

Strategic Plan

2022-2024



FOUNDATION FOR A
SMOKE-FREE WORLD



Mission

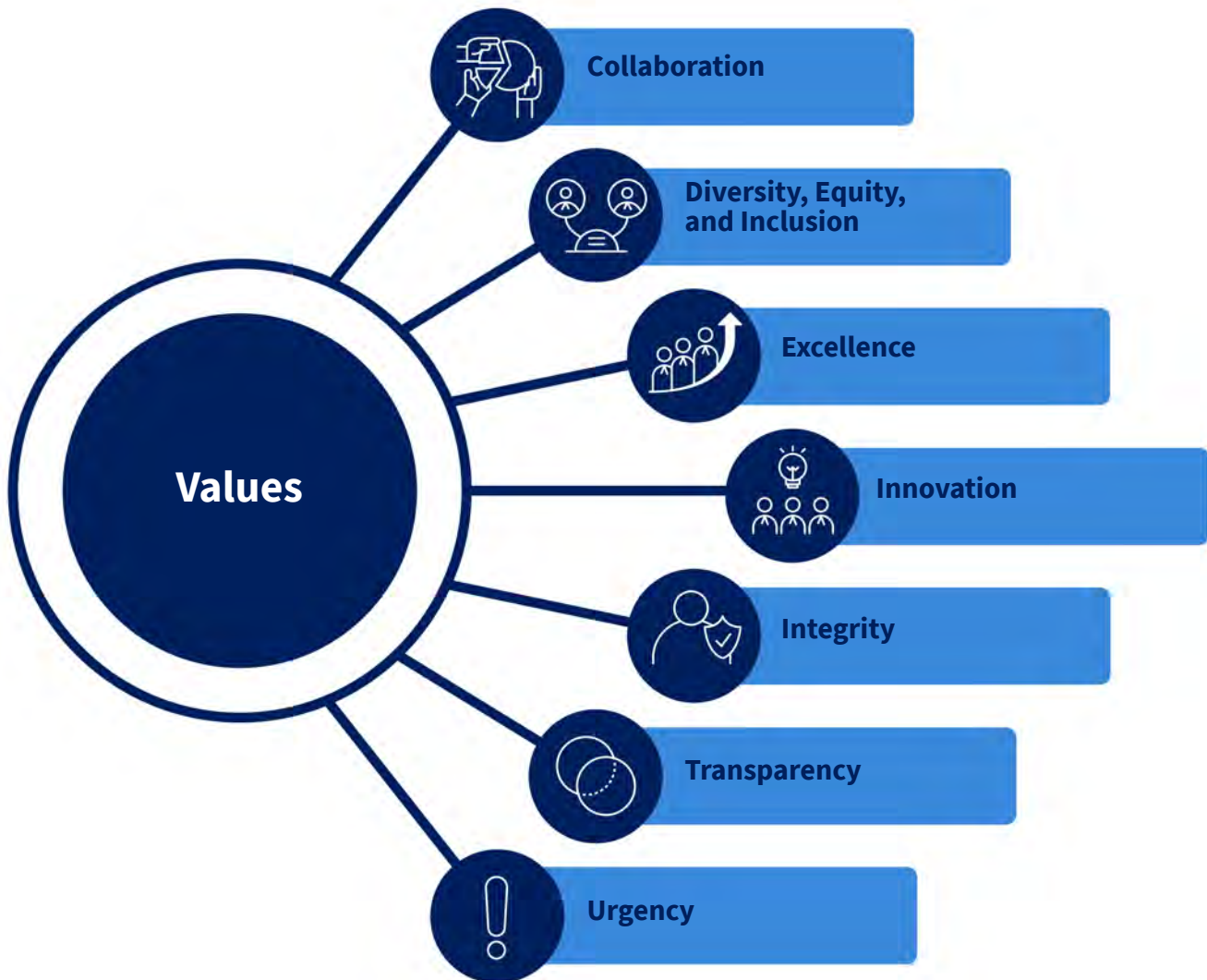
The mission of the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World is to end smoking in this generation.

Vision

Our vision is a world in which combustible, other forms of toxic tobacco, and smoking related death and disease are eliminated, and tobacco-dependent agriculture and economies are diversified.

Values

As we work toward achieving our mission and goals, we at Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (“FSFW” or “Foundation”) are guided by the following fundamental values:



Executive Summary

This 2022 to 2024 Strategic Plan (the “Strategic Plan”) serves as the Foundation’s roadmap for the next three years. Intentionality in setting goals, strategies, tactics, and metrics maximizes the likelihood of accomplishing our objectives. Moreover, such intentionality supports the Foundation’s conviction that by acting with a sense of urgency, producing excellent work, and emphasizing a collaborative, transparent, and inclusive environment with the highest level of integrity, we will create a world in which combustible tobacco, other toxic forms of tobacco, and smoking-related death and disease are eliminated and tobacco-dependent agriculture and economies are diversified, achieving our mission to end smoking in this generation.

