

A light blue map of the African continent with its national borders outlined, centered on a white background. The map is framed by a dark blue border.

# **Facts on tobacco use in the African Region**



**World Health  
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Africa**

## Background

Tobacco use kills nearly six million people each year, and more than 600 000 of these people are exposed to second-hand smoke.<sup>1</sup> In fact, tobacco kills up to one half of all its users and remains one of the leading preventable causes of death.<sup>2</sup> Tobacco has no known health benefit. On the contrary, it causes disease, disability and premature death.

Tobacco control actions aim to substantially and continually reduce the prevalence of tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) sets forth different tobacco control measures to be implemented in order to prevent people especially the youth from starting to use tobacco; help current tobacco users to quit and; protect non-smokers from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Strengthening the implementation of the WHO FCTC is one of the big challenges for countries in the African Region. Developing comprehensive tobacco control legislation and building capacity for its effective enforcement are crucial for Member States of the Region.

This document provides an overview of the tobacco epidemic in the African Region. Key articles in the WHO FCTC are featured in the document along with a selection of findings from the Global Youth Tobacco Surveys (GYTS), the Global School Personnel Surveys (GSPS) and the Global Health Professions Student Surveys (GHPSS). These surveys were conducted by countries in the African Region since 1999.

The information presented in this document would be useful to policy-makers, governments and tobacco control advocates.

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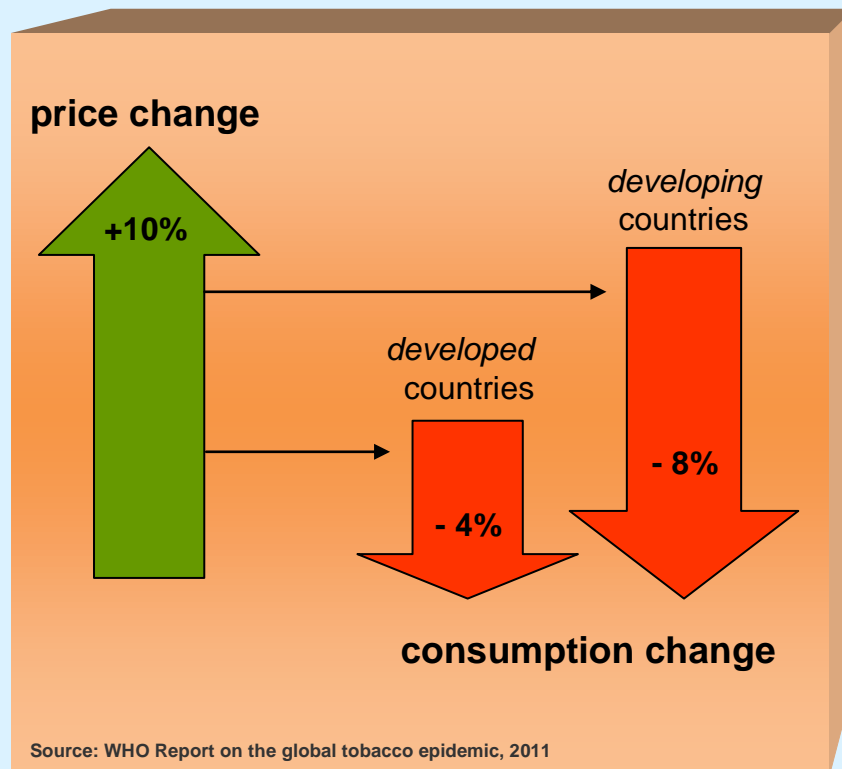
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<sup>1</sup> WHO Global Health Risks: Mortality and burden of disease attributable to selected major risks. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2009.  
<sup>2</sup> WHO Report on the global tobacco epidemic, World Health Organization, 2011.

