br/group/sites/SOU_7YKDBY.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO7V9P7F?opendocument&SKN=1)

4 Tobacco Free Initiative (WHO) (2003): Tobacco industry and corporate responsibility ... an inherent contradiction. Geneva, p. 3. See also BAT website: Sustainable agriculture and environment. [http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk\\_\\_3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO6RWJXU?opendocument&SKN=1&TMP=1](http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk__3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO6RWJXU?opendocument&SKN=1&TMP=1) On a UNDP funded project of Kerio Trade Winds see: DMI Associates (2006): Evaluation of International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO). Export led Poverty Reduction. Copenhagen, pp. 19-22.

5 ITG: Microfinance in Malawi. <http://www.imperial-tobacco.com/files/environment/cr2008/index.asp?pageid=67> and ITG: Support for farmers in Morocco. <http://www.imperial-tobacco.com/files/environment/cr2008/index.asp?pageid=65>

6 These include, BAT, PMI, Imperial Tobacco and Japan Tobacco International. ECLT Foundation: ECLT structure. <http://www.eclt.org/about-us/structure>

7 ECLT: Tanzania. <http://www.eclt.org/projects-and-progress/tanzania-2>

## Local movements and organisations

The **National Smallholder Farmers Association (NASFAM)**, an independent smallholder-owned organisation in Malawi, has been working since 1995 to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.<sup>36</sup> The main focus of its work is the promotion of diversification practices to move away from dependency on tobacco and maize crops.<sup>37</sup> Thus farmers wishing to experiment with alternative crops can receive training in crop production and business skills through NASFAM. Through capacity building work, the organisation encourages its members to form into associations. This is how the **Mchinji Area Smallholder Farmers Association (MASFA)** was created in 2001. MASFA is setting out to improve market conditions for groundnut farmers in Mchinji District. It is made up of around 1,000 farmers, who themselves are organised into village level societies of up to 20 members. MASFA provides a guaranteed market for its members and provides warehouses where their goods can be stored until transport. By selling the nuts onto the fair-trade market, the association has been able to pay its farmers prices per kilo up to eight times higher than usual.<sup>38</sup> Participating families have reported a reduction in malnutrition diseases amongst their children as well as now being able to afford to send them to school. Farmers like Stella Fenodi have been able to re-invest earnings made from the sale of groundnuts into livestock such as goats, chicken or rabbits.<sup>39</sup>

In Brazil, the **Centro de Apoio ao Pequeno Agricultor (CAPA)**<sup>40</sup> supports a model based on agro-ecological production. They provide technical training on multi-crop cultivation and organic fertilisation, enabling smallholder families to practise an alternative type of agriculture in comparison to chemical intensive monocropping.<sup>41</sup> The organisation is active in southern Brazil, where the biggest tobacco producing states<sup>42</sup> are found. In Rio



Fair trade groundnuts from MASFA

36 NASFAM (n.d.): NASFAM Brochure.

37 Alternative crops are e.g. groundnuts, chilli, rice, soybeans, sunflower. See NASFAM website: [http://www.nasfam.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=31](http://www.nasfam.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=31)

38 Fairtrade Foundation: Mchinji Area Smallholder Farmers Association (MASFA), Malawi. [http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers/nuts/masfa\\_malawi.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers/nuts/masfa_malawi.aspx): "In the 2006-07 season, MASFA paid its members 70 Malawi Kwacha per kilo (33 pence) for their groundnuts. Before the association was formed, farmers were paid as little as 8 MWK (4 pence) per kilo and often had to deal with unscrupulous buyers who fixed their scales to cheat farmers out of a fair price."

39 ICRISAT: Malawi farmers benefit from ICRISAT-NASFAM-McKnight Foundation project. <http://www.icrisat.org/newsroom/latest-news/happenings/happenings1469.htm#3> and Nunez, Marta Ortiz (2009): Impact of local RUTF manufacture on farmers' incomes in Malawi. <http://fex.enonline.net/38/impact.aspx>

40 Center of Assistance for Small Farmers.

41 Vargas, Marco A; Campos, Renato R. (2005): Crop Substitution and Diversification Strategies: Empirical Evidence from Selected Brazilian Municipalities. Economies of Tobacco Control Paper No. 28. HNP Discussion Paper (Worldbank). Washington DC, pp.15-18.

42 CAPA has offices in the main tobacco-producing states Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná.

Grande do Sul, where about 90% of farmers depend on tobacco as a source of income;<sup>43</sup> the local CAPA centre has supported around 500 tobacco-farming families in diversifying production activities on their land.<sup>44</sup> In the South Region, CAPA has assisted in setting up the cooperative ECOVALE in 2000. ECOVALE enables local farmers to make a greater profit through the direct-sale of their products (amongst other beans, rice, sugar and honey)<sup>45</sup> instead of selling them to supermarket chains. Other CAPA cooperatives focus on processed products such as jam, vegetable oil and flour.<sup>46</sup> In this way CAPA does not merely provide training on alternative agricultural practices and crops, but it also supports farmers with the processing and marketing of their products. Furthermore, CAPA supported the establishment of an organic certification scheme ECOVIDA in order to advance the quality of products and to market them.<sup>47</sup>

In Bangladesh, UBINIG and Nayakrishi Andolon are taking the lead in the reconversion of food cropland from tobacco.<sup>48</sup> Their holistic approach to practise biodiversity-based ecological agriculture incorporates the absolute absence of pesticides and other chemicals, seed conservation, crop rotation and mixed crops, a pattern of cultivated and uncultivated spaces, the exclusive use of surface water, as well as a general intent to ecologically diversify the farming households for the benefit of the people.<sup>49</sup>

## Advocacy

In some places civil society members have openly expressed their dissatisfaction at the extent or lack of measures being undertaken in their countries to face the issues associated with the cultivation of tobacco.

Particularly in Bangladesh, several organisations have been actively advocating and lobbying for alternatives for tobacco farmers. Thus research conducted by the **Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust** (WBB Trust) has illustrated the link between tobacco farming and poverty in Bangladesh and formulated recommendations conducive to policies for alternatives.<sup>50</sup> The trust has been involved in regular lobbying work, most recently in January 2012, when they organised a seminar on “The Responsibility to Create Alternative Employment for Bidi Factory Workers and Tobacco Growers and Poverty Reduction” at the National Press Club. In a public appeal, they asked the government to

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43 IECLB; CAPA (2004): CAPA em defesa da vida. Jorev Luterano, Encarte Especial.

44 Rita Surita, personal communication, 22 Mar 2012.

45 STR Cruzeiro do Sul (2011): ECOVALE completa dez anos. <http://strcruzeirosul.blogspot.de/2010/08/agosto-de-2010-ecovale-completa-dez.html> and CAPA: Produtos. <http://www.capa.org.br/site/content/produtos/index.php> (Santa Cruz).

46 E.g. COOPERFAS and COOPERBIORGA, see: CAPA: Produtos. <http://www.capa.org.br/site/content/produtos/index.php> (both Erexim).

47 CAPA (2005): Agroecologia. A prática no CAPA. Porto Alegre, p. 17. [http://www.capa.org.br/uploads/publicacoes/Caderno\\_sobre\\_Agroecologia.pdf](http://www.capa.org.br/uploads/publicacoes/Caderno_sobre_Agroecologia.pdf)

48 See chapter 3.3 on UBINIG's efforts.

49 Nayakrishi Andolon literally means ‘New Agricultural Movement’. UBINIG: About Nayakrishi Andolon. <http://www.ubinig.org/index.php/campaigndetails/showArticle/6/13>

50 Path Canada (ed. 2002): Tobacco and Poverty. Observations from India and Bangladesh. WBB Trust, Health Bridge (formerly PATH Canada) (2007): Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh. Research and Recommendations on Agriculture and Taxes. Dhaka.

## ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS FOR BEEDI WORKERS

*Efforts to reduce tobacco leaf production do not only call for alternatives to tobacco growing but also need to consider the tobacco-manufacturing sector. Tobacco workers worldwide face violations of their human rights. In Tanzania, women have to work in cigarette factories without proper protective clothing.<sup>1</sup> In India, the beedi industry is based on exploitative working conditions involving child labour.<sup>2</sup> In the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, the Cancer Institute in Chennai has researched some initiatives for alternative livelihoods.<sup>3</sup>*

**Rural Uplift Centre Veturnimadam** has launched programmes to assist workers in quitting beedi rolling and getting employment in other factories, in the brick industry or in shops. For workers who have not completed school the centre provides an education programme to obtain diplomas and build contact to local employers. Around 50-60 beedi rollers benefit each year from the programme.

**Beedi agent Ms. Saroja** had previously supplied 400 workers with leaf material for rolling beedis. After more than 10 years of selling beedis, she decided to switch to tailoring, teaching yoga, and poultry farming, advising her fellow villagers to do the same.

**Mr. Manikandan in Kudangulam** started a tailoring unit in 2006. Since then he has been teaching tailoring and thus supported 837 beedi workers in quitting beedi rolling.

**Mr. Murugan in Melappalaiyam** owns a pottery factory, where he employs 15 former beedi workers. The pottery products are sold on the international market. He is planning to expand the factory and employ more workers, since demand is so high.

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1 Heller, Peter (2001): Rauchopfer. Tanzania/Germany. Documentary.

2 Voluntary Health Association of India (2010): At the Crossroads of Life and Livelihood: The Economics, Poverty and Working Conditions of People Employed in the Tobacco Industry in India. Final Narrative Report.

3 Vidhubala, E. (2001): Alternative Livelihood for Beedi Workers in Southern Districts of Tamilnadu: Best Practices. Cancer Institute, Chennai, India. Documentary.

provide incentives for tobacco farmers wishing to switch to alternative crops as well as alternative employment for beedi factory workers.<sup>51</sup>

Campaign work led by the **Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance (BATA)** supported a case filed by two local journalists,<sup>52</sup> who were concerned about the impact of increased tobacco acreage on food security in Bandarban. Their appeal against tobacco farming led the Bandarban district court in 2010 to restrict tobacco-farming activities to a maximum surface of 1,000 acres (404.68 ha) within the district.<sup>53</sup> Using protest actions, press

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51 Appeared in the online version of the Bangladeshi newspaper "New Age", 29 Jan 2012. <http://www.newagebd.com/newspaper1/national/48624.html> (accessed on 6 Feb 2012)

52 Alauddin Shariar and Jafor Iqbal filed the public interest litigation against tobacco cultivation.

53 This would mean a substantial reduction from 10,000 acres down to 1,000 acres. See: [bdnews24.com](http://bdnews24.com): Injunction remains on tobacco cultivation. 25 Nov 2010. [www.bdnews24.com/details.php?id=179792&cid=2](http://www.bdnews24.com/details.php?id=179792&cid=2) According to

conferences and the circulation of petitions, BATA consistently lobby local and national government powers to provide support for alternatives to tobacco farming.

In Tanzania, advocacy work has also played a crucial role in raising awareness on the need for alternatives to the crop amongst politicians and farmers. By presenting recorded video testimonies of tobacco farmers relating their grievances, the **Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum** (TTCF) helped convince MPs of the need to ratify the FCTC.<sup>54</sup> In 2006, TTCF's campaign work in Namtumbo district supported farmers to realise that their living conditions might be improved if they switched from tobacco cultivation to food crops. Despite the lack of availability of technical support to help farmers shift production, these nonetheless started cultivating other crops such as groundnut, sesame and sunflower. By 2008 TTCF recorded that the number of tobacco farmers had dropped from 22, 300 to 6,333.<sup>55</sup>

### Individual efforts

There are also cases where individuals have inspired farmers in tobacco growing regions to adopt alternative farming methods. This was the case in Saharbari village in Bangladesh. Prior to 1983, tobacco had been the most widely grown crop in the village. This changed when an artist from the area returned to his village and started experimenting with growing food crops such as watermelon. The WBB Trust reports on the artist's actions as follows:

“He encouraged the local people not to grow tobacco. People considered him crazy, and said that he knew nothing about agriculture. But gradually, as people saw he was profiting from his experiments, they began imitating him. As a result of his efforts over the years at motivating tobacco farmers to switch to food crops, and witnessing of the profitability of such a move, tobacco is no longer grown in the area.”<sup>56</sup>

Instead of tobacco the villagers started growing foods such as potato, wheat, garlic, cauliflower, mustard seeds and other vegetables. Field researchers observed that nearly every house had its own vegetable garden and remarked an abundance of livestock in Saharbari.