In creating this Strategic Plan, we considered internal and external factors impacting the Foundation’s ability to achieve its mission and goals over the next three years. We also reflected on the Foundation’s activities during the last three years as it executed its first strategic plan, including its key accomplishments. The current state of the public health and tobacco control communities also impacted our planning.

Importantly, in formulating this Strategic Plan, we re-emphasized our commitment to funding research that is nonduplicative and novel, focusing on scientific and regulatory gaps. We started with the bedrock that the Foundation’s grantmaking and other efforts support three broad categories of work: (i) health and science research aimed at helping smokers quit or switch to reduced-risk products (RRPs); (ii) transforming industry; and (iii) diversifying the agricultural sector in Malawi.

As more fully detailed in the Strategic Plan, with this background in mind, our roadmap for the next three years is defined by the five SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals that the Foundation will work toward achieving. To accomplish these goals, the Foundation will focus its broad categories of grantmaking across six “ smoke-free purposes” for which it was created. The Strategic Plan will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and adjusted as appropriate.

Goals

With this background in mind, Foundation will work over the next three years to achieve the following five goals:

- 1. Reduce barriers to quitting and/or switching from combustibles and other toxic tobacco products.**
- 2. Strengthen understanding, knowledge, and research capacity in the area of tobacco harm reduction and its role to end smoking.**
- 3. Support the development of a diversified agricultural ecosystem in Malawi to lead smallholder farmers toward alternative livelihoods.**
- 4. Drive the transformation of tobacco companies for the benefit of public health.**
- 5. Strengthen the Foundation's future to fulfill its mission.**

Context

I. Foundation's Progress Toward Its First Strategic Plan

As we reach the end of the First Strategic Plan three-year cycle, we reflect on the Foundation's activities over the last three years. Key accomplishments include:

- [Foundation grants](#) supported more than 100 international researchers in advancing research in smoking cessation and harm reduction, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries (“LMICs”), marginalized communities, and culturally sensitive interventions.
- The Foundation's [Global State of Smoking Polls](#) provided an understanding of the experiences and challenges of smokers, their habits, and their perceptions of the risks associated with tobacco products and alternative nicotine delivery systems. These polls and other FSFW-supported reports, including [Global Trends in Nicotine](#), [Burning Issues: The Global State of Harm Reduction](#) and the [Dubrovnik Consultation](#), documented the nicotine ecosystem, perceptions and misperceptions about tobacco and nicotine, and economic perspectives associated with tobacco harm reduction—initial steps in addressing false beliefs.
- Several [country reports](#) published by the Foundation and its partners filled knowledge gaps in our collective understanding of tobacco production and use, especially in LMICs.
- In Malawi, working with our Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) affiliate, the Foundation provided grants to support the launch of the Centre for Agricultural Transformation (CAT), which aims to help farmers diversify their incomes to build resilience and ease their heavy reliance on the declining tobacco sector. The Foundation, with ATI's assistance, continues to support CAT programs, scholarships, and other human and institutional capacity-building efforts.
- The Malawi Agriculture Policy Advancement and Transformation Agenda (MwAPATA) Institute was launched by Michigan State University (MSU) with the support of a Foundation grant. This think tank is assisting in generating evidence to inform policies that support smallholder farmers in diversifying their production. The MwAPATA Institute, along with its partners—the National Planning Commission, MSU, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the National Statistical Office—have produced a number of [research papers](#) and briefs, which are leading to impactful science-based policy reform.
- The [Tobacco Transformation Index](#) is the first tool to rank the world's 15 largest tobacco companies, which account for nearly 90% of global cigarette volume, on their relative progress toward harm reduction. The first edition was published in September 2020 and a new edition will be published every two years. The Index is a platform that produces research and other content to complement the company rankings.
- Scientific journals have published several reports written by Foundation grantees that explore the barriers to smoking cessation and the impacts of harm reduction. The grantees include [Analytisch-Biologisches Forschungslabor GmbH](#), [Center of Excellence for the Acceleration of Harm Reduction](#), and [BOTEC Analysis](#).

II. Research Gaps and Responses

The Foundation funds research and engages in direct charitable activities that are nonduplicative and novel, focusing on scientific and regulatory gaps, in furtherance of the purposes for which it was formed. Our efforts generally fall into three main subject areas:

A. Health and Science Research Aimed at Helping Smokers Quit or Switch to RRP

For the incidence of cigarette smoking and other forms of toxic tobacco use to decrease, current users must quit or switch to RRP and non-smokers and those who do not use tobacco in any form must not start. Researchers and experts define the former path as the “off-ramp” of smokers and tobacco users, and the latter path as the “on-ramp” of non-smokers and non-tobacco users. The material net gain for public health can only be achieved if substantially more smokers quit than non-smokers start.

