

# Tobacco Control in the Americas

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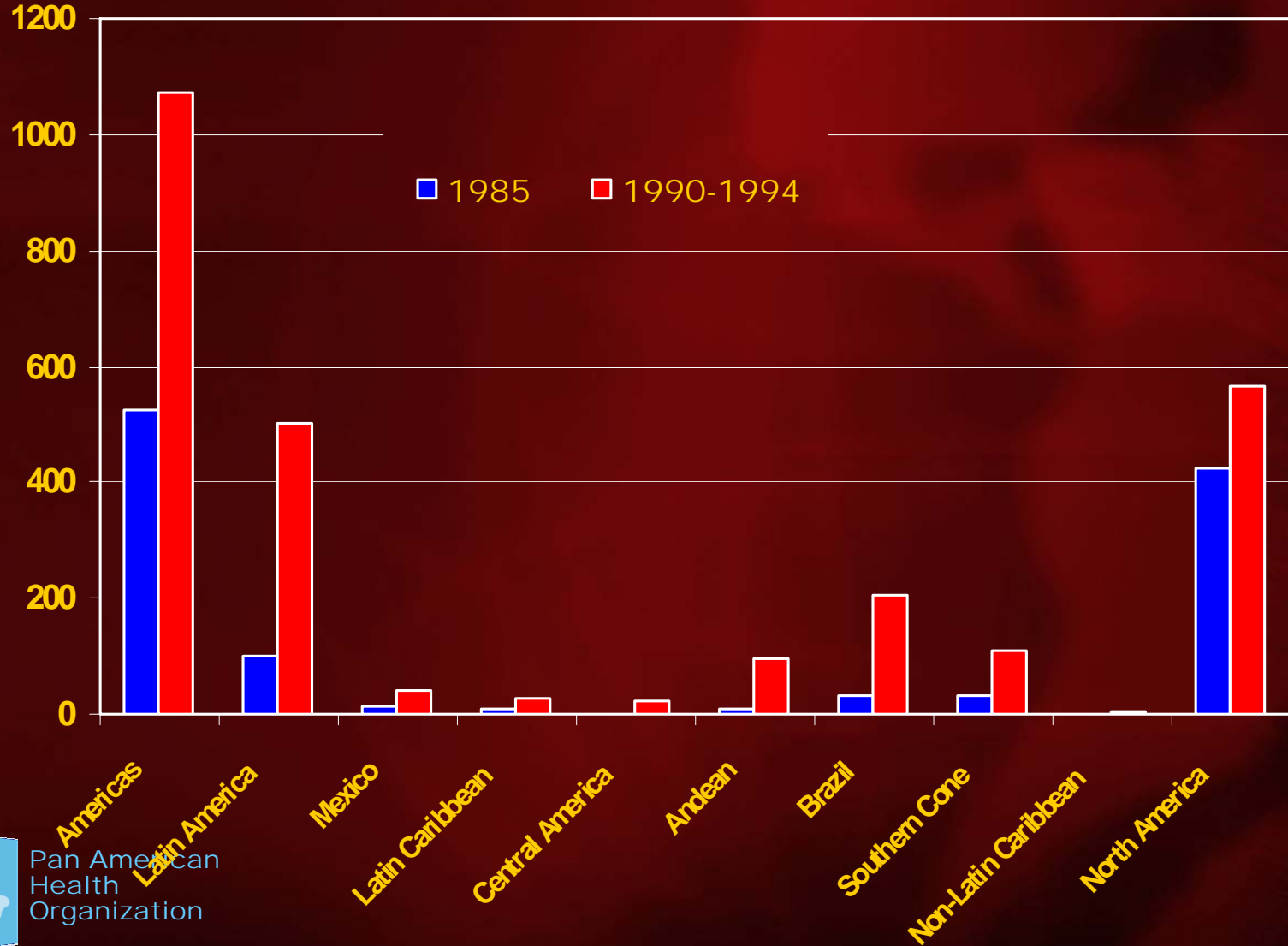
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# Tobacco's global impact