Similar inspiration could emanate from people like Ethel Katumba in Malawi who practises permaculture on her land. She highlights the importance in individuals taking the lead to promote changes: “Malawian people, they want an example first.”<sup>57</sup>

personal email correspondence with BATA in December 2011, tobacco companies have since appealed in High Court and managed to get an injunction against the ban until the case is decided. Meanwhile tobacco cultivation continues in Bandarban. The case is still pending to date.

54 Tanzania ratified the FCTC in 2007. Kagaruki, Lutgard (2010): “Alternatives to Tobacco: Hope for Resource-poor Farmers in Tanzania”. In: Framework Convention Alliance Bulletin, No. 108. Punta Del Este, p. 2.

55 Kagaruki, Lutgard (2010): “Community-based advocacy opportunities for tobacco control: experience from Tanzania”. In: Global Health Promotion Supp (2), Vol. 17, No. 2, p.43.

56 WBB Trust, Health Bridge (formerly PATH Canada) (2007): Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh, p.15.

57 Otañez, Marty (2012): House Woman: Notes on Permaculture and Food Sovereignty in Malawi. Documentary. On his vimeo-site Marty Otañez promotes alternative livelihoods to tobacco using video footage of good examples. Another important site for awareness raising on the conditions and consequences of tobacco cultivation is his site [www.fairtradetobacco.org](http://www.fairtradetobacco.org).

# THREE DIFFERENT APPROACHES

# 3

*Among the variety of approaches outlined we chose three examples from three parts of the world to explore their potentials in depth: a government programme, a university based research project and a grassroots movement. We invited authors from Brazil, Kenya, and Bangladesh to give their perspective from within and present their endeavours towards a sustainable livelihood beyond tobacco. Adriana Gregolin gives an overview of the National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas run by the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture. Jacob K. Kibwage describes the Bamboo as Alternative Crop and Livelihood to Smallholder Tobacco Farming Research Project affiliated to the South Eastern University College in Kisumu, Kenya. Farida Akhter (UBINIG) provides detailed information on the research and community-based work of UBINIG in tobacco growing areas and their biodiversity-based agricultural movement Nayakrishi Andolon in Bangladesh.*

## **3.1 BRAZIL: DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION AND INCOME IN TOBACCO GROWING AREAS**

*Adriana Gregolin*

### **Introduction**

The National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas<sup>1</sup> (hereafter ‘the Programme’) was launched in October 2005, within the context of the ratification of the FCTC by the Brazilian Senate. The Programme is coordinated by the Secretariat for Family Farming (SAF) through the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA).

Global plans to reduce cigarette consumption in the medium and long term, will impact the lives of farming families, who are socio-economically dependent on tobacco production. The Brazilian Agricultural Census (2006)<sup>2</sup> data confirmed a significant share of agriculture

<sup>1</sup> Programa Nacional de Diversificação em Áreas Cultivadas com Tabaco

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/economia/agropecuaria/censoagro/default.shtm>

takes place on small-scale family farms,<sup>3</sup> on a total of 4.4 million properties, accounting for 84.4% of all farms in Brazil. Tobacco production is almost entirely concentrated on land cultivated by smallholder families.<sup>4</sup> The integrated production system in Brazil directly links tobacco companies with growers.<sup>5</sup> With around 180,000 tobacco-producing households in the country, Brazil is the second largest producer and biggest exporter of tobacco.

The nature of the tobacco production chain in Brazil generates a series of challenges to the introduction of diversification measures in the tobacco growing areas. This paper will outline the core principles, structure and activities of the Programme, with reference to the pilot project currently being run in Dom Feliciano municipality.

## **Programme Structure**

The Programme aims to support the implementation of projects for rural extension, training and research and to develop strategies for diversification of production amongst smallholders that produce tobacco, creating new opportunities for income generation and quality of life for them. The principles of the Programme are: sustainable development, food security, diversification, participation, convergence of public policy and partnership (with government entities, civil society, universities, research centres and smallholder farmers).<sup>6</sup>

The Programme has invested about US\$ 25 million (€ 19 million) into 75 projects that focus on technical assistance and rural extension, training and research, involving 45,000 families from 600 municipalities. The Brazilian government, through partner organisations involved in the Programme, invites families to participate in projects. From this acceptance

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3 'Agricultura Familiar' is the actual term used to refer to smallholder farming in Brazil. Family Agriculture takes place on a surface area that accounts for 24.3% of all farmed land in Brazil. It occupies an average of 15.3 people per 100 hectare and contributes 50% of the production of the food basket, with products such as beans, cassava, milk, poultry, pork, among others. (IBGE, 2006).

4 Contract workers are hired during the harvest season.

5 Integrated production involves the use of contracts drawn up between a company and individual tobacco growers. The contract provides: funding by the tobacco company for inputs (fertilisers, pesticides, seeds) and investments needed for the production of tobacco, technical assistance, guaranteed purchase of tobacco leaves, transport of the product to company warehouse and also provides crop insurance through AFUBRA (Tobacco Growers' Association of Brazil).

6 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - The development of productive and income-generating alternatives to tobacco growing with a view to achieve environmental sustainability, quality of life for families and a transition towards agro-ecological farming methods, with the support of ATER (Research, Training and Technical Assistance and Rural Extension organisations). FOOD SECURITY - The principle of food security is associated with the Federal Government's commitment to the development of actions and policies, that encourage clean and diversified production in the smaller properties of tobacco growing smallholder families, allowing them to have access to food on their properties, with quality and sufficient quantity for consumption and commercialisation; DIVERSIFICATION - The diversification of production and activities amongst smallholders are to be integrated within existing policies and programmes targeting farming families, thus contributing to solving wider socio-economic and environmental issues. The alternatives supported by the Programme must contribute to food security and income generation. PARTICIPATION - Smallholder families are the ones who determine the type of alternative activities they wish to engage in. Technical guidance and information helps them build knowledge in the field, respecting issues of gender, age, race and ethnicity. PARTNERSHIP - As a way to strengthen and broaden the process of planning and execution of diversification activities, partnerships are important and strategic for the implementation of the Programme at the national, state and municipal level. The integrated action, together with governmental and non-governmental organisations, universities, ATER institutions, research, and others, collaborates for coordinated action in the areas of diversification of tobacco.

planning activities for training and technical assistance are begun. Various institutions are funded to undertake this field work with farmers.

A Thematic Network<sup>7</sup> has been established in 2008 with the goal of managing the Programme. It is made up of representatives from 25 partner institutions involved in the implementation of the Programme. The network regularly meets to discuss programme activities. The experiences made on ongoing projects are presented, new activities are proposed and planned, and progress made on the implementation of FCTC articles 17 and 18 is evaluated.

For the generation of references in research and development a pilot project is being implemented in the municipality of Dom Feliciano/RS. The objective there is to integrate the Programme's policies within federal and local actions to enhance opportunities for development in Dom Feliciano, RS and the Centre-South region of Rio Grande do Sul, with reference to the findings of the international working group on FCTC articles 17 and 18. The objectives in Dom Feliciano are: a) Implementation of demonstration units on poultry farming, aquaculture, dairy farming, cultivation of grapes for the production of grape juice and wine, as alternatives to tobacco growing; b) Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (ATER)<sup>8</sup> for the diversification of production and income; c) Information on healthcare in tobacco production; d) Communication-information actions for farmers; e) Research on the day-to-day reality of women producers of tobacco. For this project, partnerships have been established with universities, ministries, health departments, research institutions and ATER services in the region. US\$ 700,000 (€ 530,000) have been invested into the first round of the pilot project, benefiting a total of 1,000 households.

Other aspects of the Programme include: local seminars with tobacco farmers, regular meetings between the projects to discuss associated technical issues, public hearings on legal issues, participation of smallholders in fairs and exhibitions to advertise the Programme, intersectoral actions with participation in the Interministerial Commission for the Implementation of the FCTC (CONICQ), training courses in public policies to support diversification in tobacco cultivating countries, conducting public calls for the hiring of contractors and training of ATER projects, creation of the initiative "Fostering sustainable rural development in tobacco areas"<sup>9</sup> to financially support the actions of the Programme, with a minimum of 1 million Reais (€ 400,000). The Programme also works in collaboration with universities to develop research on diversification in tobacco growing areas.



Fish farmers in Brazil

7 Thematic Network on Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas (Rede temática de diversificação em áreas cultivadas com tabaco).

8 Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural (ATER).

9 Fomento ao Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável em Áreas de Produção de Tabaco, in the Federal Government's multi-annual plan.

## Key Aspects

The implementation of FCTC articles 17 and 18 requires coordinated action that will enable a process of change in the relationship of smallholders towards tobacco cultivation. In Brazil, this culture has been part of the lives of thousands of farming families for about 100 years, and any action to encourage the inclusion of new production in the areas of tobacco production requires capacity building work, training, discussion and planning with the participating entities and public authorities, technicians and farmers. It is on these levels that the actions of the Programme are being implemented.

Tobacco producers in Brazil decide to stop producing this crop because of health reasons, excessive work in the fields, unsanitary conditions, lack of manpower and low prices on sale.

The transition out of tobacco production is a gradual process and will expand as families acquire more security in terms of income. For structural, social and technical reasons (e.g. outstanding debts, personal choice, adapting to new production systems), families are not required to stop planting tobacco to participate in the Programme.

## CHALLENGES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF

**Communication and information** Broaden the debate and make information related to the FCTC accessible to farmers, technicians, public administrators and society in general. Greatly increase information and communication.

**Financial support** Expand financial resources and direct these towards the provision of ATER, training and research

to help implement articles 17 and 18 of the Convention, and wider measures for tobacco control in rural areas.

**Health** Expand and upgrade health activities with tobacco-growing smallholders (Agricultural Families) focusing on issues such as the green tobacco sickness and the consequences of pesticide use.

In order to counter the tobacco industry lobby, research has been conducted to generate references that demonstrate the feasibility of reducing dependence on tobacco cultivation and the benefits this entails.

Technical support, the development of appropriate methodology and policy, coupled with institutional intersectionality are critical to the success of diversification in tobacco producing areas. Brazil, through the MDA, has made an effort in the integration and convergence of public policies on smallholder farming, in order to directly support the tobacco growing families in the diversification of production systems and income. The involvement of local government authorities has helped enable the various diversification projects on the field.

As well as presenting alternatives to tobacco production, training and capacity building activities should include: promotion and debate on issues and measures related to the FCTC, dissemination of information on the international debate regarding tobacco consumption and production, tobacco cultivation issues associated with health, education, environment, leisure, and culture. Training and capacity building activities present an opportunity for exchanging experiences amongst farmers looking to diversify cultivation on properties where tobacco monoculture is the main activity. On these occasions the issues related to socio-economic dependence on tobacco cultivation are also discussed. Efforts are made to actively involve farmers in the planning of seminars.

Technical assistance and rural extension (ATER) are offered by governmental and nongovernmental partners. The ATER in its capacity works to technically support smallholder farming. Variables that influence the livelihoods of farming families – e.g. health, education, employment, leisure, environment, social organisation, access to public policy amongst others – are evaluated beforehand.