Proponents of THR focus on the benefits of the “off-ramp”, *i.e.*, RRP as a means of helping smokers quit. While the traditional tobacco control community highlights the challenges associated with the “on-ramp,” focusing particularly on youth vaping.

We consider the research being conducted globally, as well as gaps in current knowledge, to assess the priorities for the Foundation’s future research in this area. The Foundation will focus on non-duplicative and novel research associated with smoking cessation and THR, including:

- improving understanding about whether THR products are an “on-ramp” for non-smokers and/or an “off-ramp” cessation tool for smokers;
- the effects of THR product use;
- the availability of and economics associated with THR and risk proportionate regulation;
- misperceptions around nicotine;
- correcting misinformation and disinformation about THR, so that it is assessed based on evidence;
- supporting medical and other health professionals in advising smokers and tobacco users, with an emphasis on marginalized and diverse communities, and LMICs.

B. Transforming Industry

The Tobacco Transformation Index research platform is a tool, the first of its kind, which complements the Foundation research agenda as a change agent. Its theory of change is predicated on the forces of competition, differentiation, and constructive engagement. The Index is not an end in itself but a potential accelerant by indirectly influencing company behavior in a manner in line with our mission.

C. Diversifying the Agriculture Sector in Malawi

The Foundation’s work in Malawi, one of the world’s most tobacco dependent economies, assists smallholder tobacco farmers in transitioning to sustainable livelihoods. Our work there is demonstrating progress and attracting potential partners. Foundation’s programs in Malawi will continue to be focused on the Centre for Agricultural Transformation, which embodies innovative programs eventually to be housed in a physical structure, and the MwAPATA Institute, which supports effective policy research and evidence generation related to agricultural transformation in the country.

Focus Areas

The Foundation will continue to fund grants and otherwise engage in charitable activities in the same three broad categories in which we have worked since our inception (health and science research aimed at helping smokers quit or switch to less harmful products, industry transformation, and agricultural diversification in Malawi). More specifically, our efforts will focus on six of the “smoke-free purposes” described in our [Certificate of Incorporation](#), Article Third. These focus areas will prescribe the direction for the work that will be done to achieve the goals we set for the Foundation for the next three years and execute on our mission to end smoking in this generation.

The Foundation will hold, invest and administer assets received as charitable gifts, bequests and contributions and use such assets or the income therefrom to:

1. Make grants relating to alternatives to cigarettes and to achieve a smoke-free world: make grants and other distributions to academic, health-related, research and science centers and institutions and other collaborating centers and institutions, and to scientists and health-related experts, to support research and projects regarding alternatives to cigarettes and other combustible tobacco products and how to best achieve a smoke-free world and advance the field of tobacco harm reduction;
2. Research and report on public opinion about tobacco harm reduction: fund global research initiatives and publish reports regarding, among other things, the attitudes and opinions of the general public towards tobacco harm reduction;
3. Fund verification studies to assess the impact of reduced risk products on public health: fund scientific verification studies to assess the impact of smoke-free and reduced risk products on public health outcomes and how such products affect the general population;
4. Inform the public about the activities of the tobacco industry that influence achieving a smoke-free world: scrutinize, comment on, and inform the general public regarding the activities of the tobacco industry, other commercial entities and other stakeholders which may have an impact, either positive or negative, on achieving a smoke-free world and advancing the field of tobacco harm reduction;
5. Research and promote sustainable agricultural alternatives in light of reduced demand for leaf tobacco: research the effect of the reduced demand for leaf tobacco on farmers and other stakeholders and explore and promote sustainable agricultural and nutritional alternatives for tobacco farmers, tobacco land and other stakeholders; and
6. Convene stakeholders around topics relevant to creating a smoke-free world: support global conferences, forums, panels and similar programs to focus on the evolving science regarding alternatives to cigarettes and other combustible tobacco products and how to best realize a smoke-free world.

Strategies and Tactics

To achieve our ambitious goals, the Foundation aims to employ a series of measurable strategies and tactics in each of its areas of focus, or smoke-free purposes, as described below.

Grants Relating to Alternatives to Cigarettes and Achieving a Smoke-Free World

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Improve understanding about the long-term effects of THR product use;
- Improve understanding about whether THR products are an effective off-ramp (cessation) tool for smokers;
- Improve understanding about whether THR products are an on-ramp for non-smokers;
- Educate about the availability of and economics associated with THR and increase awareness of risk-proportionate regulation;
- Ensure the needs of overlooked smokers, including those suffering from mental health conditions, LGBTQ+, people of color, and people residing in poverty are considered; and
- Address the needs unique to smokers living in LMICs.