- **Mortality**
  - Five million deaths globally every year; one million in the Americas
- **Deaths from noncommunicable diseases**
  - Responsible for one-third of all cardiovascular and cancer deaths in the Americas
- **Economic impact**
  - The World Bank estimates that tobacco drains the global economy of \$200 billion annually

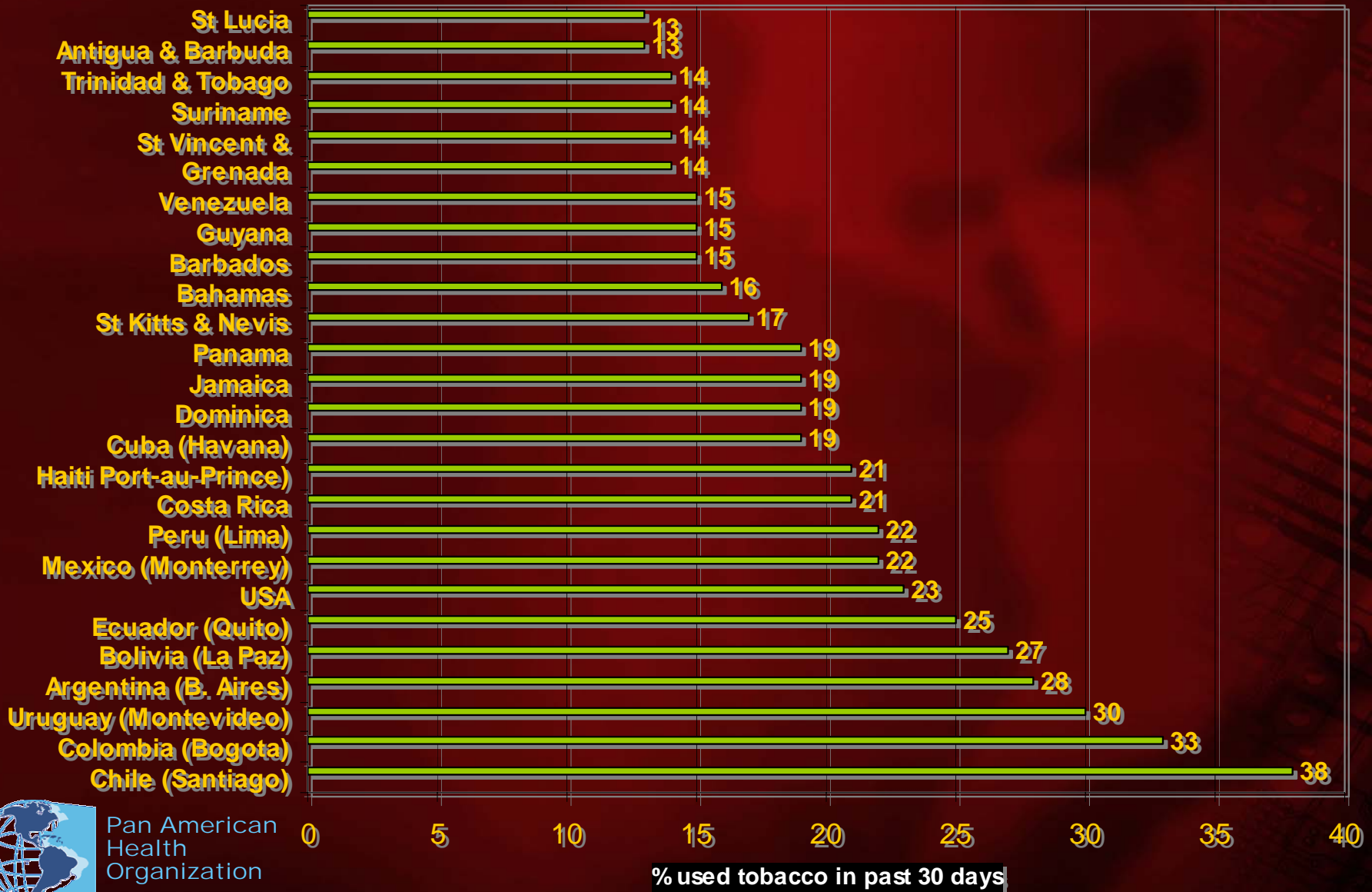


# Mortality attributable to smoking, Americas 1985, 1990-94 average ('000s)



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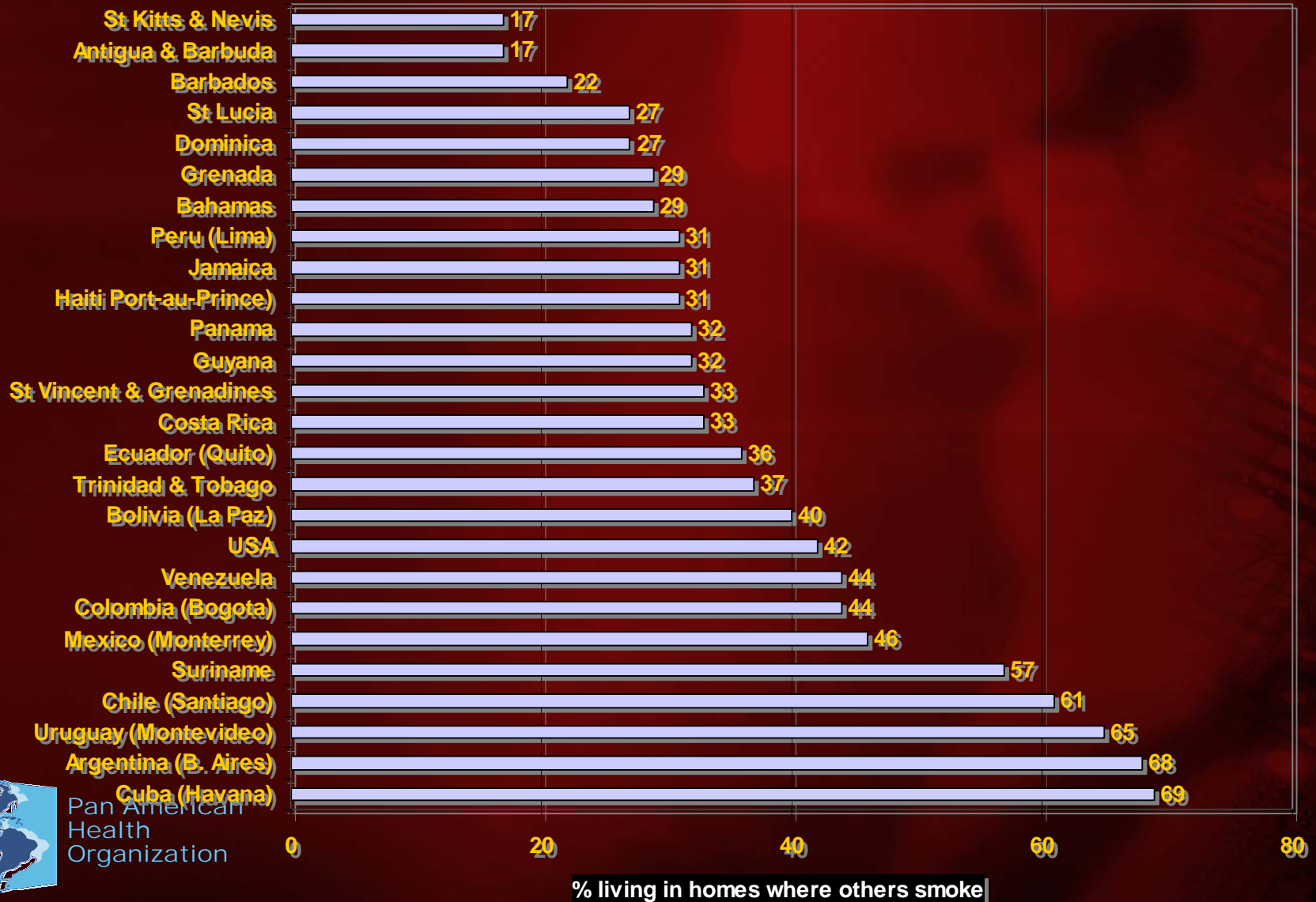
# Prevalence of Tobacco Use Age 13-15, Americas, 1999-2002