## FCTC ARTICLES 17 AND 18 IN BRAZIL

**ATER Training and research** Expand research, investigations, and studies and extend practical experience on alternatives to tobacco cultivation. Provide appropriate infrastructure and marketing channels, in accordance with the guiding principles of the National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas. Expand research on economically viable alternatives to tobacco growing as per FCTC articles 17 and 18.

**Intersectoral approach** Integrate actions within knowledge areas from different sectors of government.

**Institutional integration** Necessary to advance the understanding in Brazil at the level of Ministries, States and federal districts on practices that violate FCTC article 5 (policy coherence, tobacco industry interference). This has prevented the integration of the Programme at all levels of government.

## Conclusions

To implement FCTC articles 17 and 18 in Brazil it is necessary to foster activities with a focus on sustainable rural development, in accordance with the Programme's key principles of sustainable development, food security, diversification, participation and partnership. Tobacco cultivation primarily takes place in developing countries. Although tobacco production might at first appear to offer a secure source of income for the poorest families, it in fact reinforces the cycle of poverty.

The support of public policies for rural areas is of great importance to encourage more diversified modes of production, market access and technical support for farmers.

Support from civil society organisations is needed to help disseminate information about the goals and proposals of the FCTC. This further reduces the scope for tobacco companies to spread industry-biased information.

Tobacco producing countries may greatly contribute to implementing the recommendations, technical guidelines and methodological proposals made by the working group on FCTC articles 17 and 18.

The implementation of these articles faces interference from the industry lobby as well as uninformed lobby from international organisations that formulate recommendations with reference to developed countries' experiences in shifting from tobacco cultivation. Such recommendations do not always apply to the reality and specificities of developing countries. Research is needed in tobacco producing countries with a focus on means of generating sustainable alternative incomes.

The intersectoral approach, through the CONICQ in Brazil, is important to advance the implementation of diversification in areas of tobacco cultivation from a sustainable rural development perspective.

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## 3.2 KENYA: TOBACCO TO BAMBOO

*Jacob K. Kibwage*

### Introduction

Tobacco is grown in three main zones: South Nyanza, Eastern and Western regions in Kenya. The number of tobacco farmers<sup>10</sup> has increased from 500 in 1971 to 35,000 in 1990s and 55,000 in 2011! The land under tobacco has also continued to grow rapidly at the expense of traditional food crops and livestock activities.<sup>11</sup> The recent expansion from medium to high potential agricultural areas due to the collapse of cotton, sisal, pyrethrum and coffee industries poses a major threat to our environment, economy and the livelihoods of farmers.

The type of tobacco grown in Kenya is mainly cured using wood fuel. Consequently, a lot of indigenous trees are felled for curing tobacco. Soil erosion is rampant in these areas. In many instances eucalyptus ssp seedlings have been provided to farmers by tobacco companies as part of a strategy to improve their own public image. These tree-planting schemes however fail to consider the long-term implications for water catchment areas. Scientific research has also shown that this type of tree puts a lot of demand on water and soil nutrients, and the result is loss of soil fertility and drying up of water sources. This

<sup>10</sup> Contracted and non-contracted by tobacco companies.

<sup>11</sup> In 2007 tobacco was grown on 15,000 hectares ([www.tobaccoatlas.org](http://www.tobaccoatlas.org)).

has also led to further reduction in food crop production, hence, increased poverty levels in the area. This kind of scenario called for research that can solve multiple problems, i.e. environmental degradation, poverty, social/cultural issues and food security. The Bamboo as Alternative Crop and Livelihood to Smallholder Tobacco Farming Research Project<sup>12</sup> was formulated based on this background, with an overall goal of investigating how the household livelihood strategies of tobacco smallholder farmers could be diversified through the introduction of Bamboo as an alternative crop and livelihood strategy in the South Nyanza region.

This project has tested the potential of bamboo production as an alternative sustainable livelihood strategy to tobacco smallholder farming in South Nyanza region, Kenya, for the period 2006-2012. A study was carried out on 240 trial farms where 2,450 bamboo seedlings were planted in two phases in 2006 and in 2010. Bamboo was selected for experimentation; because it has over 2,000 environmental, health, economic, household and industrial uses so far recorded. The crop also has very high annual yields of 20-40 tons per hectare with a growth rate which is three times faster than eucalyptus, maturing in about 3-4 years; harvests are possible for up to 80-120 years with very little investment and it promotes highly diversified community-based enterprises.

The scientific results indicate that about 90% of bamboo seedlings perform well under the same agro-climatic and soil conditions as those of tobacco in the region. Annual estimated income from bamboo farming is 4-5 times higher than tobacco at the farm gate prices on the same acreage and may fetch values up to 10 times higher when processed at the community/ family level into various products like bamboo furniture, housing construction materials, assorted handcrafts, high-value charcoal, toothpicks, etc.

Some of the factors behind the success of the research project were: the selection of a suitable location for experimental research sites<sup>13</sup>, a positive grass root political will to control tobacco<sup>14</sup>, the integration of other tobacco control strategies<sup>15</sup>, the participatory approach in the whole project cycle, and partnerships with clear roles in the project. Furthermore, the project takes into account the annual subsistence-farming calendar, gender aspects, an appropriate technology transfer, and the provision of a constant source of income during the project's start-up<sup>16</sup>.

The project has already established four bamboo farmers' cooperatives for former tobacco farmers in each of the four districts and developed an Action Plan to address the key issues surrounding the smallholder tobacco farmers in the area. The research has indicated that bamboo is a solution to most of the tobacco-related socio-cultural, economic, health and

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12 The project was funded through a research grant administered by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

13 The selected areas show high concentration in tobacco farming and were also the main locations where tobacco farming had originally been established before it spread to other areas.

14 Local leaders from the church, NGOs and popularly elected councilors and Members of Parliament are very supportive of the initiative and they are actively involved at various appropriate stages.

15 I.e. advocacy and capacity building of stakeholders.

16 Inter-cropping of bamboo with vegetables, legumes, pepper and other horticultural crops in the first two years of the experiment ensured that farmers had a constant source of income as they awaited bamboo to mature in the third year.

environmental problems in the region. 42% of former tobacco smallholder farmers in the region have already switched to bamboo production and processing. In some of the experimental sites, project farmers have totally abandoned tobacco cultivation and are now expanding their bamboo farms.

### **Reasons for starting and quitting tobacco farming**

Most farmers in the country started tobacco-farming activities either because they anticipated a ready market (23.4%), incentives from tobacco companies (19.7%), influence from other farmers (18.4%) or lack of a viable alternative cash crop (16.8%). Most farmers (16.5%, 21.5%, 6.7% and 12.2%) continue growing tobacco because of its alleged high financial benefits, ready market, availability of loans in form of farm inputs and favourable climatic conditions, respectively. An estimated 8.0% continue to grow the crop so that they clear pending debts from previous years.



Bamboo utilisation workshop, Kenya

The study has established that most farmers (34.9%) in Kenya abandon tobacco farming because it is labour intensive while 26.7% and 23.6% due to its low returns and ill-health, respectively. Religion also plays a significant role (12.3%) in forcing some farmers to abandon tobacco farming. The rest have abandoned the occupation due to land scarcity and other minor reasons. The study has shown that most farmers are willing to abandon tobacco farming and switch to an alternative crop if assisted with selection of viable crops, easy access to inputs, extension services, reliable marketing services, crop protection and stable product prices.

### **Participating in tobacco to bamboo**

The project team in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture grassroot officials and village elders identified 240 farmers from the experimental areas and trial farms in each of the four districts. Areas with the highest concentrations of tobacco farming activities were the target of the project in order to measure the impact of the initiative. The criteria used in the selection of farmers included: whether one is a tobacco farmer or not, sex, age, household wealth/poverty status, farming scale, access to water and the willingness to provide land for bamboo experimentation/ farming. A balance was struck between the number of tobacco and non-tobacco farmers as a long-term strategy to avoid a

negative perception that the bamboo-farming project was only targeting tobacco farmers. Smallholder poor households were given priority.

In terms of farmers' organisation, the project and the Kenyan Government (Ministry of Social Services) facilitated the establishment and official registration of four Community-based Bamboo Farmers Groups, i.e. one per site.<sup>17</sup> After the bamboo matured in 3-4 years, these four CBOs developed into Bamboo Farmers Cooperatives to assist farmers in marketing their bamboo poles and processed products. This form of project organisation was initiated for easy project administration in terms of supervision of farm preparations, distribution of planting materials/ inputs, farmers' mobilization, discipline of farmers, general project monitoring and reporting. To ensure success of the idea, the various stakeholders, who include the tobacco and non-tobacco farmers, government agricultural officers, provincial administration, Ministry of Health officials among others, were fully involved since the inception of the idea, project design, implementation, data validation and dissemination of results. Working with key stakeholders is also aimed at helping institutionalise the new industry in the country.

Apart from the provision of initial farm inputs (mainly, bamboo seedlings), the capacity of farmers was built through field demonstrations, group discussions, in-house and field-based trainings on land preparations, planting procedures and requirements, farm management, harvesting, propagation methods and processing. The project staff provides bamboo farming and processing extension services through field visits and provision of manuals on the above subjects. The project has also supported the cooperatives in the establishment of bamboo processing workshops with simple hand-tools required at the small-scale operation stage. Large bamboo product processing machines will be required if bamboo farming becomes adopted by more farmers in the near future.

### **Sustainable market chain for bamboo products**

Bamboo has over 2,000 uses ranging from conservation, industrial, construction, household, medicinal, energy, etc recorded so far in the world. The project has undertaken a range of feasibility studies on five prioritised market product value chains in the country and provided business plans for smallholder tobacco farmers and related local enterprises interested in bamboo production and processing. The chains targeted at this level of operation include: 1) bamboo furniture, 2) bamboo for construction- rural bamboo housing and scaffolding in urban areas, 3) bamboo weaving and handcrafts for household/ office use, 4) toothpicks industry, 5) bamboo seedlings production business. The bamboo weaving, handcrafts and toothpick activities target women as key players. Since these studies have indicated how feasible these chains are, the project is currently seeking to establish market linkages between the proposed bamboo cooperatives and other sectors of the economy.

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<sup>17</sup> The four farmers groups formed were: Migori Bamboo (Modi) Farmers Group, Kuria Bamboo (Imiere) Farmers Group, Homa Bay Bamboo (Modi) Farmers Group, Suba Bamboo (Modi) Farmers Group.

## The challenges of the project

Some of the challenges that the project has faced over time and the various actions being undertaken to address these are outlined below:

CHALLENGE	ACTION BEING UNDERTAKEN
Increased demand of bamboo seedlings by tobacco farmers willing to shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial beneficiaries (phase one farmers) were trained on bamboo propagation skills and started nurseries and currently sell seedlings to new farmers</li> </ul>
Marketing of bamboo products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation and capacity building of four bamboo farmers cooperatives</li> <li>Market surveys were carried out and business plans developed for implementation</li> <li>Development of a bamboo market value chain</li> </ul>
Limited knowledge on bamboo production and processing / utilisation technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer of technology from countries like China, India, Bangladesh and other Asian countries</li> <li>Trainings on farm preparation, farm management, harvesting and processing/utilisation by project staff and partners (especially, International Network of Bamboo and Rattan-INBAR, China and Kenya Forestry Research Institute, KEFRI) was integrated throughout the project cycle</li> </ul>
Farmers group dynamics & sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of long-term linkages with relevant Government Agencies and Ministries</li> <li>Trainings from Government Ministries of Agriculture, Cooperatives and Social Services</li> <li>Create ownership of the project initiative through application of a participatory approach at every project stage</li> </ul>
Development of a sustainable market chain for bamboo products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulation of the National Bamboo Industry Development Strategic paper by key stakeholders for government approval and implementation</li> <li>Plans for establishment of the National Bamboo Development Programme (NEBADEP) are underway by the office of the Prime Minister in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry through basic support by the research project staff</li> </ul>
Lack of government and global guidelines and farmer-support mechanisms / policies on the shifting process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation of government officers in the various project stages and development of relevant participatory policy briefs</li> </ul>

## Tobacco industry interference

To date, no interference from the tobacco industry has been recorded. Tobacco companies' plans to promote bamboo, as an alternative source of energy for tobacco curing because it grows fast have not taken off. This is because farmers are more likely to utilise mature bamboo poles for higher value bamboo products and uses rather than its application

as a source of firewood. Hence, their plans are likely to fail. Recent intensification of strategies of attracting more farmers to tobacco farming through offers like cheap mobile phones, school bursaries and scholarship for best-performing farmers is a likely strategy of hooking farmers to tobacco and ensuring the shift to bamboo and other crop alternatives is slow in the long-term.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The government should develop a national programme on sustainable alternative crops/livelihoods to tobacco. The programme should concentrate on subsistence farmers by providing a complete, functioning market system – making it possible for even the poorest and most rural farmer to generate more income, and permanently solve their own hunger problem. The programme must provide farmers with a complete service model — inputs, financing, training, farm and market education and insurance — that helps them to increase their farm incomes per acre for selected crops specific for given regions. Such a programme should focus on supporting the following elements:

**Empowerment of local groups of farmers:** selects existing self-help groups (mostly made up of women farmers) by bringing farmers together so that it is possible for them to economically interact with markets.