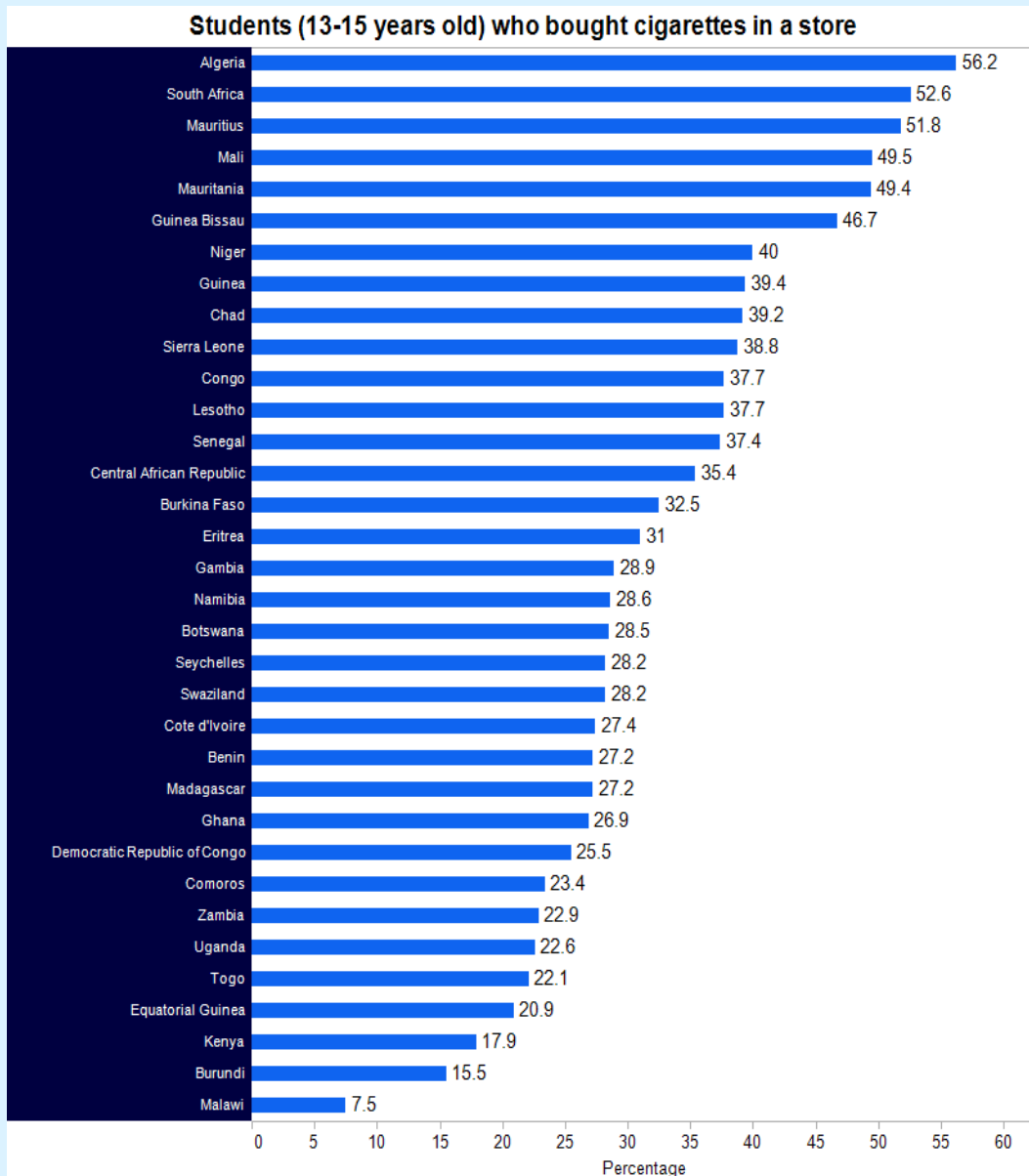


## Article 6 - Price and tax measures to reduce the demand for tobacco

“The Parties recognize that price and tax measures are an effective and important means of reducing tobacco consumption by various segments of the population, in particular young persons.”



## 28.7% of youth in the African Region bought cigarettes in a store.



Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)



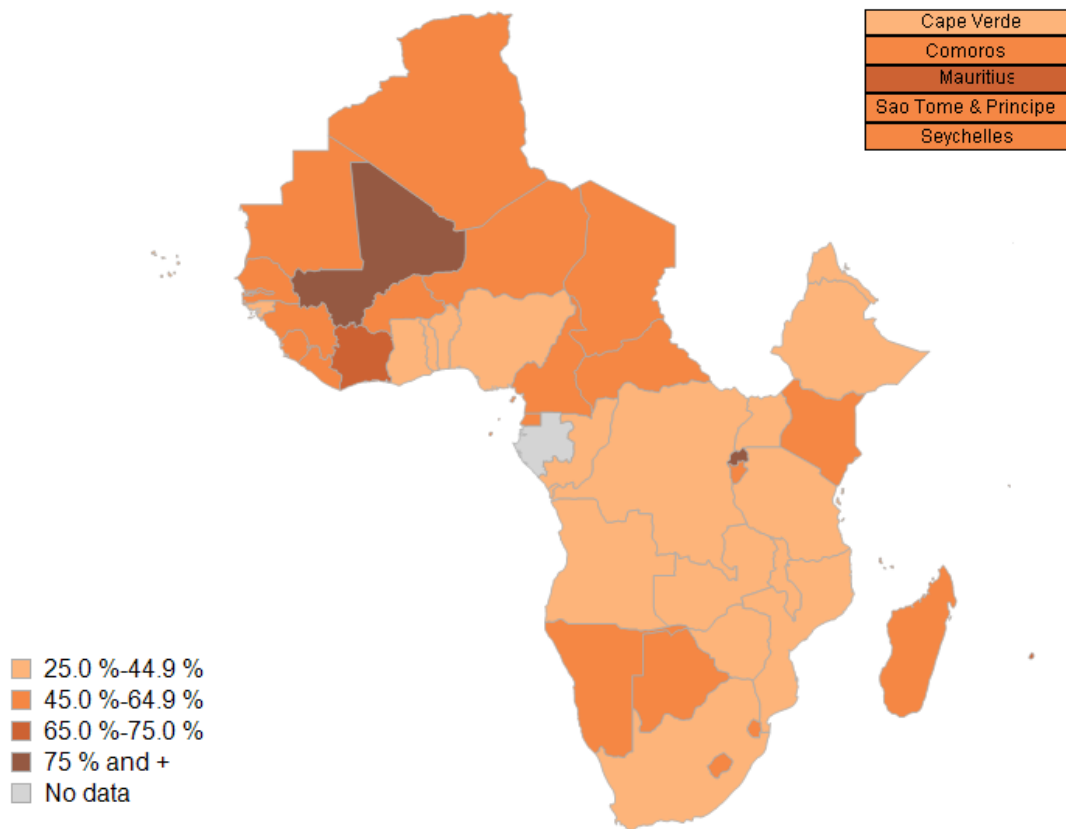
## Article 8 - Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke

**“Each Party shall adopt and implement... measures, providing for protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces, public transport, indoor public places and, as appropriate, other public places.”**