Pan American Health Organization

Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey

# Exposure to tobacco smoke in the home Age 13-15, Americas, 1999-2002



Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey



# Social and political context

- Despite progress in developed and some developing countries, tobacco remains a widely unregulated, socially acceptable product in most of the world
- Tobacco's disease vector is a powerful industry with resources and political influence in every corner of the globe:

"Tobacco use is unlike other threats to global health. Infectious diseases do not employ multinational public relations firms. There are no front groups to promote the spread of cholera. Mosquitoes have no lobbyists."

- WHO expert committee on tobacco industry documents

- This situation requires unique public health approaches: economists, lawyers and lobbyists are as important as health professionals



# Tobacco control in the Americas: How are we doing?

## BAD NEWS

- Smoking prevalence stagnant in most countries
- Few countries with effective tobacco control policies
- Limited government and civil society infrastructure
- Focus on individual



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approaches

## GOOD NEWS

- Per capita consumption decreasing; prevalence decreasing in Brazil, Uruguay, N. America
- Countries that have them are leading the world
- Investments in tobacco control are slowly increasing
- Movement toward policies

# How can we make the news better?

## Bring the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control into force

- The WHO FCTC is an international treaty adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2003
- 168 countries have signed, 32 have ratified. 8 more ratifications will trigger entry into force
- The WHO FCTC addresses the most cost-effective tobacco control measures:
  - Tax and price increases on tobacco products
  - Smoke-free environments
  - Health warnings on tobacco packaging
  - Bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship





# Tobacco Taxes

WHO FCTC: Encourages use of taxation and fiscal policy to reduce tobacco use

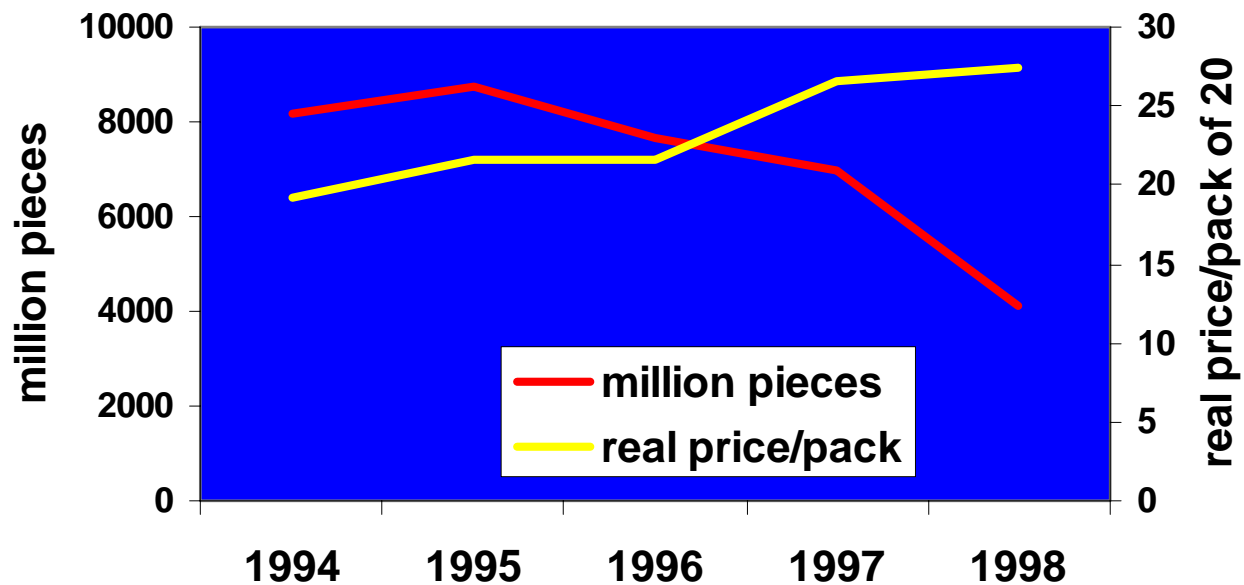
## Impact

- A real price increase of 10% decreases per capita consumption by 8% in low and middle-income countries
- The effect is even greater on youth and the poor
- Decreasing real price of tobacco can greatly undermine the impact of most other tobacco control measures
- Increasing taxes also increases tobacco tax revenue (7% per 10% tax increase); this can be used for health promotion and other social programs