**Farm education:** to be provided with field / extension agricultural officers. The latest practices should be provided by a trained agronomist and translated into simple, easy-to-understand lessons and manuals in local languages.

**Provision of Capital:** to support environmentally sensitive planting materials and fertiliser. Fertiliser and seeds should each be professionally applied and selected in farms. The fertiliser blends used should provide most needed nutrients to local soils that have been stripped bare over decades of poor management. Storage facilities for crops harvested like maize and beans should also be supported.

**Market facilitation:** field officers should provide extensive training on post-harvest handling and storage, so that farmers do not experience post-harvest crop loss. Safe storage systems will ensure that farmers can access markets several months after harvest, especially when prices are higher.

**Crop insurance:** the crop insurance cover will pay farmers in the event of a significant drought or disease.

Finally, the development of sustainable market value chains for alternative viable crops through various development mechanisms by both public and private sectors will provide the missing infrastructure for the whole envisaged switching process in the long term.

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### 3.3 BANGLADESH: NO TOBACCO, GROW FOOD! *Farida Akhter, UBINIG*

#### **Tobacco cultivation and its impact on food production**

Concern about chemical-based agriculture and promotion of monoculture crops triggered UBINIG's involvement in research on tobacco cultivation and its impact on food production. Bangladesh is predominantly an agricultural country with over 70% of its population dependent on farming as a livelihood. Food production is of vital importance. UBINIG has been running an ecological agricultural movement called *Nayakrishi Andolon* since 1990 and works with over 300,000 farming households in 17 districts. In the areas where UBINIG is working, particularly in the districts of Kushtia, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, farmers have experienced the expansion of tobacco cultivation. UBINIG was approached by farmers to look for strategies for shifting out of tobacco.

Tobacco was widely introduced by British American Tobacco Bangladesh after liberation in 1971. The company introduced flue cured Virginia in 1967 on an experimental basis and by 1976 it started producing it commercially. The other tobacco varieties are Jati, Motihari, Burley, etc.

There are about 100,000 tobacco farmers, out of which 25,000 are associated with BAT Bangladesh. There is no specific data collected in Bangladesh on the number of farming households by crops, thus precise numbers are unknown. The total number of tobacco farmers is also difficult to find out, because tobacco is grown through contract growers holding company cards, who then subcontract other farmers, particularly share croppers, to grow tobacco. In our view it is a misnomer to refer to tobacco growers as 'farmers', because they are not 'free' to decide the crop pattern and are completely dependent on the company for the variety of tobacco to be cultivated, the inputs, as well as the marketing of their produce.

BAT Bangladesh recruits cardholders either from the farming communities or non-farming communities. They offer a wide range of incentives to attract farmers' interest in tobacco cultivation. In the local areas they are called '*Card dhari*' (cardholders) or '*chukti boddho*' (contract growers) growers. However, the land that is brought under tobacco cultivation is crop land and belongs to landowners in the area. These lands are generally taken on lease for tobacco cultivation. The company card is used for receiving inputs such as fertilisers (urea, TSP, SOP, DAP)<sup>18</sup>, Coromil<sup>19</sup>, Polythene etc. at a fixed price, which is determined by the company.<sup>20</sup> The cardholder has to commit himself to the '*Ongikar*' (agreement), that indicates this amount as credit to be paid back and obliges him to produce the quota amount of tobacco leaves in due time, otherwise the company may take legal action. BAT Bangladesh card has a warning sign for not using children in

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18 TSP = triple superphosphate, SOP = potassium sulfate, DAP = diammonium phosphate.

19 Coromil is a fungicide.

20 For example, in the card of a local company 15,320 Takas (€ 140) is fixed for providing urea, TSP and SOP, while in the BAT card for fertiliser, polythene and Coromil the price is fixed at 22,850 Takas (€ 207). There is no unit price for each input. It is only the total price, which will be deducted at the time of selling the tobacco leaves.

any work related to tobacco production, but in reality the use of child labour is part of the tobacco cultivation.

According to UBINIG research there are several reasons including cash earning, perceived high profit, guarantee of inputs and market by the company and the involvement of farmers through company cards, that play a decisive role in encouraging the continuation of tobacco cultivation. At the same time lack of support for food production by the government's department of agriculture discourages farmers to remain in food production. Tobacco companies can easily take advantage of the situation.

For decades tobacco production has moved from one location to another, due to the loss of soil fertility and destruction of sources of fuel wood in areas under production. This trend can be seen from government records,<sup>21</sup> which show that tobacco leaf production increased from 36,755 metric tons in 2000-01 to 40,272 metric tons in 2008-9, with virtually no increase in land area (73,870 acres in 2000-1 to 73,811 acres in 2008-9). The unofficial statistics for tobacco cultivation far exceed the government's figures. The national statistics fail to take into account the fact that companies were encouraging production, moving from one district to the other. Companies move mostly, when they face decline in soil fertility and shortage of fuel wood for curing tobacco leaves. After Rangpur, tobacco production started in Kushtia in the fertile land of Gangetic Flood Plain and has now moved to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) mainly because of the river Matamuhuri's fertile land and the trees in the hill forests. In these districts, the increase in tobacco cultivation has been very high. In the CHT, it was 304% and, in Bandarban alone, it was 540% because of the availability of forest trees for the curing of tobacco leaves.

Tobacco is an aggressive crop grown during the period of November to March, overlapping with the production of major winter crops. It also affects other crops grown at other times of the year, because it overlaps and clashes with sowing or harvesting season of other crops.

Tobacco cultivation requires a huge amount of fertilisers, pesticides, seed, irrigation water and labour. These are the same inputs which are also required for boro rice cultivation and other crops. Tobacco seeds are provided by the company (at a price).

Tobacco growers even though apparently gaining financially cannot claim that they are doing something good. They have a sense of guilt on their faces. They know what they are doing is not good for soil, human health, for social well-being of people etc. On the other hand, farmers growing food crops have a 'clear conscience' and have a happy face.

### **Looking for a way out of tobacco**

UBINIG research<sup>22</sup> showed that initiatives to discuss the possibilities of shifting out of tobacco were immediately well-received by the poor and marginal tobacco growers and particularly those without company cards. It was a good starting point to see the constraints and how to strategize a shift out of tobacco as it was farmers' spontaneous

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<sup>21</sup> BBS, Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh 2009.

<sup>22</sup> For these findings see: UBINIG; Carleton University (2008): From Tobacco to Food Production: Assessing Constraints and Transition Strategies in Bangladesh. Scientific Reports: 2006-2008. Dhaka.

decision and they were searching for a way out. Direct experiments at the field level in the three research areas were first carried out to find out the proper substitute crop for replacement of tobacco during the season when tobacco is grown. The villages, where tobacco is grown extensively, have lost crop diversity, particularly in terms of food crops. However, the replacement of tobacco by substitute food crops involved a lot of issues including i. land selection, ii. cropping plan iii. seed management and land



Potato field in Kushtia, Bangladesh

preparation. But in order to get the land free from tobacco and to grow food crops, farmers needed to have time to discuss before sowing and after harvesting of tobacco crops.

Therefore, the need was not only to select substitute crops, but also to devise a cropping pattern round the year matching local environmental and ecological conditions. Generally, tobacco is harvested between mid March to the end of April. At this stage, the farmers start planning of the crops for the next season. Farmers, who would like to continue tobacco production, plan to cultivate aus paddy: aus paddy occupies the land from mid June to mid September.

Tobacco is grown during mid October – mid April. The tobacco growers follow a cropping pattern such as tobacco – aus paddy – tobacco or tobacco – fallow land – tobacco. In the latter pattern the land, in fact, remains fallow for about four months and tobacco becomes monocrop cultivation for the entire year. Clearly tobacco impacts the cultivation of food crops round the year.

On the other hand, farmers who have decided to shift out of tobacco plan to grow other crops in mid April – mid June. Farmers, who have expressed interest to give up tobacco and go for the food crops, particularly needed support in the selection of crops and necessary inputs, especially seeds.

The cropping pattern is designed in keeping with the major crop seasons of summer, monsoon and winter in view:

- Summer season: mid April – mid May
- Monsoon & post monsoon: mid May – mid October
- Winter: mid October – mid April

Cropping designs for the transition period, called transition crops included crops for summer and monsoon season. The main transition crops for Cox's Bazar included: leaf amaranth, radish leaves, coriander, okra, bitter gourd, yard long bean etc. while transition crops for Kushtia region included: leaf amaranth, radish, spinach, cabbage and coriander.

The crops grown for substituting tobacco in the winter season are called substitute crops. The main substitute crops for Cox's Bazar included potato, French bean, felon (a variety of bean), sweet gourd, chili, egg plant, ground nut and tomato. The main substitute crops for Kushtia included potato, wheat, maize, garlic, masur (lentil), mustard and chili.

Farmers emphasised the need for a sustainable seed system that can help them continue to grow food crops, which will ensure improved soil fertility, meet family food needs, can be marketed easily and can be grown in a mixed cropping system. The mixed cropping system is followed both for soil nutrition and pest management under Nayakrishi farming practices.<sup>23</sup>

Issues considered important in the selection of crops were: resistance to pest attack, less irrigation and chemical fertilisers, less hard work and costs, improvement of soil fertility, and saleability throughout the year. Among these crops, some relevant criteria for farmers to shift out of tobacco were 1. to have good output in the season, 2. to be sold easily in the market, 3. to meet farmers' needs around the year, 4. to save seeds, 5. to use the experiences of the farmers, 6. to improve soil fertility, to meet food shortages, etc.

### **Success and challenges**

In the three most concentrated tobacco growing areas, namely Kushtia, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts, the prominent rabi (winter) crops combinations practised by the Nayakrishi farmers are potato + maize + lentil + coriander at Kushtia, potato + French bean + felon at Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. The UBINIG study showed, that about 80% more human labour is required in tobacco production and tobacco growers have to pay 21% higher wages per man-days compared to rabi crops (combination) cultivation. Tobacco growers in these areas used excessive and imbalanced doses of chemical fertilisers, applying insecticides/pesticides on average six times per season. The study also revealed, that the per hectare yield of tobacco was lower during this season than the yield of tobacco in the previous season at each of the locations. On the other hand, the Nayakrishi farmers utilised their farm and non-farm resources more efficiently during the present season and achieved higher yields per hectare of different rabi crops compared to the previous season. The study also showed, that the total cost (full cost) per hectare of tobacco production was more than 119% higher compared to rabi crops (combination) cultivation practised by the Nayakrishi farmers. Moreover, the Nayakrishi farmers achieved remarkable net profit from rabi crops (combination) cultivation than tobacco both on full and cash cost basis respectively. They obtained more return, i.e 1.42 Taka from per Taka investment, by cultivating these rabi crops combinations during this season compared to tobacco production.<sup>24</sup>

The Government of Bangladesh enacted the SMOKING AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS USAGE (CONTROL) ACT, 2005 with a view to control smoking, production of

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<sup>23</sup> For Nayakrishi farming practices see <http://www.ubinig.org/index.php/campaigndetails/showArticle/6/13>.

