

Fighting Back Against Strawberry Cigarettes to Protect Youth

In Brazil, Vital Strategies and its local partners have been focused on tactics used by the tobacco industry to attract new consumers, and in particular, the proliferation of flavored cigarettes. Aware that flavored cigarettes attract young people, the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) published a resolution in 2012 banning additives such as sugar, flavors and aromas in cigarettes. However, in 2013, the industry, represented by the National Industry Confederation (CNI) managed to obtain a provision from the Constitutional Court of Brazil that allowed industries to sell these products until a final decision was determined by the court.

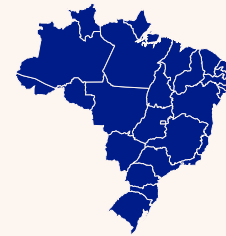
In 2018, after five years of waiting, a decision on the matter was made by the court. At least six votes were necessary to declare the ANVISA measure to ban additives valid, but only five justices voted in favor of ANVISA's authority to regulate additives in cigarettes. This meant that though the decision keeps the ANVISA regulation in place, it was not binding at a national level.

As a result, the industry filed requests for provisional measures to keep selling flavored products. One of the courts, the Regional Federal Tribunal of the First Region conceded a provisional measure in 2018, authorizing sale by the tobacco companies.

To generate awareness of a need to suspend these provisional measures, Vital Strategies in collaboration with partners at the Tobacco Control Alliance (ACT) developed a campaign targeting courts in Brasília, the capital of Brazil, with messages around the harms of flavored tobacco and its attractiveness to youth.

The campaign was aired on outdoor media in February 2019 in strategic places in Brasília around the main federal judiciary courts. The campaign, which was seen by thousands of people, used the tagline: *"It starts with mint and ends with emphysema."*

In August of the same year, combined with joint advocacy efforts, among NGO's, the constitutional court struck down the provisional measure. This reinforced ANVISA's authority over the matter and now prohibits the sale of flavored cigarettes.



Population

210 million

Smoking Prevalence

12.3% of men, 7.7% of women, and 6.7% of boys and girls currently use tobacco¹.

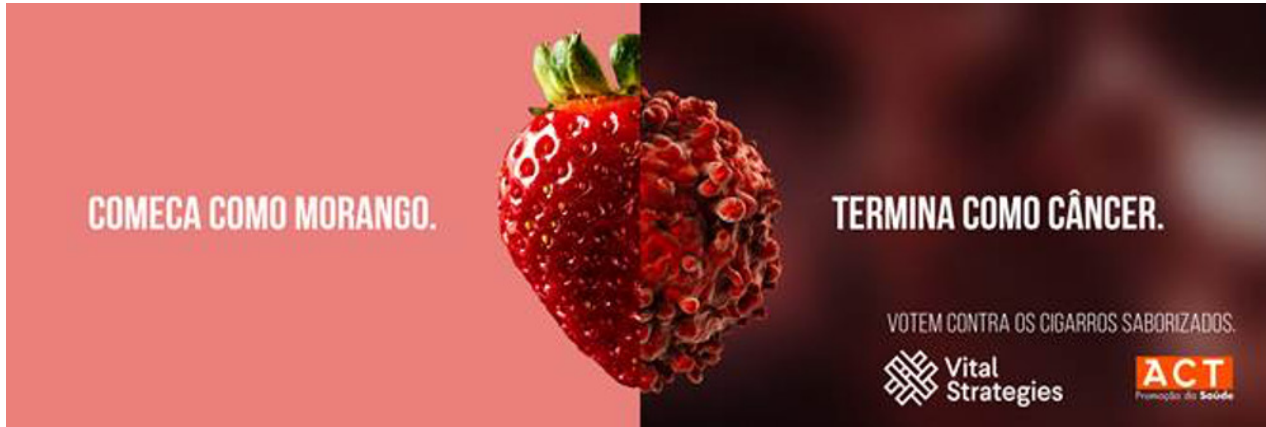
Tobacco Control Policies

Brazil has some of the strongest tobacco control regulations in the world, which include, graphic pack warnings, comprehensive smoke-free laws, significant taxes and a prohibition on the advertising of tobacco products. The sale of e-cigarettes are prohibited.

Milestone

In 2019, Brazil's attorney general filed a lawsuit against tobacco industries pledging that public coffers will be reimbursed for the expenses incurred by the treatment of diseases caused by cigarette smoking.

¹ VIGITEL Survey, 2018



A variation with strawberry, showing cancer as a consequence, was also developed.



"It starts with mint and ends with emphysema."

This case study is part of a series highlighting our work with the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use in priority countries.

About Vital Strategies

Vital Strategies is a global health organization that believes every person should be protected by a strong public health system. We work with governments and civil society in more than 70 countries to design and implement evidence-based strategies that tackle their most pressing public health problems. Our goal is to see governments adopt promising interventions at scale as rapidly as possible. To find out more, please visit www.vitalstrategies.org or Twitter @VitalStrat.