Directives/Tactics

- Make grants to better understand the economics of THR and support availability and effective policies through in-country research and capacity building, particularly in LMICs;
- Make grants to research, introduce, and apply 21st century systems biology in epidemiology;
- Make grants to initiate novel and nonduplicative research on the potential effects of THR product use;
- Make grants to research interventions for quitting or switching for use in marginalized and vulnerable communities;
- Make grants to research interventions for quitting or switching for use in LMICs; and
- Make grants to research and report on companies' THR marketing practices to restrict youth access.

Research and Report on Public Opinion About Tobacco Harm Reduction

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Identify and dispel misperceptions around nicotine;
- Support health professionals in advising smokers and tobacco users to quit or switch to THR products;
- Correct misinformation and disinformation about THR, so that it is assessed based on evidence;
- Enhance the capacity of researchers and stakeholders to undertake and implement smoking cessation and THR programs by enhancing human resource and organizational capacity and by advancing common methodologies; and
- Help drive global public discussion about cessation and THR.

Directive/Tactics

- Make grants for performing literature reviews of the existing body of research to identify findings and gaps related to THR and associated products;
- Make grants focused on nonduplicative and novel research relating to the potential benefits of nicotine as these could apply to specific disease groups and/or population health conditions;
- Make grants to study various groups' perceptions of nicotine (information and misinformation) and support education on this topic, focusing on LMICs;
- Make grants to enhance the role and capacity of various groups in leading interventions for smokers through cessation and THR, focusing in particular on smokers from diverse and underserved communities;
- Make grants to enhance the role and capacity of various groups in LMICs in leading interventions for smokers through cessation and THR; and
- Make grants to support the development and strengthening of civil society networks that focus on misinformation and disinformation associated with nicotine and provide education about THR.

Verification Studies to Assess the Public Health Impact of Reduced-Risk Products

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Assess methodologies, data, interpretations, and conclusions from studies on cessation, THR, and related research to independently verify outcomes and recommendations.

Directives/Tactics

- Make grants to perform verification studies on scientific publications relating to smoking cessation, THR, product usage trends, World Health Organization and other United Nation agencies' publications, and policy development and recommendations.

Inform the Public about the Activities of the Tobacco Industry That Influence Achieving a Smoke-Free World

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Advance the Tobacco Transformation Index as a credible research platform and vehicle of change for key stakeholders, including institutional investors, researchers, media, and policy makers; and
- Increase Index recognition by company management as a vehicle that creates relative competitive advantage, or conversely disadvantage, depending on company actions over time.

Directives/Tactics

- Introduce additional formal Index releases; and
- Produce a steady flow of new research on a regular basis, including company performance by region/country, state monopolies, marketing practices, global trends in nicotine, intellectual property, and more.

Research and Promote Sustainable Agricultural Alternatives in Light of Reduced Demand for Leaf Tobacco in Malawi

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Increase knowledge and adoption of agricultural science, technology, and innovation;
- Diversify agricultural production by smallholder farmers;
- Provide analyses, studies, research, and education about agricultural policies that constrain agricultural diversification, and support advocacy to eliminate constraints;
- Build human and institutional capacity necessary to support development and adoption of improved agricultural practices and diversification; and
- Generate awareness for the challenges smallholder tobacco farmers and Malawi's agriculture infrastructure face and evidence-based solutions.

Directives/Tactics

- Make grants to introduce improved agricultural practices and technologies through smart farms to farming communities;
- Make grants to support institutional capacity for organizations that advocate for agricultural policy reform and facilitate agricultural diversification;
- Make grants that support grantees who develop linkages with international institutions that deepen and broaden human capacity and accelerate diversification from tobacco; and
- Partner with institutions that are aligned to develop alternatives to tobacco to support agricultural diversification.

Convene Stakeholders Around Topics Relevant to Creating a Smoke-Free World

Desired Outcomes/Strategies

- Promote the active and sustainable exchange of ideas between and among stakeholders in the tobacco-control community, the broader harm-reduction community, and the agriculture sector, including those of differing views;
- Leverage the Foundation's network to bring together thought leaders to drive solutions to challenging issues; and
- Broaden the Foundation's partner network.

Directives/Tactics

- Identify key audiences and pursue engagement and partnerships;
- Host webinars around key topics;
- Support grantee-led stakeholder engagement sessions; and
- Participate at traditional THR and agriculture conferences, as well as relevant events outside of those sectors.

Our goals to end smoking in this generation are ambitious. Many external factors will impact our ability to achieve these goals, and we will continue to review, monitor, and update this organic plan periodically.