<sup>24</sup> UBINIG (2010): Comparative Economics of producing Alternative Combinations of Rabi Crops by Substituting Tobacco in Bangladesh. Dhaka.

tobacco, and its use, purchase, sale, and advertisement. This act also provides options on giving loans for food crops production in article 12 of the act.

“Article 12: Granting of Loan for Production of Alternative Crops to Tobacco Products

(1) To discourage tobacco farmers from producing tobacco products and to encourage them to produce alternative cash crops the Government shall provide loan on simple terms and the facility shall continue for the next five (5) years from the coming into force of this Act.

(2) For motivating in gradually discouraging the production and use of tobacco products and for the purpose of discouraging the establishment tobacco products industry, the Government will formulate necessary policy. “

But by the point, when the time limit was reached in 2010, no such loans had been issued to farmers. A law amendment is being proposed to the government, which is obstructed by the tobacco companies.<sup>25</sup>

The Bangladesh Bank, the central bank of the country, in a circular on 18 April 2010 has ordered all commercial banks to not grant any loans for tobacco farming. The Bangladesh Bank has taken this decision in view of concerns about public health, economic condition, food crisis and environment. The Ministry of Agriculture has taken strict measures for withdrawal of subsidies for tobacco growers. The Ministry of Finance imposed an export tax of 10% on tobacco leaves in the last budget of 2010-11, but had to reduce this to 5% in the 2011-12 budget due to pressure from tobacco companies.

Farmers are looking forward to future policy changes to stop tobacco cultivation.

UBINIG is a Policy Research Organisation established in 1984. It carries out research and community-based work and has been running a biodiversity-based agricultural movement since 1990. Farida Akhter is the Executive Director of UBINIG. This paper is based on UBINIG research and, therefore, the authorship of the article goes to UBINIG rather than to the individual. Contact: [info@ubinig.org](mailto:info@ubinig.org) or [www.ubinig.org](http://www.ubinig.org)

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<sup>25</sup> The amendments suggested include the imposition of export tax on green tobacco leaves, the provision of low interest loans to farmers interested in switching to food crops, policies to discourage tobacco cultivation and the cessation of support to tobacco growers with inputs such as fertilisers.

# MERE SUBSTITUTION, HOLISTIC APPROACH OR ECONOMIC INTEREST?

# 4

*Sonja von Eichborn, Laure Norger*

*The three approaches presented all emphasise the importance of finding alternative crops to tobacco. Mere crop substitution is however not the only aspect that needs to be considered. The experiences related in these three articles point to further issues related to the process of shifting out of tobacco, including structural requirements, food security, environmental impact as well as social and economic consequences. These aspects need to be discussed in relation to the existing framework provided by tobacco control, financial and economic policies.*

## 4.1 AT THE GRASSROOT LEVEL

By taking a closer look at the contract farming system, it is possible to highlight some important challenges and issues faced by most initiatives that work to improve the livelihoods of tobacco smallholders. Contract farming is the dominant method used by transnational tobacco companies to organise and secure supply in tobacco growing regions.<sup>1</sup> Through contract farming, smallholders are provided with

- 1) access to loans, allowing them to ‘buy’ capital for production such as land,
- 2) inputs (fertiliser, seeds),
- 3) technical advice for growing the crop
- 4) a guaranteed market (companies guarantee they will buy a fixed quota per year).

All these aspects play a key role in encouraging farmers to grow tobacco in the first place.<sup>2</sup> A similar level of support is not as widely provided for other crops.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Geist, Helmut et al. (2009): “Tobacco growers at the crossroads: Towards a comparison of diversification and ecosystem impacts“. In: Land Use Policy, Vol. 26, No. 4, pp. 1066-1079. Other cultivation systems include the tenancy system in Malawi and the auction system in countries like India.

2 Lecours, Natacha (2011): IDRC-Research Report. Consolidation of Evidence in the Field of Alternative Livelihoods to Tobacco Farming in LMICs. Ottawa, p.29. See also chapters 3.2 and 3.3.

3 However, contract farming also allows companies to have a greater control over production output, quality and prices. Especially the control over prices is solely on the side of the companies, thus infringing upon farmers’ ability to bargain for a reasonable price.

Surveys have shown that principal reasons for not switching were linked to the structure of contract farming.<sup>4</sup>

It is precisely for lack of loans, extension services or guaranteed markets that farmers have been either unable to switch or reluctant to do so.<sup>5</sup> Organisations working on issues involved in tobacco farming have recognised these aspects as key action areas for projects that wish to support alternatives.<sup>6</sup> Most of the projects reviewed in this study have been particularly active with regards to the last two aspects: agricultural extension services and strengthening of market opportunities. **UBINIG** and **Nayakrishi Andolon** have facilitated access to seeds as well as provided knowledge on multicropping and pesticide-free agriculture. **MASFA** in Malawi guarantees to buy the groundnuts produced by its members. **Brazil's National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas** has worked in all three areas: providing financial support and extension services as well as securing markets for farmers.<sup>7</sup>



Kenaf: just another monocrop?

Merely substituting tobacco cultivation with another crop might however be too one-sided an approach. In fact, the Malaysian government's explicit efforts to develop kenaf production as a new source of economic growth for the country ought to be viewed with some level of caution.<sup>8</sup> Overtly encouraging the cultivation of crops that are solely used as a source of cash income might expose farmers to the same problematic issues usually associated with the cultivation of cash crops, such as price fluctuation and monoculture.<sup>9</sup> If smallholders were to redirect all farming activities to exclusively grow kenaf, jatropha or bamboo, these would be putting themselves in a more vulnerable position in terms of food security. Food crops, by contrast, although also subject to price volatility, can at least fulfil farming families' food needs.

4 WBB Trust, Health Bridge (formerly PATH Canada) (2007): Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh, p.14. Vargas, Marco A; Campos, Renato R. (2005): Crop Substitution and Diversification Strategies, p.8. Lecours, Natacha (2011): IDRC-Research Report, p. 32.

5 Ibid. See also chapters 3.2 and 3.3.

6 WBB Trust, Health Bridge (formerly PATH Canada) (2007): Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh, pp. 17-18.

7 City Hall of Dom Feliciano (2012): Semeadura. Actions towards production and income diversification in Dom Feliciano's tobacco farming areas. Dom Feliciano. The Programme has for instance provided loans via the Programa Mais Produçao, to finance inputs (seeds, fertiliser) and land preparation activities for farmers wishing to plant other crops (p.10). The Mais Peixe scheme also provides training and financial support for smallholders wishing to start fish farming (p.18).Market security is provided for instance by integrating farmers' diversification initiatives within the National School Feeding Programme (p.26).

8 Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, in 2005 already explained the alleged importance of kenaf as a promising source of economic growth for Malaysia.: <http://www.kppk.gov.my/en/component/content/article/19-2005/65-seminar-on-kenaf-qa-new-source-of-growthq.html>

9 Monoculture is related to high use of pesticides and chemicals, leading to soil impoverishment and diminishing returns.

By encouraging the cultivation of food crops and the practice of polyculture, some of the projects surveyed for this study help address the issues associated with non-food crops and price fluctuations. For instance, **Putting Farmers First**, **CAPA** and **UBINIG** advise farmers on intercropping, crop rotation, conservation agriculture and chemical-free farming methods. The practice of polyculture is not only key for ensuring greater food security, the cultivation of a greater variety of food crops can also mean better nutrition for farming families. By supporting smallholders to start livestock keeping activities, **Malaysia's NKTB** and **Putting Farmers First** are helping farmers diversify their income in two ways: animals can be eaten or act as savings (capital). If combined with other activities, livestock farming can help reduce vulnerability to price fluctuations.<sup>10</sup> Finally, many projects have strived to create added value for the products designed to replace tobacco. Processed products or niche-products usually bring higher returns than the selling of raw, unmanufactured products. In Kenya, **Tobacco to Bamboo** supported farmers in creating cooperatives for marketing and processing bamboo products. The Brazilian diversification programme encourages initiatives for beekeeping and dairy farming<sup>11</sup>, while **CAPA's** cooperatives help farmers sell products such as jam, vegetable oil and flour. In Malawi, the groundnuts marketed by **MASFA** are shelled and certified as fair trade.

Thus polyculture, livestock farming, processing/added value activities, and securing markets for new products are key aspects within the strategies used by the projects surveyed.

## 4.2 GOVERNMENT BACKING

Governments and politicians have been particularly susceptible to one argument recurrently put forward by the tobacco industry lobby: the idea, that tobacco cultivation can be a driver of economic growth (by providing employment, taxes, and foreign exchange).<sup>12</sup> Studies have however shown, that benefits made by governments do not necessarily trickle down to those who actually grow the crop.<sup>13</sup>

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10 Putting Farmers First promote rabbits and goats. <http://www.puttingfarmersfirst.ca/small-rabbits-big-profits/> The NKTB support cattle, goats, ducks and fowl livestock breeding as well as aquaculture. <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?118>

11 Ministry of Agrarian Development (2010): Actions of the Ministry of Agrarian Development for the Diversification of Production and income in Areas of Tobacco Cultivation in Brazil. Brasilia, pp.17-18.

12 Examples of the economic growth argument being pushed: Roadshows around 2000 to gain political support from tobacco dependent economies against the FCTC process. See: Otañez, Marty et al. (2009): "Tobacco Companies' Use of Developing Countries' Economic Reliance on Tobacco to Lobby Against Global Tobacco Control: The Case of Malawi". In: Health Policy and Ethic, Vol. 99, No. 10, pp.1759-1771. To this day companies portray tobacco cultivation as an important source of employment that will improve livelihoods of smallholders, e.g. BAT website: "Farmers, many of them in developing countries, choose to grow tobacco because it (...) fetches a higher and more stable income than many other crops. In developing countries, farmers can earn good yields from very small plots of tobacco, while dedicating most of their land to other uses, like maize, cereals, root crops or fruit and vegetables." [http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk\\_\\_3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1](http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk__3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1)

13 International Union Against Cancer (UICC) (1993): UICC Tobacco Control Fact Sheet 5. Tobacco – The Need for Alternative Economic Policies. Manduna, Calvin (2003): Non-smokers hooked on tobacco. Tralac Working Paper No. 9/2003. Stellenbosch, South Africa, p. 17. Lecours, Natacha (2011): IDRC-Research Report, p.20.

On the contrary much research has demonstrated that there is a strong link between tobacco farming and poverty.<sup>14</sup> Although tobacco is a source of revenue for national economies, some tobacco-growing countries have nonetheless started to engage in diversification activities.

Government institutions are in the best place to conceive and implement macro-level policies supportive of diversification strategies. **Malaysia's Tobacco Industry Restructuring Plan** (RPSIT) has thus ensured the provision of financial means and infrastructure for developing the kenaf industry. The development of a new market for this product would obviously be much harder without strong governmental support and intervention. In Brazil, the MDA plays a key role in coordinating partnerships between relevant governmental institutions, research bodies, agricultural extension services. A further key component of the MDA-run **National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas**, is policy coherence. This has allowed farmers involved in the programme's diversification schemes to take part in the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE)<sup>15</sup> and become certified suppliers for products used in school meals. In this way, farmers are provided with a guaranteed market for their new crops,<sup>16</sup> and contributing to the implementation of the PNAE initiative.