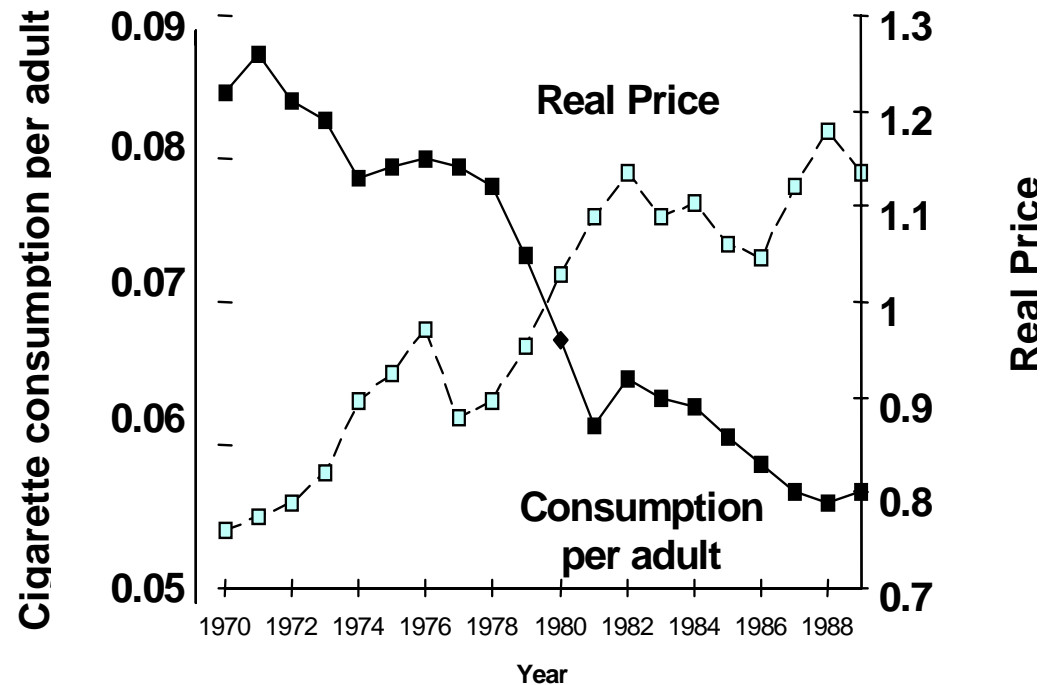


# Higher price = lower consumption in Venezuela

## Cigarette Consumption and Real Price/Pack, Venezuela, 1994-1998

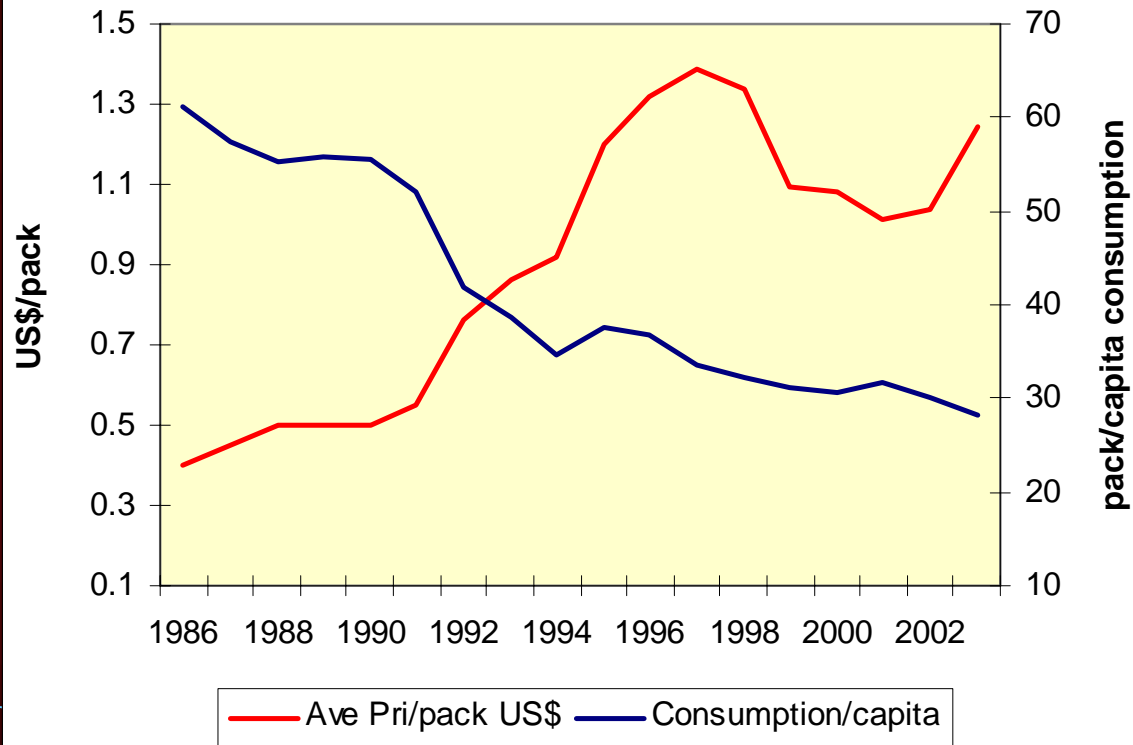


# ... and in South Africa



# ... and in Brazil

Relationship between price and consumption of cigarettes in Brazil, 1986-2003



# Smoke-Free Environments

WHO FCTC: Requires protection from secondhand smoke in all public transit, indoor workplaces and public places

Impact: The tobacco industry's view

“The most dangerous development to the viability of the tobacco industry that has yet occurred.” The  
Tobacco Institute, 1978

“At a dollar a pack even the lightest of workplaces smoking restrictions is costing this industry 233 million dollars a year in revenue [in the US].” The Tobacco  
Institute, late 1980s

“It is our opinion that the single most important issue facing our industry is the erosion of social acceptability of smoking.”



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Andrew Whist of Philip Morris, 1994

# 100% Smoke-Free Environments

## Protect nonsmokers

- Reduce death and disease caused by secondhand smoke exposure

## Help smokers quit

- Reduce tobacco consumption among smokers by 29%

## Prevent smoking initiation

- Create a nonsmoking norm



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**THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A NON-SMOKING SECTION**

Secondhand smoke drifts from the smoking section exposing everyone to cancer-causing chemicals. By supporting smoke-free restaurants and bars, you're helping eliminate 3,000 secondhand smoke deaths in non-smoking American adults every year. Make smoking history.