**48.2% of youth in the African Region are exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke in public places.**

**Students (13-15 years old) who were exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke in public places**

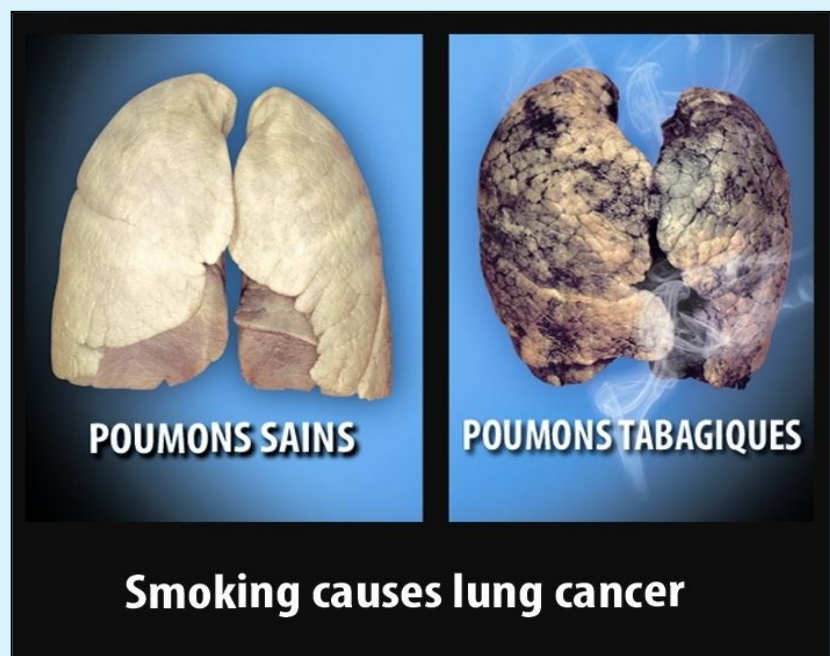


**Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)**



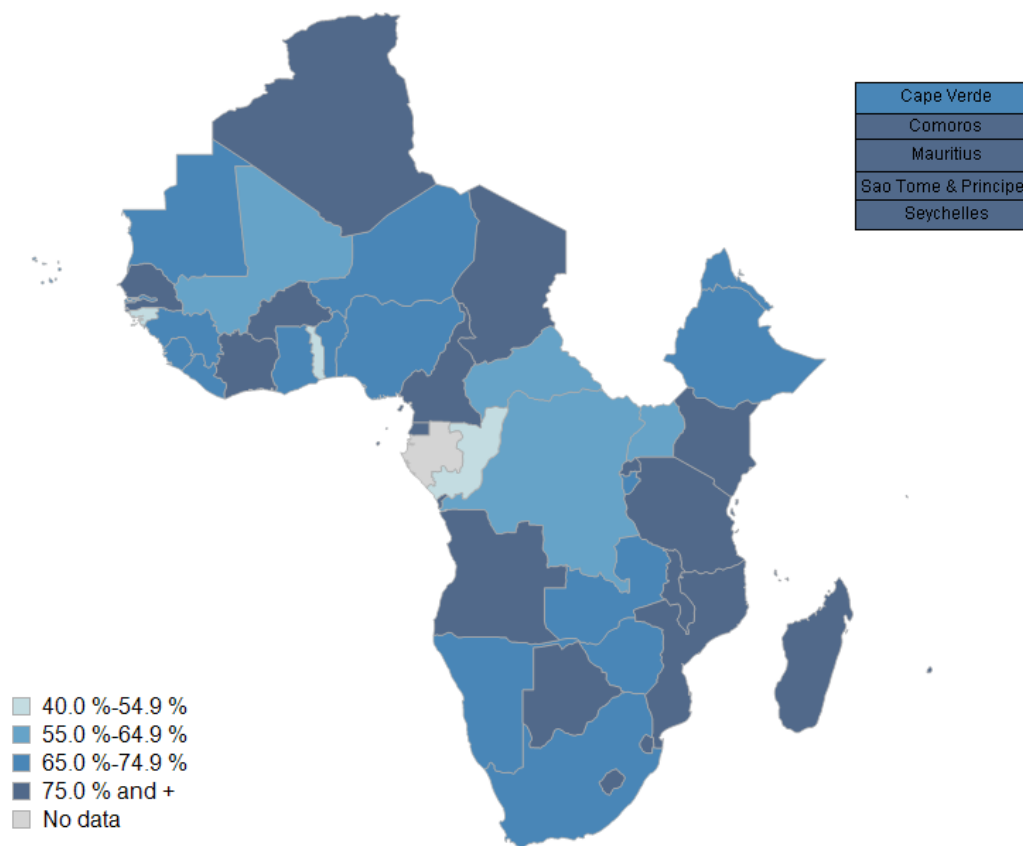
## Article 11 - Packaging and labelling of tobacco products

“Each Party shall... adopt and implement... effective measures to ensure that tobacco product packaging and labelling do not promote a tobacco product... each unit packet and package of tobacco products and any outside packaging and labelling of such products also carry health warnings describing the harmful effects of tobacco use.”



