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**Date:** Saturday, April 29, 2017 07:50AM  
**Subject:** The global economic strain caused by Big Tobacco PREVENTION  
OBVIATES THE COST OF THE TREATMENT

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## The global economic strain caused by Big Tobacco



The tobacco industry undermines the global economy. Big Tobacco frames itself as an economic stimulator, but independent peer reviewed studies show these claims are illusory.

A 2017 report by the World Health Organization and the National Cancer Institute [1] demonstrates that smoking and its side effects **cost the world economy over US\$1 trillion**. In 2012, the British Medical Journal noted that British American Tobacco (BAT) is responsible for US\$152 billion of that cost on the basis of its 11% global market share. [2]

BAT claims [3] that though the market for tobacco is declining, their economic contribution to the global economy is on the rise, and by extension, their contribution to the livelihood of people around the world. Its report, while focusing on the macroeconomic climate in which it participates, **fails to take into account healthcare costs and lost productivity due to smoking complications that too often lead to premature death.**

Furthermore, the true cost of tobacco has a disproportionate effect in the developing world, which is home to 80% of the world's smokers.

**For example, effective smoking prevention in developing nations costs about US\$20–40 per year of life gained, while lung cancer treatment, which prolongs the lives of only around 10% of those affected, costs US\$18,000 per year of life gained. [4]**

The cost of the death and diseases caused by tobacco is too great to be ignored. The US\$152 billion strain placed on the global economy by BAT is money wasted which could be better spent on preventative measures to dissuade people from smoking. We must #ActOnTobacco in order to create a stronger global economy, strengthen developing nations to lift people out of poverty, and develop healthier communities around the world.

Here's how you can #ActOnTobacco:

Contact BAT directly and tell it that it must pay for the harm its business causes. Email or tweet at the press office using the hashtag #ActOnTobacco, and phone its offices on 020 7845 1000. If you're outside the UK you can find a list of country specific contacts here.

#### **References:**

[1] U.S. National Cancer Institute and World Health Organization. The economics of tobacco and tobacco control. National Cancer Institute Tobacco Control Monograph 21. 2016.

[2] Goodchild M, Narigs N, d'Espaignet ET. Global economic cost of smoking-attributable diseases. Tobacco Control 30 January 2017.

[3] British American Tobacco. The global market: Trends effecting our industry. [Accessed April 2017]

[4] <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs223/en/>

[https://medium.com/@ASH\\_LDN/the-global-economic-strain-caused-by-big-tobacco-2942efb75823](https://medium.com/@ASH_LDN/the-global-economic-strain-caused-by-big-tobacco-2942efb75823)

More of these lawsuits are needed:

<http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/tobacco-control/tobacco-control-litigation/master-settlement-agreement>

Attachments:

m21\_complete.pdf