# Package Messages

WHO FCTC: Requires health warnings covering 30% of surface of all tobacco packaging within 3 years

## Impact

- Target information perfectly at smokers
- Provide information that smokers read and help meet standard of informed consent
- Greatly detract from the appeal of the package
- Motivate smokers to try to quit
- Support other tobacco control policies and goals

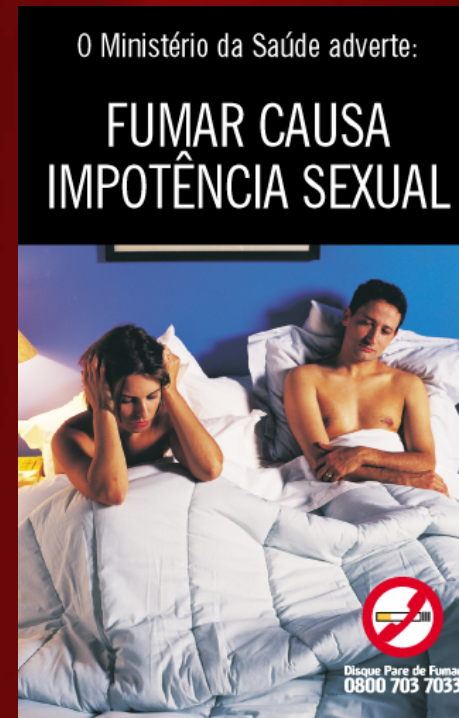


# Evidence from Brazil

- 54% of smokers had changed their opinion on the health consequences of smoking as a result of the warnings
- 67% of smokers said the warnings made them want to quit
- impact was greater among lower income and education groups



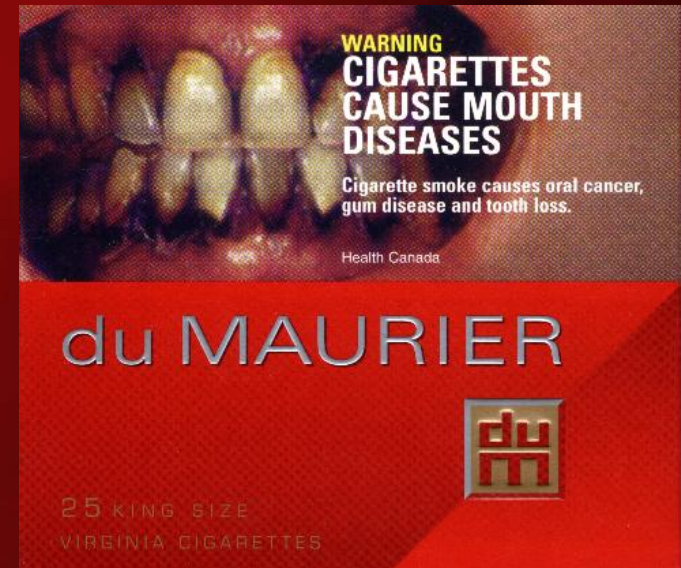
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# Evidence from Canada

- 58% of smokers thought more about the health effects of smoking as a result of the warnings
- 44% of smokers said the warnings had increased their motivation to quit
- 27% of smokers smoked less inside of their home as a result of the warnings



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# Ban on tobacco promotion

WHO FCTC: Requires countries to prohibit all direct and indirect advertising within 5 years