**74.1% of youth in the African Region saw anti-smoking media messages.**

**Students (13-15 years old) who saw anti-smoking media messages**



**Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)**



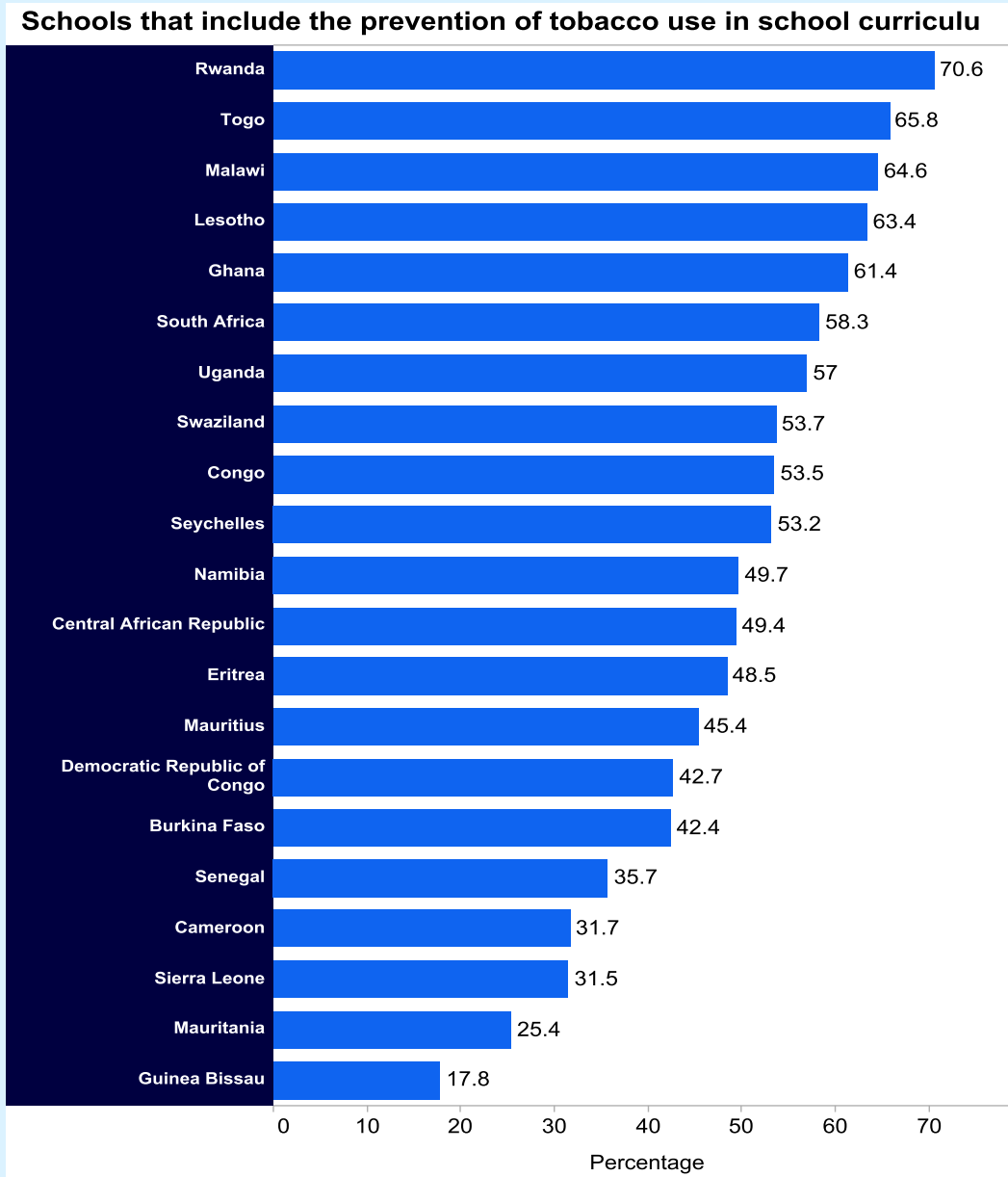


## Article 12 - Education, communication, training and public awareness

“Each Party shall promote and strengthen public awareness of tobacco control issues, using all available communication tools.”



**49.6% of the schools in the African Region include tobacco use prevention in school curriculum.**

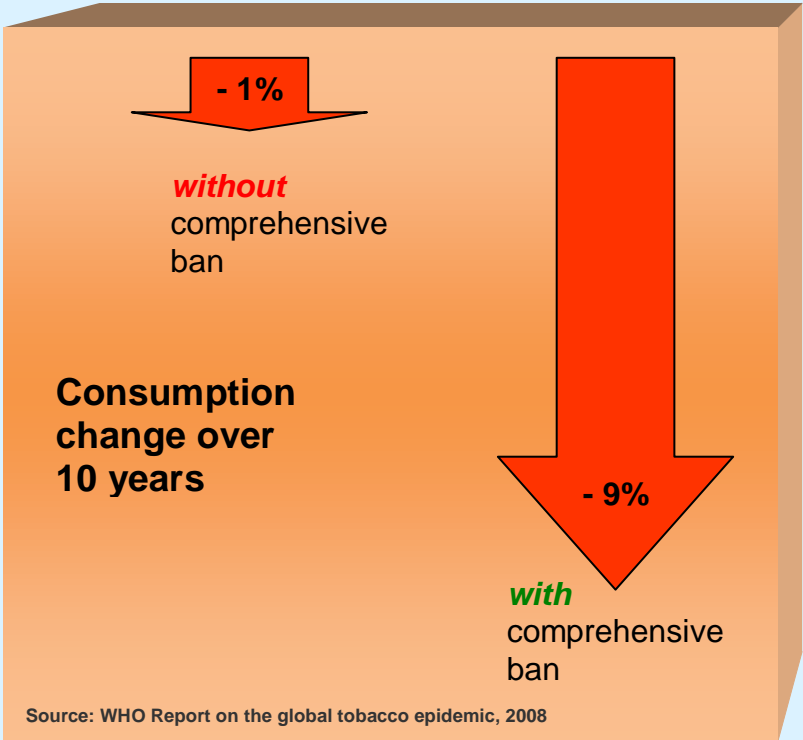


Source: Global School Personnel Survey factsheets (2006-2011)



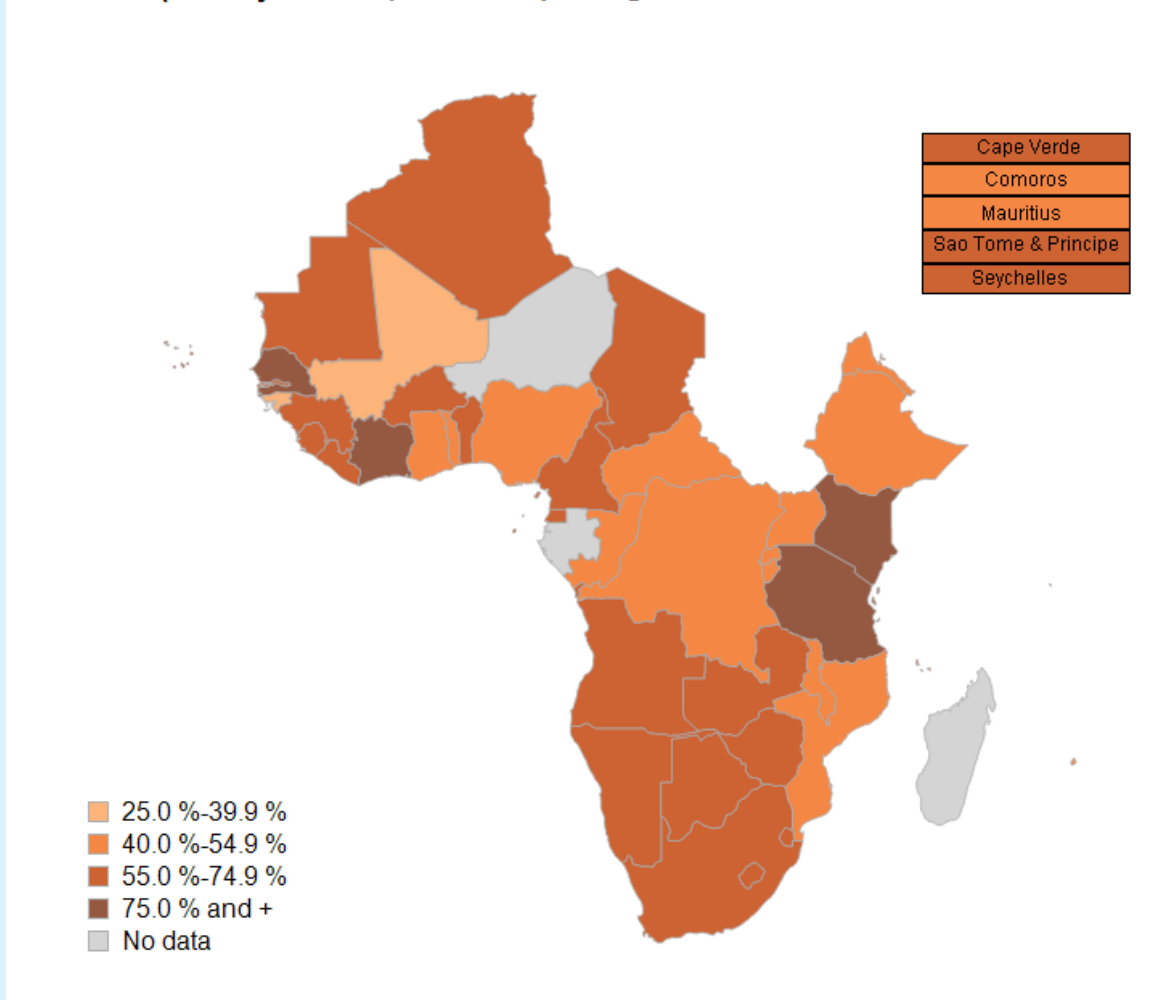
## Article 13 - Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