Another aspect that speaks for calling governments to action is their legislative power. As part of their strategy for tobacco control, some governments have enacted laws that provide incentives for tobacco farmers willing to switch. Bangladesh, the Philippines and Taiwan have moved in this direction.<sup>17</sup> Despite these efforts, in most countries signatory to the FCTC, there is an apparent lack of legislative initiatives to develop and enact legally binding frameworks on a national level in order to implement the FCTC articles 17 and 18. Although Malawi has not ratified the FCTC, a legislative initiative that targets tobacco tenants' working conditions is the Tenancy Labour Bill.<sup>18</sup> It was drafted in 1995 with the support of **TOTAWUM**, and seeks to regularise the relationship and transactions between landlords and tenants, thus putting tenants in a better position to negotiate the terms of their work. The bill has however not yet been tabled in parliament; possibly due to involvement of parliament members in the tobacco sector.<sup>19</sup>

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14 E.g. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (2001): *Golden Leaf, Barren Harvest. The Costs of Tobacco Farming*. Washington DC. Otañez, Marty; Otañez, Michelle (2002): *Thangata*. Documentary. Malawi. WBB Trust, Health Bridge (formerly PATH Canada) (2007): *Addressing Tobacco and Poverty in Bangladesh*. Eltz, Tiago (2008): *Human Rights and Tobacco Growing in Brazil*. Documentary.

15 Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar (<http://www.fn.de.gov.br/index.php/programas-alimentacao-escolar>)

16 See: City Hall of Dom Feliciano (2012): *Semeadura*, p. 11: "What truly gave Ivo his first push to leave tobacco farming behind and dedicate himself to new crops was the National School Meal Program (PNAE), for which he is a supplier." Another individual case of a former tobacco farmer, who has guaranteed market thanks to PNAE: [http://comunidades.mda.gov.br/portal/saf/noticias/item?item\\_id=9302352](http://comunidades.mda.gov.br/portal/saf/noticias/item?item_id=9302352)

17 See chapter 2.1 Government-supported actions and chapter 3.2 Bangladesh: No Tobacco, Grow Food!

18 See draft of the Tenancy Labour Bill: [http://www.sidewalkradio.net/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/Tenancy\\_Bill\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sidewalkradio.net/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/Tenancy_Bill_2005.pdf)

19 See: Otañez, Marty; Otañez, Michelle (2002): *Thangata*. Documentary. Malawi. Recently, some CSOs have started a new initiative to send the bill to parliament. See: Mgunda, Temwani: "Nanzikame Arts in tenancy bill campaign". In: *The Daily Times*, 17 Jan 2012. <http://bnltimes.com/index.php/daily-times/headlines/arts/3740-nanzikambe-arts-in-tenancy-bill-campaign>

Where governments have perceived the shift out of tobacco as something that would benefit their economies, these have been much more prone to develop policies that would support such a move. For instance, in Malaysia, the coming into force of the AFTA agreement in 2010 meant that Malaysian tobacco would no longer be competitive. By searching for viable alternatives to tobacco, the Malaysian government was thus not only seeking to fulfil its commitment to the FCTC, but it also had an economic interest to do so. The strong efforts made to develop an entirely new industry around one particular crop (kenaf), might therefore be best interpreted as a change that was not primarily instigated by concerns for the welfare of cigarette consumers or tobacco growers or by concerns for the environment. Instead the government was looking for an alternative product, where better profits might be made – neglecting the implications of monoculture for the environment, food security, etc. Similarly, Taiwan’s access to the World Trade Organisation meant that government budget could no longer be invested to support local tobacco production,<sup>20</sup> thus providing an incentive for Taiwan to encourage diversification initiatives.

Government programmes tend to address problems on a large scale and for this reason intra-governmental policy coherence is more difficult to achieve. Although we note the positive efforts made towards policy coherence within the context of Brazil’s national diversification programme, research indicates that there might be a lack of coordination between governmental departments in other countries.<sup>21</sup> Thus one department (usually the Ministry of Health<sup>22</sup>) might promote diversification measures, whilst the other (e.g. Ministries of Agriculture or Finance) encourages cultivation of tobacco as a source of economic growth. Such a situation leads to the farmers being caught between contradictory recommendations. This aspect has been noted for instance in Kenya<sup>23</sup> and India<sup>24</sup>.

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20 Tobacco had been categorized as special-use crop that was bought by the state monopoly without exception. Entering the WTO, Taiwan was obliged to treat tobacco as a general crop that could not be bought by the state. See: Department of Health, Taiwan (2007): *The FCTC in Taiwan*, p. 41.

21 This issue is also one of the major points noted by the FCTC’s study group on viable alternatives to tobacco in their report for the COP 2 in 2007. See: Framework Convention Alliance (2007): *Briefing Paper: Economically Viable Alternatives to Tobacco – The Study Group on Alternative Crops*. Bangkok, p.11 (recommendation 4). In their report to the COP 4 in 2010, the working group reiterates this point.

22 Though promoting the diversification from tobacco, ministries of health usually lack expertise in the field of agriculture which leaves them in a quite weak position vis-à-vis ministries of agriculture.

23 Jacob Kibwage reported that “the Kenyan Government has no clear policy on tobacco production control. While the Ministry of Agriculture is promoting the growing of the crop, the Ministry of Health is seriously campaigning against the crop and smoking in particular.” See: Kibwage, Jacob (2007): *Diversification of Household Livelihood Strategies for Tobacco Smallholder Farmers: A Case Study of Introducing Bamboo in the South Nyanza Region, Kenya*. p.2. See also: Magati, Peter Omari (2009): *A cost-benefit analysis of substituting bamboo for tobacco: A case study of South Nyanza, Kenya*. Thesis. p.4.

24 In their 2007 brief, the FCTC study group observed that the Indian Ministry of Health’s efforts to promote alternative crops had been undermined by the Ministry of Agriculture’s active promotion of tobacco cultivation. Framework Convention Alliance (2007): *Briefing Paper: Economically Viable Alternatives to Tobacco*, p.11 (recommendation 4). This seems to have remained an issue until now, since Dr. Jagdish Kaur from the Indian Ministry of Health most recently reported that one of the crucial challenges in effectively implementing the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) in India was the “lack of cooperation and coordination” with other ministries/departments (amongst them agriculture, commerce, industry, rural development). Kaur, Jagdish (2012): “The National Tobacco Control Programme: Critical Review and Next Steps”, p.15.

## BIG TOBACCO'S MONEY

The FCTC's article 5.3 prohibits tobacco industry influence on publicly funded organisations. In some cases, this article has been violated by institutions working towards implementation of the FCTC. Below are two examples:

**National Kenaf and Tobacco Board** Three cigarette companies, organised in the Confederation of Malaysian Tobacco Manufacturers (CMTM), donated 20 million Ringgit (€ 4.9 million) to fund the diversification initiatives of the NKTB.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the CMTM provided 50 million Ringgit (€ 12.3 million) to be channelled into the restructuring of the tobacco industry in Malaysia.<sup>2</sup> It appears that the CMTM also has a seat on the board of the NKTB, it is thus able to effectively influence decisions on the restructuring plan and the diversification programme.<sup>3</sup>

**International Development Research Center** The IDRC, a Canadian Crown agency, has played a key role in facilitating international research on alternative livelihoods to tobacco growing. Although it has not received direct funding from tobacco companies, the institution has somewhat lost its integrity among tobacco control activists, especially in African countries. In 2007, a member of the IDRC board was appointed despite her having been on Imperial Tobacco Canada's board of directors since 2004. In early 2010, once the situation had been exposed, the board member did not go for another term in office at Imperial and has remained on IDRC's board.<sup>4</sup>

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1 This amounts to almost half of the NKTB budget for diversification activities, with the Malaysian government providing a further 25 million Ringgit (€ 6.1 million). See: Dato 'Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak (2005): The Launch of the Restructuring Plan for the Tobacco Industry (RPSIT) II. Bachok, Kelantan, paragraph 10. <http://www3.pmo.gov.my/WebNotesApp/tpmmain.nsf/f0d8126d117745db4825674f00069cba/17490a19d9bbe904825705700196e02?OpenDocument>

2 BAT Malaysia's Social Report 2004/2005 mentions a total of 70 million Ringgit (€ 17.2 million) donated by the CMTM, on behalf of the companies it represents (i.e. BAT Malaysia, Philip Morris Malaysia, Japan Tobacco International). See: BAT Malaysia (2005): Social Report 2004-2005. Berhad, pp. 22-23.

3 The NKTB board has 12 members, 5 members are selected by ministers involved in the NKTB. Until January 2012, Shaik Abbas Shaik Ibrahim had been the chief executive of the CMTM and was member of the NKTB board. See: <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?25>

4 See: Todkill, Anne Marie et al. (2010): „Tobacco control and the collateral damage of conflict of interest”. In: Open Medicine, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 98-101.

## 4.3 INSTITUTIONS FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTION

Various institutions affiliated to government ministries such as the **NKTB** in Malaysia and the **CTRI** in India have been commissioned to research alternative crops and implement diversification projects. These institutions follow the political agenda of their respective governments and are not likely to promote a total shift out of tobacco production. They are also less likely to support genuine alternatives to tobacco growing, as they are structurally devised to strengthen the tobacco production sector.

In Malaysia, the National Kenaf and Tobacco Board is the successor to the National Tobacco Board, whose role had been to support and improve the tobacco production industry. Acting under the auspices of the **Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities** (MPIC) the NKTB has the mission “to develop and enhance kenaf and tobacco based industry towards national economic growth;”<sup>25</sup> which corresponds very well to the MPIC’s own objective “to maximize the contribution of the commodity-based industries to national income including GDP and foreign exchange earnings.”<sup>26</sup> As well as being responsible for developing kenaf production the NKTB oversees a crop diversification programme for tobacco growers,<sup>27</sup> where the overall aim is “to increase productivity and competitiveness of the tobacco production.”<sup>28</sup>

A similar scenario can be seen in the case of the **CTRI** in India. The CTRI has the objective “to carry out ... fundamental and applied research on all types of tobacco grown in India with special emphasis on improving the productivity and quality of exportable types”. The CTRI’s interest in supporting the continuation of tobacco production is also apparent in the institute’s vision for 2030, where research on potential alternative uses for tobacco (phytochemicals, edible oil from seeds, solanesol extract for pharmaceutical use, etc.) is presented as a means to sustain the crop in the country.<sup>29</sup> With regards to the research conducted on alternative crops to tobacco, the incentive came from funds provided by the Ministry of Health<sup>30</sup> rather than from CTRI’s own household budget. The research is limited to beedi and chewing tobacco,<sup>31</sup> excluding FCV tobacco, whose production is even optimised for economic reasons (taxes, foreign exchange).

## 4.4 TOBACCO INDUSTRY’S INTERESTS

Over the past decades tobacco companies have been encouraging more and more countries to grow tobacco, thus creating an oversupply of raw tobacco that results in low prices for the crop.<sup>32</sup> The tobacco industry engages in different strategies to ensure supply (and to ensure a slow pace of diversification): 1) incentives to attract farmers towards tobacco cultivation,<sup>33</sup> 2) lobbying politicians on local, national and international levels, 3) showing

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25 NKTB: Vision & Mission. <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?5>

26 MPIC: Our Vision, Mission & Objectives. <http://www.kppk.gov.my/en/about-us/profiles/vision-mission-objectives-mainmenu-47.html>

27 NKTB: Crop Integration Programme & Livestock. <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?118> The NKTB also promotes food crops such as corn, watermelon, cassava, etc. and encourages farmers to take up livestock breeding activities. In 2010, 1,234 farmers benefited from the programme.