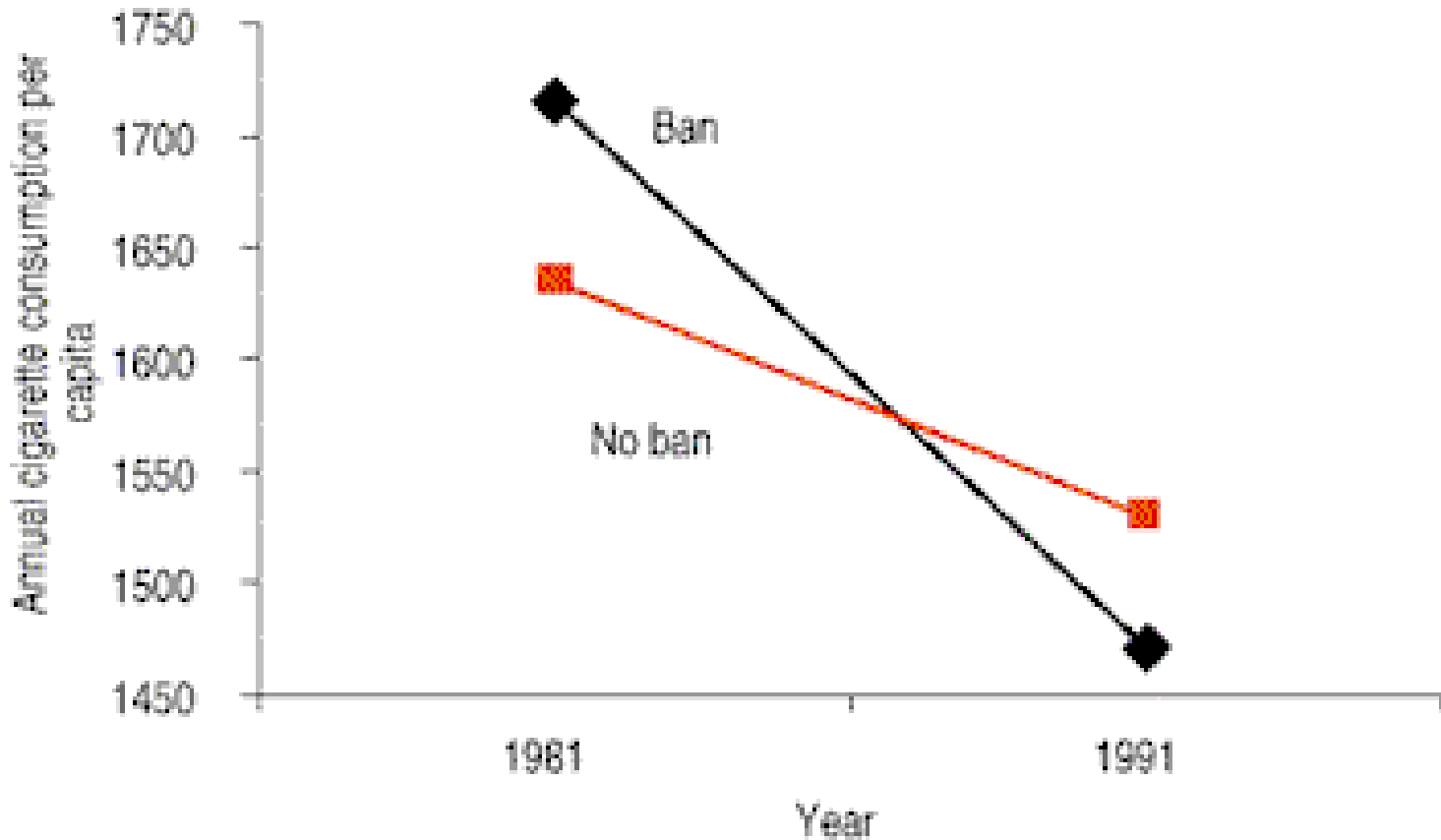
## Impact

- Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship increases tobacco initiation and overall consumption
- Promotion creates a “friendly familiarity” for tobacco that makes it seem normal and acceptable
- Tobacco use decreases faster in countries with bans or comprehensive restrictions on promotion experience than in countries with no restrictions or weak restrictions



# Per capita consumption in countries with and without advertising bans

(study of 102 countries)



# Initiatives in the Americas

- Promoting ratification and implementation of the WHO FCTC
- Smoke Free Americas initiative – smoke-free environments
- Building civil society capacity
- Economic research