“Each Party shall... undertake a comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. This shall include... a comprehensive ban on cross-border advertising, promotion and sponsorship originating from its territory.”



**59.1% of youth in the African Region saw pro-cigarettes advertisement on billboards.**

**Students (13-15 years old) who saw pro-cigarette advertisement on billboards**



**Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)**



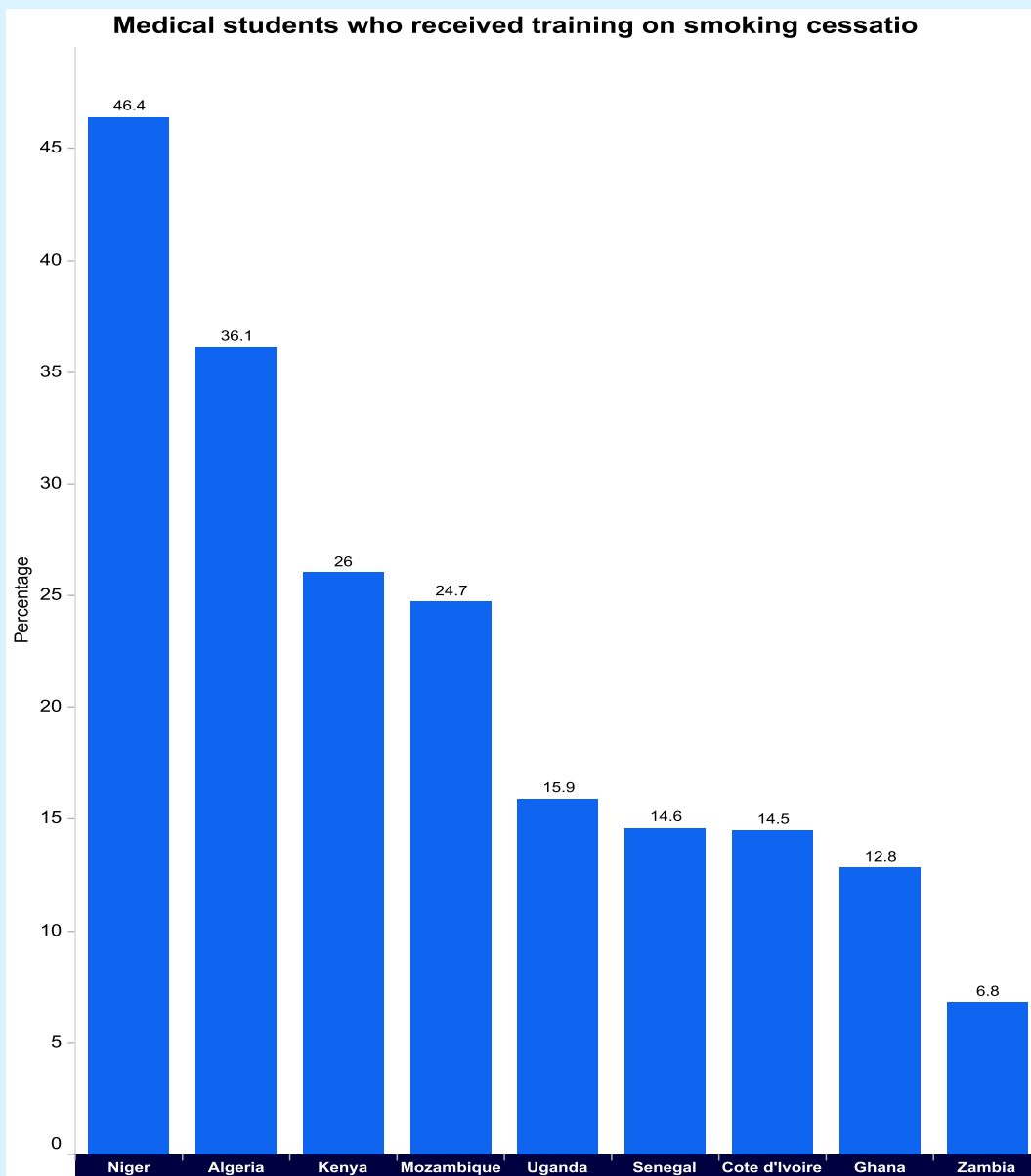
## Article 14 - Demand reduction measures concerning tobacco dependence and cessation

“Each Party... shall take effective measures to promote cessation of tobacco use and adequate treatment for tobacco dependence.”