28 NKTB: Technology Transfer And Crop Integration Department. <http://www.lktn.gov.my/en/page.php?54>

29 Central Tobacco Research Institute (2011): Vision 2030. Rajahmundry, p.6.

30 Kaur, Jagdish (2012): “The National Tobacco Control Programme: Critical Review and Next Steps”, p.12. For the Pilot Project on Alternative Crops to Bidi and Chewing tobacco in Different Agro-ecological Sub-Regions, see: <http://www.ctri.org.in/research/external.html>

31 Beedi and chewing tobacco are nearly exclusively used inside the country. Therefore, the Ministry of Health shows its commitment to improve the health of the Indian population by sponsoring research on these types of tobacco.

32 Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (2001): Golden Leaf, Barren Harvest, p.6-8.

33 See for instance chapter 3.2. Kenya: Tobacco to Bamboo.

concern for tobacco farmers' fears of job losses and 4) promoting supposedly sustainable tobacco farming methods and implementing social responsibility programmes.

In the political arena, tobacco companies have spent large amounts of money to influence public policy.<sup>34</sup> In Kenya, these have for instance worked to gain the support of local political leaders to explicitly promote the cultivation of tobacco in their constituencies.<sup>35</sup> In Canada, a tobacco company director chaired the board of a publicly funded development agency involved in tobacco control.<sup>36</sup>

In order to anticipate the potential impact of a successful implementation of the FCTC,<sup>37</sup> tobacco companies have declared alleged concerns for tobacco farmers and used front groups such as the **International Tobacco Growers' Association** (ITGA) to work against tobacco control measures. For instance, on the occasion of the COP4 to the FCTC in 2010, the ITGA had managed to mobilise farmers to oppose the draft guidelines to articles 17 and 18.<sup>38</sup> Most recently, the ITGA organised the Asia Tobacco Forum in Malaysia, where a final declaration was issued, dismissing the guidelines again.<sup>39</sup>

In order to counter efforts to develop genuine alternatives to tobacco, Big Tobacco have been promoting the use of more environmentally-friendly farming practices, to somewhat improve the lives of tobacco farmers. So-called Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) have been hence promoted by the companies. For instance, **BAT** advertises its support for farmers on the following aspects: reducing pesticide use by providing training in alternative pest control methods, encouraging farmers to monitor and reduce impact of tobacco cultivation on local environment (soil, flora/fauna and water systems).<sup>40</sup> GAPs also support the use of alternative fuels for curing and fund afforestation programmes. In Malawi, **ITG** has been funding the Opportunity International Bank (OIB), that provides micro finance services to tobacco farmers, in order "to help ensure the sustainability of tobacco supply". In Tanzania, ITG supports a project to train oxen for tilling tobacco fields.<sup>41</sup>

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34 Eriksen, Michael et al. (2012): The Tobacco Atlas Fourth Edition. Atlanta, USA, p.62. <http://www.tobaccoatlas.org>  
See also: Sebríé, Ernesto; Glantz, Stanton A (2006): "The tobacco industry in developing countries has forestalled legislation on tobacco control". In: British Medical Journal, Vol. 332, No. 7537, pp. 313-314.

35 Kibwage, Jacob (2007): Diversification of Household Livelihood Strategies for Tobacco Smallholder Farmers, p.2.  
See also: Patel, Preeti et al. (2007): " 'The law was actually drafted by us but the Government is to be congratulated on its wise actions': British American Tobacco and public policy in Kenya". In: Tobacco Control, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp.1-8.

36 See IDRC case in box „Big Tobacco's Money“.

37 A successful implementation of the FCTC would mean a certain level of control on tobacco companies' communication to consumers, a set of mechanisms to reduce consumption and a substantial reduction of tobacco production.

38 Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (2011): Tobacco Industry Front Group: The International Tobacco Growers' Association. Fact Sheet, Washington DC. ITGA also protested against guidelines 9 and 10. The South East Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) have also noted the recent emergence of industry-linked NGOs in Malaysia and Indonesia, i.e. The Indonesian Tobacco Society Alliance, which campaigns to preserve the Indonesian tobacco industry. <http://seatca.org/dmdocuments/TI%20front%20groups%20fact%20sheet.pdf> p.2

39 Asian tobacco farmers sign pact to defend land, livelihood. In: Business Mirror. 8 Apr 2012. <http://businessmirror.com.ph/component/content/article/53-agri-commodities/25479-asian-tobacco-farmers-sign-pact-to-defend-land-livelihood> A final set of guidelines is due to be agreed on at the COP5 in November 2012.

40 BAT website: [http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk\\_3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1](http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk_3mnfen.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1)  
See also PMI website: [http://www.pmi.com/eng/about\\_us/how\\_we\\_operate/pages/good\\_agricultural\\_practices.aspx](http://www.pmi.com/eng/about_us/how_we_operate/pages/good_agricultural_practices.aspx)

41 ITG websites: <http://www.imperial-tobacco.com/files/environment/cr2008/index.asp?pageid=67> and <http://www.imperial-tobacco.com/files/environment/cr2008/index.asp?pageid=66>

Altogether, Big Tobacco is diverting public attention away from the basis upon which their profits actually rest (child labour, debt cycles, environmental degradation, health damages for producers and consumers), claiming instead to be concerned about farmers, and their ability to generate livelihoods.

## 4.5 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

This study has shown that CSOs do not only contribute to the implementation of the FCTC articles 17 and 18 by providing technical assistance (e.g. through research, extension services, capacity building), but they also campaign for the formulation of policies supportive of alternative livelihoods to tobacco.<sup>42</sup>

### BIG TOBACCO'S LANGUAGE

**Good Agricultural Practices** GAP is a term adopted by the tobacco industry in reaction to issues such as pesticide use, soil degradation, wood fuel use for curing, and health risks for farmers.<sup>1</sup> The term was originally introduced by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). It has been used by the organisation over the past ten years and is first and foremost used in relation to food production. Thus, the tobacco industry adopts a term with positive connotation for a crop which is toxic to producers and consumers.

**Sustainability** is a term tobacco companies use to improve the industry's image. It is often used in reference to so-called environmentally friendly farming practices and in relation to measures supposed to improve farmers' socio-economic situation. In fact, sustainability means the optimising of tobacco production and benefits for the companies' shareholders.<sup>2</sup>

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1 See BAT website: [http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk\\_\\_3mfnf.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1](http://www.bat.com/group/sites/uk__3mfnf.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO52AQ3V?opendocument&SKN=1) ; PMI website: [http://www.pmi.com/eng/about\\_us/how\\_we\\_operate/pages/good\\_agricultural\\_practices.aspx](http://www.pmi.com/eng/about_us/how_we_operate/pages/good_agricultural_practices.aspx) ; ITG also employs the term. See: Imperial Tobacco Group (2011): Respecting natural resources.

2 For instance, BAT website: "Our vision of a sustainable tobacco business is one that manages the impact of its operations and products responsibly today and prepares for a future in which it continues to create value for shareholders as well as being in the best interest of other stakeholders." [http://www.bat.com/groupfs/sites/BAT\\_8NXDKN.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO8QDE4Y?opendocument&SKN=1](http://www.bat.com/groupfs/sites/BAT_8NXDKN.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO8QDE4Y?opendocument&SKN=1)

These organisations can also play an important role in monitoring the implementation of measures for alternatives to tobacco, making governments accountable to their

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42 See Chapter 2.2 Civil society led initiatives.

commitments. This has notably been the case in the Philippines, where an organisation campaigning for the welfare of smallholders, named the **Solidarity of Peasants against Exploitation** (STOP-Exploitation), complained that funds for alternatives earmarked under excise tax laws had failed to be allocated in the Ilocos region.<sup>43</sup> In her article for this study, UBINIG's Farida Akhter draws attention to the fact that loans for growing alternatives to tobacco had not been disbursed by the Bangladesh government. Finally, CSOs can also help monitor the CSR activities undertaken by tobacco companies. **BATA** has for instance called for a ban on tobacco companies' tree planting schemes in Bangladesh, as those initiatives have involved the introduction of foreign tree species ill-suited to local environmental conditions.<sup>44</sup>

Another field of action for CSOs could be to facilitate the involvement of tobacco growers and farm workers in projects for alternative livelihoods to tobacco. Some initiatives have been proposed to tobacco growers without a consultation process. This seems to have been the case in Malaysia and India. In Bangladesh, **UBINIG** has organised meetings and workshops with farmers, in which the issue of tobacco cultivation and potential ways out were discussed.<sup>45</sup>

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43 FCA Philippines (2011): Legislative Brief Alternatives to Tobacco Farming. <http://tobaccocontrol.ph/archives/53>. Although several tobacco control laws in the Philippines foresee measures to support tobacco farmers wanting to diversify their income, these measures have not necessarily been effectively implemented, with provincial governments sometimes misusing the funds they were supposed to distribute to tobacco growers. (See example here: <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/special-report/05/07/09/tobacco-fund-not-much-help-ilocos-sur-farmers>). STOP-Exploitation have thus also lobbied the government to distribute funds directly to farmers rather than via public bodies.

44 BATA, Personal Communication, November 2010.

45 See: UBINIG: Farmers against tobacco cultivation. <http://www.ubinig.org/index.php/home/showAerticle/17/english> and UBINIG: Stop tobacco cultivation, grow food. <http://www.ubinig.org/index.php/home/showAerticle/16/english>

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# 5

*Sonja von Eichborn, Laure Norger*

The experiences related here show that diversification can be interpreted very differently, depending on the involved party's interests (e.g. economic gain, standard of living, health issues, philosophy of life) and the amount of economic power they dispose of. Essentially, the concept of 'diversification' appears to have been interpreted in two different ways:

- a) diversification as a process that involves adding other crops / products to be cultivated along with tobacco and
- b) diversification as a strategy geared towards abandoning the cultivation of tobacco.

In Malaysia, diversification has meant adding kenaf as a crop to be promoted alongside tobacco. In Brazil, the government seeks to offer a diversified livelihood to tobacco farmers in order to foster food security and economic sustainability – but does not necessarily require them to initially abandon tobacco. In Mexico, the government seeks to replace tobacco by substitute crops. In Taiwan, the government provides incentives to encourage farmers to abandon tobacco and diversify into other crops. In India, the government aims at phasing-out beedi and chewing tobacco, while keeping FCV tobacco as a foreign exchange earner.

In Malawi, civil society led initiatives encourage farmers to diversify their sources of livelihood, either with or without entirely opting out of tobacco. In Kenya, a university research project promotes a complete shift from tobacco to bamboo as a cash crop. In Bangladesh, an agricultural movement focuses on diversification towards food and market crops based on ecological and cooperative principles with a clear stand against tobacco growing.

However these initiatives are shaped, merely reforming the tobacco sector is a short-term strategy to tackle the issues involved in tobacco farming. Thus, diversification should be defined as a **strategy to completely abandon tobacco growing** in favour of any other option securing a decent livelihood for tobacco growers, farm workers and manufacturers

Certainly, the most tobacco-dependent economies (Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Macedonia, Moldova, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe)<sup>1</sup> would need to be very cautious in accomplishing the process of shifting out of tobacco.<sup>2</sup>

**Participatory approach** For a successful and sustainable implementation of the process it is essential to involve tobacco growers and farm workers in every step of the process. This includes research for alternative livelihoods, policy development as well as implementation on the ground. Farmers and workers are the ones who actually grow the crop and therefore their concerns should be heard and respected, their ideas should be incorporated. Moreover, their experiences are a valuable source to help identify barriers to diversification, test substitute crops, educate other farmers/growers and expose the tobacco industry's influence.<sup>3</sup>

**Dialogue** In order to work towards a more optimal alignment of interest, it is important that research institutes, CSOs and governments engage in substantial dialogue on the topic of alternatives: For instance, the Tobacco to Bamboo project is very active on the ground, but Jacob Kibwage points to a lack of infrastructure and governmental support to develop the market for bamboo and other alternatives to tobacco cultivation. The experience in Kenya lies in stark contrast to Malaysia, where the government has been actively developing the market for kenaf. However, orientation towards profit making in the case of kenaf, or support for crops with controversial uses (e.g. jatropha, for biofuel) will need careful monitoring from CSOs.<sup>4</sup>

**Networking** For the purpose of accessing existing knowledge, it will be necessary to establish networks with organisations that already have expertise in relevant areas. Nayakrishi Andolon have for instance supported UBINIG's work by disseminating knowledge on seed conservation and propagation techniques in Bangladesh. In Kenya, the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) and the East Africa Bamboo Project (EABP) have each provided training on bamboo cultivation and processing of bamboo products, respectively. In Brazil, CAPA has been involved in Brazil's National Programme for Diversification in Tobacco Growing Areas.<sup>5</sup>

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1 All of these countries derive at least 1% of their export earnings from tobacco. See: Otañez, Marty et. al. (2009): "Tobacco Companies' Use of Developing Countries' Economic Reliance on Tobacco to Lobby Against Global Tobacco Control: The Case of Malawi", pp.1759-1771.