**Cigarette is a highly addictive drug**

**15.9% of medical students in the African Region received formal training in smoking cessation approaches during medical school.**

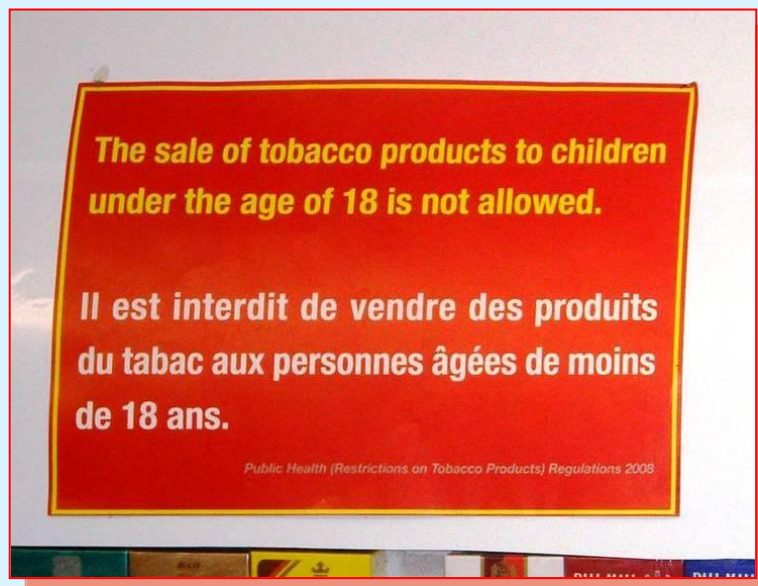


**Source: Global Health Professions Student Survey factsheets (2005-2009)**



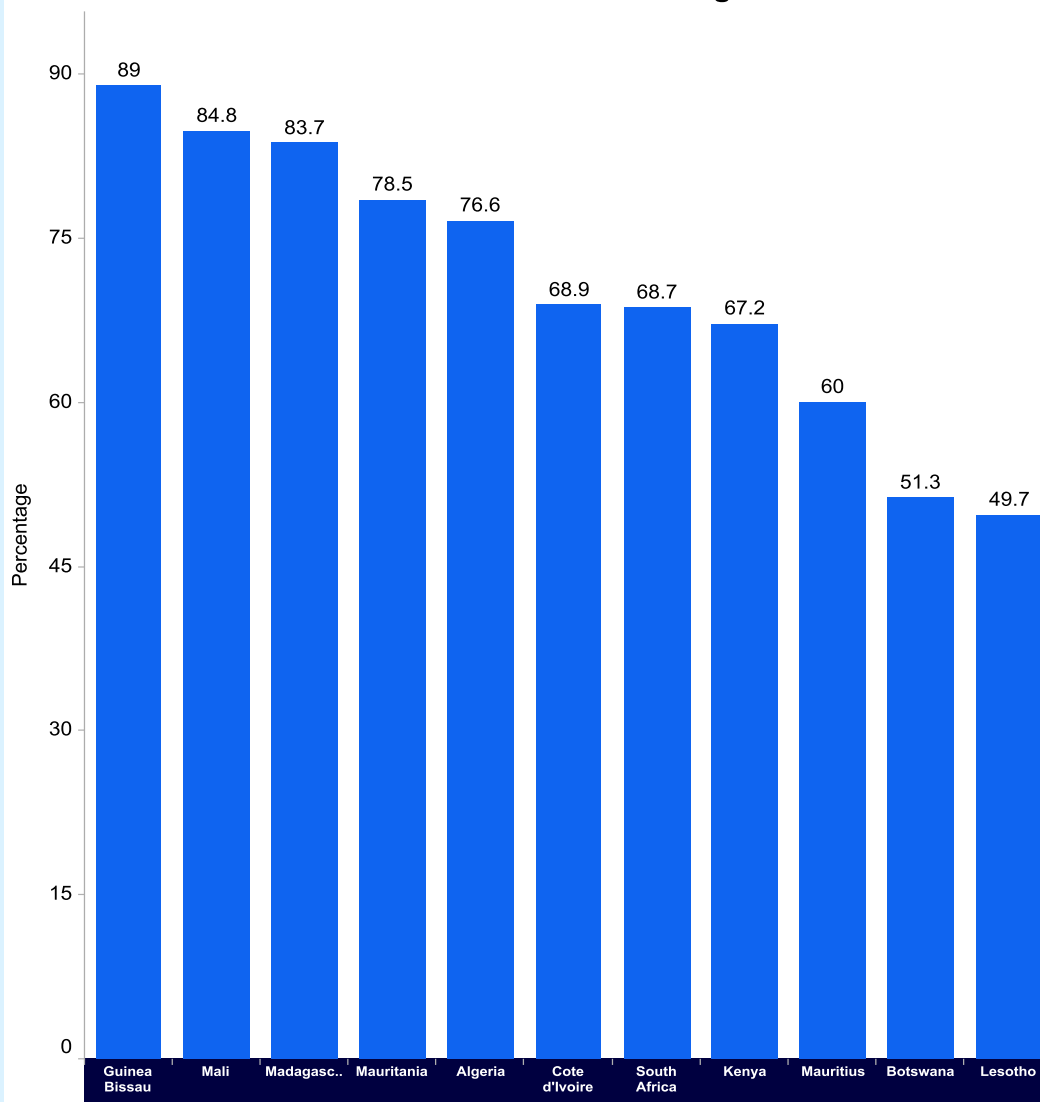
## Article 16 - Sales to and by minors

**“Each Party shall adopt and implement... measures at the appropriate government level to prohibit the sales of tobacco products to persons under the age set by domestic law, national law or eighteen. Each Party should, as appropriate, adopt and implement... measures to prohibit the sales of tobacco products by persons under the age set by domestic law, national law or eighteen.**



**68.9% of youth in the African Region bought cigarettes in a store and were not refused purchase because of their age.**

**Students (13-15 years old) who were not refused to purchase cigarette in a store because of their age**



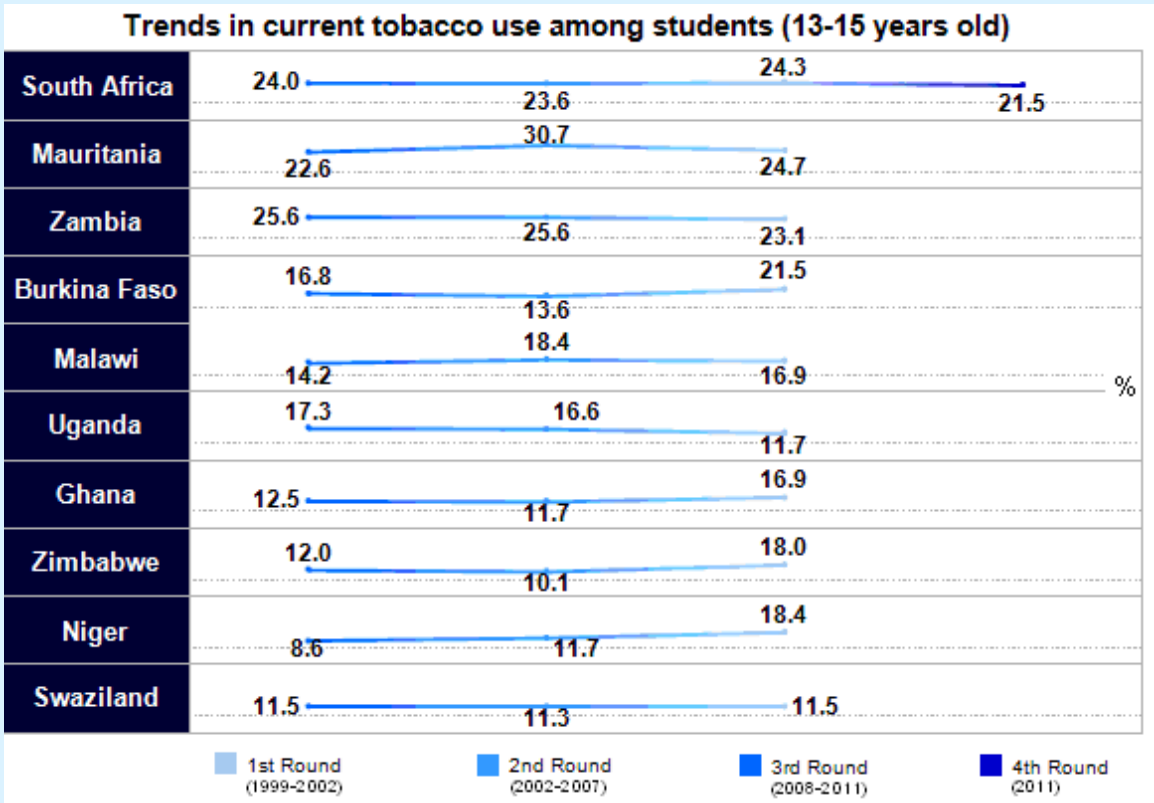
**Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2007-2011)**





## Article 20 - Research, surveillance and exchange of information

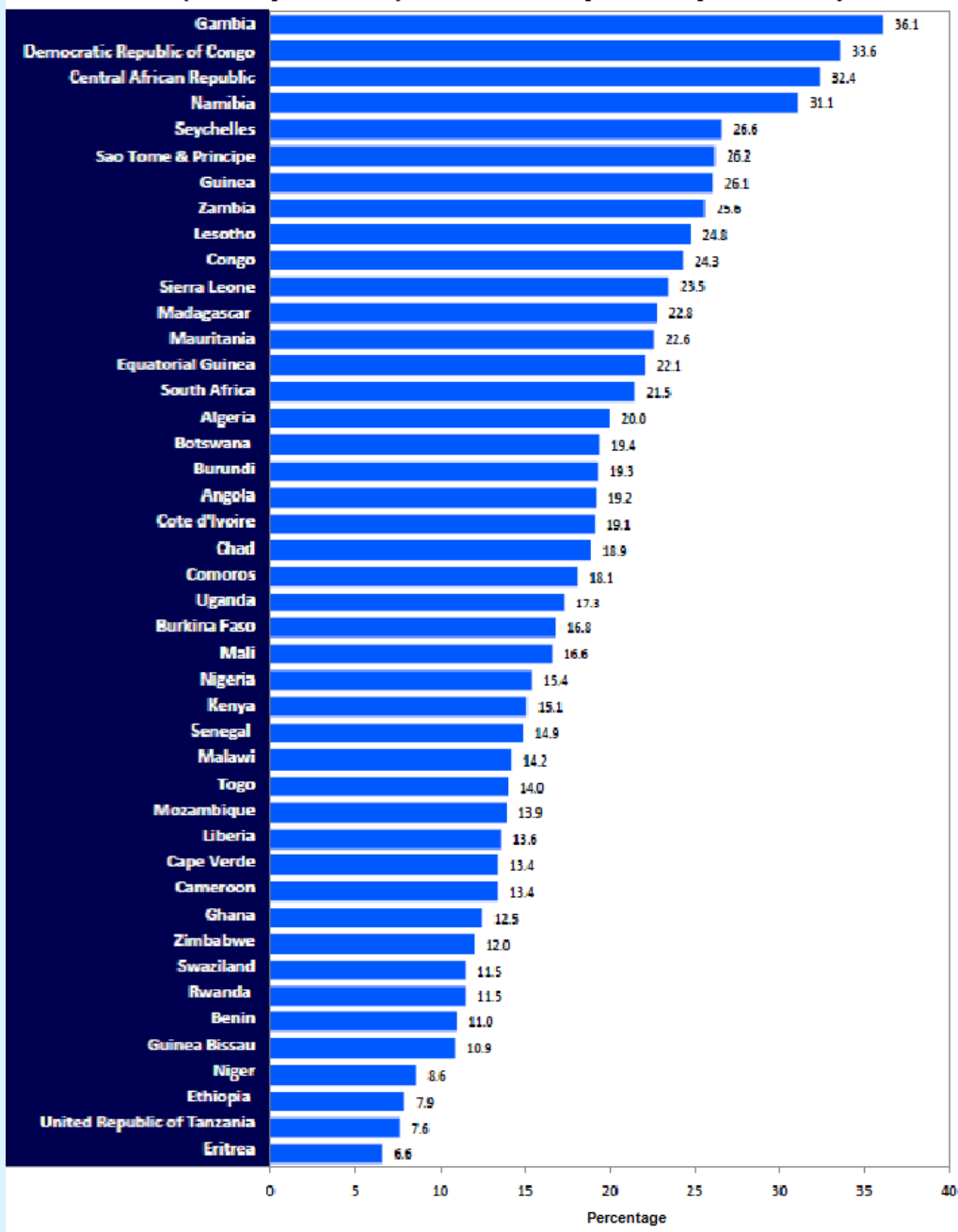
“The Parties shall establish, as appropriate, programmes for national, regional and global surveillance of the magnitude, patterns, determinants and consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke.”



Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (1999-2011)

**18% of youth in the African Region currently use any form of tobacco product.**

**Students (13-15 years old) who currently use any tobacco product**

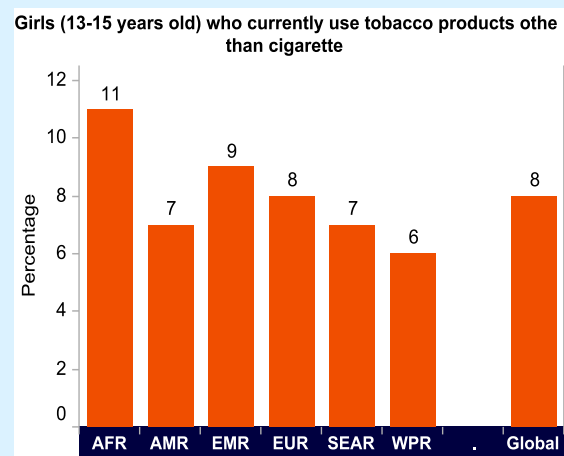
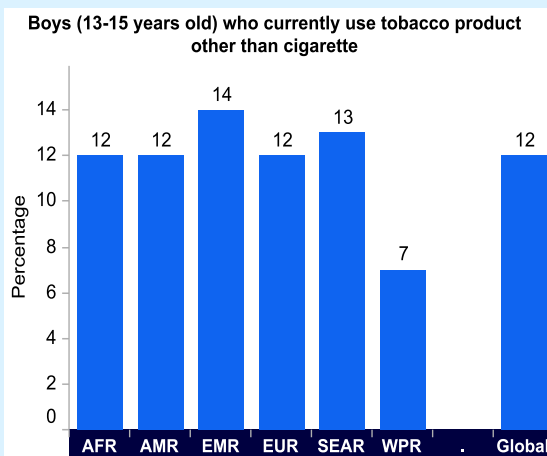


Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)



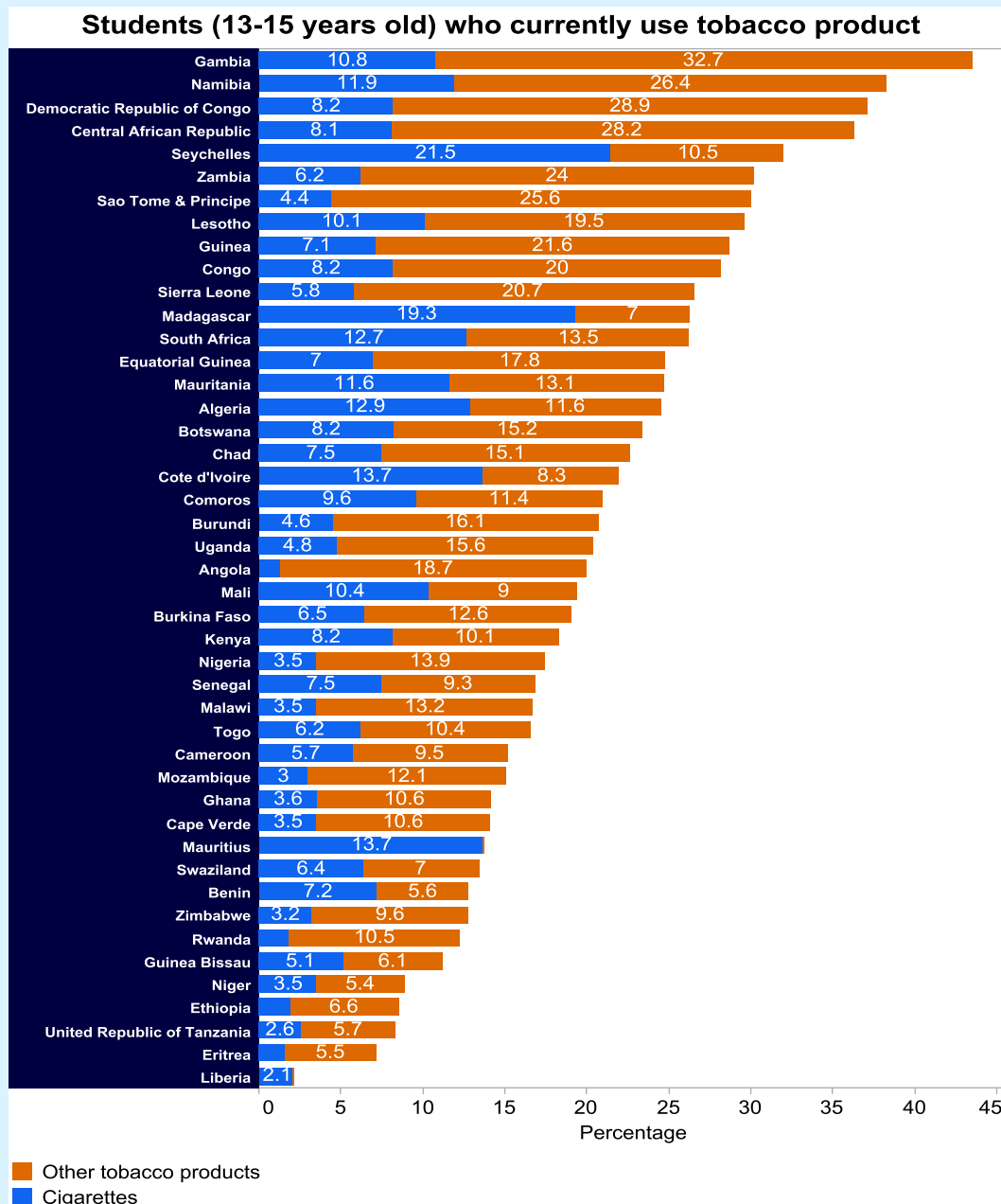
## Article 20 - Research, surveillance and exchange of information

“... the Parties should integrate tobacco surveillance programmes into national, regional and global health surveillance programmes so that data are comparable and can be analyzed at the regional and international levels, as appropriate.”



Source: The Global Tobacco Surveillance System Atlas, 2009

**11.6% of youth in the African Region currently use tobacco products other than cigarettes compared to 6.5% who currently smoke cigarettes.**



Source: Global Youth Tobacco Survey factsheets (2003-2011)



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