2 According to a World Bank study, only net exporting countries (countries that produce more tobacco than they consume) such as Malawi, Brazil, India or Turkey will have high transition costs involved in shifting economy away from tobacco production. In most countries, phasing-out tobacco is expected to have smaller repercussions on their economy and might even be associated with positive gains. Jacobs, Rowena et al. (2000): "The supply-side effects of tobacco-control policies. In: World Bank; World Health Organisation (2000): Tobacco control in developing countries. New York/Geneva, pp. 323-326.

3 See: FCTC working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing (2010): Progress report of the working group. FCTC/COP/4/9. Annex, principle 2.

4 See: FCTC working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing (2010): Progress report of the working group, principle 6.

5 See: FCTC working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing (2010): Progress report of the working group, principles 3, 4 and 6.

**Holistic Approach** In the whole process of abandoning tobacco a holistic approach to alternative livelihoods might be the most promising option. Neither mere substitution with another cash crop nor replacement with a single food crop nor a single variety of livestock will do, if tobacco growers, farm workers and manufacturers are to obtain a decent livelihood in the end.<sup>6</sup> In India, for instance, a former beedi agent has diversified into tailoring, poultry and teaching yoga. In Bangladesh, Nayakrishi Andolon are showing an alternative to the mainstream development paradigm of economic growth. Nayakrishi is about “more than introduction of technologies, it is not merely sustainable agriculture. More precisely it is rather appropriation and regeneration of the life activities of the communities, the joy of living. (...) It is a quest for good and happy life, here and now.”<sup>7</sup>

**Protection** Since processes to diversify out of tobacco production have the long-term effect that tobacco companies will lose (at least some of) their profits, it is indispensable to protect projects for alternative livelihoods to tobacco from the influence of the tobacco industry and leaf companies. As examples from Malaysia and India show, programmes with ties to the tobacco industry are not likely to lead to a complete phase-out of tobacco production.<sup>8</sup>

**Commitment** The provision of financial support through the international community is essential for helping tobacco growing countries switch. Governments all over the world, especially those of industrialised countries, should be held accountable for the commitments they made under article 26 of the FCTC (financial resources). The WHO’s recent proposal for the establishment of a so-called solidarity tobacco contribution (STC)<sup>9</sup> would generate funds that could for instance be invested in strategies for reducing child mortality. In order to avoid cross-financing, we would suggest to explicitly allocate funds for alternative livelihoods to tobacco.

Since the coming into force of the FCTC in 2005, we have seen considerable advancements in the drawing up of guidelines for most articles concerning the control of tobacco consumption. Now, it is time to gain momentum for the implementation of articles regarding tobacco production.

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6 See: FCTC working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing (2010): Progress report of the working group, principle 4.

7 Nayakrishi Andolon. <http://membres.multimania.fr/ubinig/naya/wayoflife.html>

8 See: FCTC working group on economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing (2010): Progress report of the working group, principle 5.

9 See: World Health Organisation (2011): Discussion Paper STC: The Solidarity Tobacco Contribution. Geneva.

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## PICTURE CREDITS

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Page 17: Programa Nacional de Diversificação em Áreas Cultivadas com Tabaco, Brazil

Page 22: Jacob K Kibwage, Kenya

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATER	Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural
BAT	British American Tobacco
BATA	Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance
CAPA	Centro de Apoio ao Pequeno Agricultor (Brazil)
CONICQ	Comissão Nacional para a Implementação da Convenção Quadro para o Controle do Tabaco (Brazil)
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPAR	Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTRI	Central Tobacco Research Institute (India)
ECLT	Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco-growing Foundation
FCTC	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
FCV	Flue Cured Virginia
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDRC	International development Research Center
INBAR	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan
ITG	Imperial Tobacco Group
ITGA	International Tobacco Growers' Association
MASFA	Mchinji Area Smallholder Farmers Association
MDA	Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário (Brazil)
MPIC	Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (Malaysia)
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers Association in Malawi
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NKTB	National Kenaf and Tobacco Board (Malaysia)
NTCP	National Tobacco Control Programme (India)
OIB	Opportunity International Bank
PMI	Philip Morris International
RPSIT	Tobacco Industry Restructuring Plan (Malaysia)
SAGARPA	Secretaría de agricultura, ganadería, desarrollo rural, pesca y alimentación (Mexico)
TOTAWUM	Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union of Malawi
TTCF	Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum
WBB Trust	Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust
WCToH	World Conference on Tobacco or Health
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Unfairtobacco.org is a project by the Berlin Working Group on Environment and Development (Blue 21) e.V. We inform about environmental degradation and human rights violations by the tobacco industry and lobby for alternatives to tobacco growing for smallholder farmers.

In practice:

- we develop education materials, give workshops and show our exposition “Big Tobacco”
- we inform about alternatives to tobacco growing, e.g. at the 2012 international conference on Alternative Livelihoods to Tobacco
- we run the website unfairtobacco.org, the only central resource on socio-economic and ecological costs of tobacco and alternatives to tobacco growing, worldwide
- and we petition politicians and protest against tobacco industry to pressure for workers’ rights

Unfairtobacco.org was founded in 2004 by Laura Graen, then named “Campaign Rauchzeichen!”. The name of the project changed to “Unfairtobacco.org” in 2011.

#### **OUR MAIN IDEAS ARE:**

**No such thing as fair trade tobacco:** Tobacco can not be fairly traded, as its cultivation is associated with damage to health, environmental destruction and human rights violation.

**Better working conditions:** The working conditions in tobacco farming - which involve indebtedness, child labour and health damage - are unsustainable. As long as there are still no alternatives for tobacco growers, we demand the improvement of working conditions as well as better worker protection.

**Reforestation:** Tobacco production destroys natural resources through soil depletion and the logging of forests. We therefore call for reforestation measures and the phasing out of tobacco farming.

**Phasing-out tobacco cultivation:** In order for tobacco growers to live in a more acceptable and autonomous manner, it is essential that tobacco cultivation be phased out. We support the development of alternative crop farming and other alternate sources of revenue.

**Non-smoker protection laws:** We demand comprehensive non-smoker protection laws.

**Backing the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control:** We support the actual implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), particularly article 17 (diversification), 18 (protection of the environment and health of persons) and 26 (financial resources).

**A solidary and ecological world economy:** The global economy is marked by injustice, privileging multinational companies such as Philip Morris International or British American Tobacco. We campaign for a solidary, ecological and peaceful world economic order, which is orientated towards the needs of people.

To stay independent, we are in need of many small and big donations.

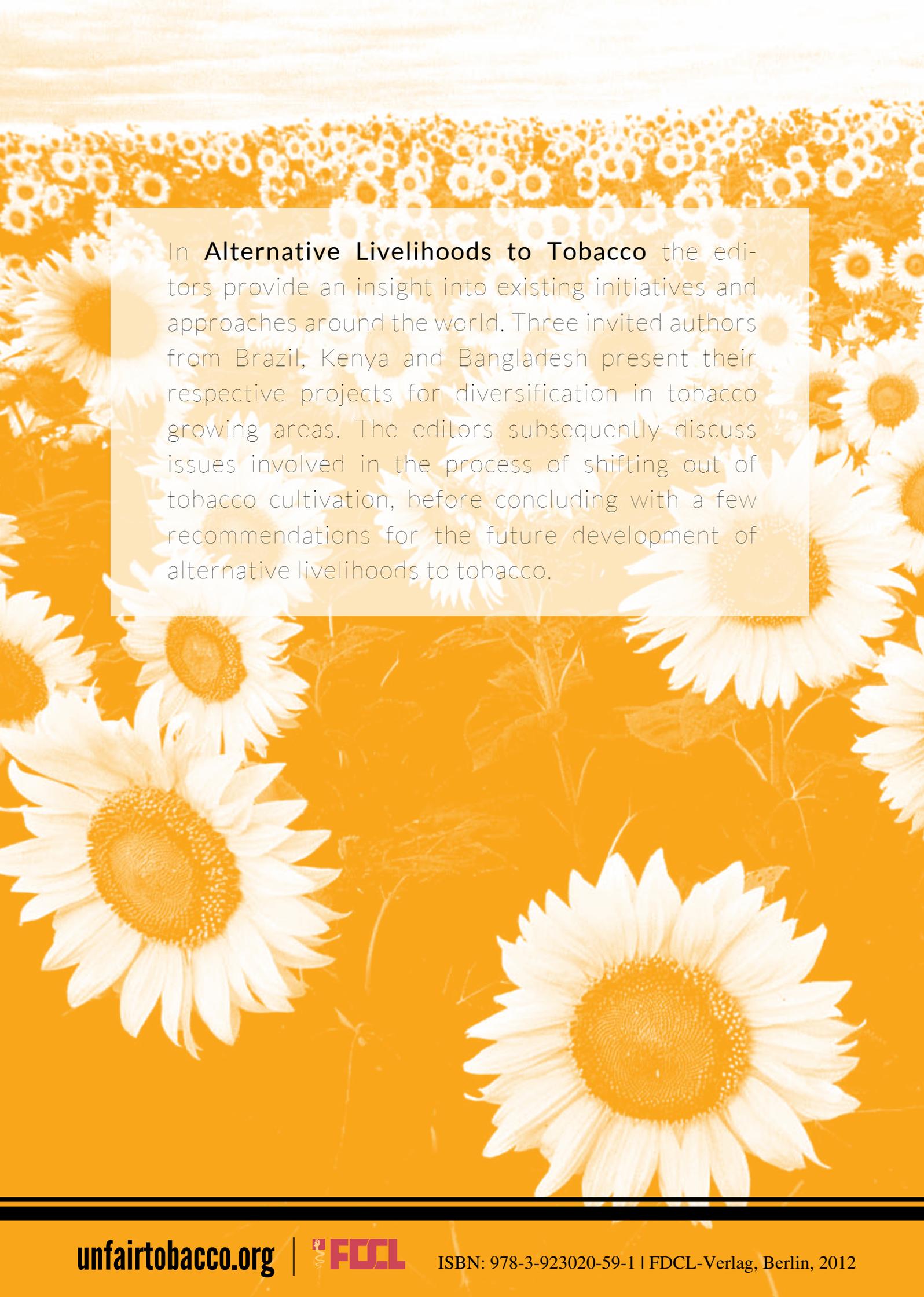
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In **Alternative Livelihoods to Tobacco** the editors provide an insight into existing initiatives and approaches around the world. Three invited authors from Brazil, Kenya and Bangladesh present their respective projects for diversification in tobacco growing areas. The editors subsequently discuss issues involved in the process of shifting out of tobacco cultivation, before concluding with a few recommendations for the future development of alternative livelihoods to tobacco.