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An evaluation of compliance, knowledge and attitudes related to the new 100% smoke-free law in bars and restaurants in Kampala, Uganda

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Statement of the problem: Uganda passed its first dedicated comprehensive tobacco control law in July 2015. This contained a raft of different measures, including a law banning smoking in public places. In low and middle-income countries tobacco control legislation is susceptible to poor implementation and low compliance. We wanted to focus on evaluating the smokefree law in high-risk venues. People who work in bars and restaurants, in countries without a smoke-free policy, are the occupational group at highest risk of SHS exposure.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: We used an established observational checklist (developed by John Hopkins School of Public Health) and we also measured pm 2.5–which is particulate matter in the air which gives us information on the level of second hand smoke in the air.

Findings: Our team employed Gabriel Okello, an expert in the measurement of pm 2.5. For 24 venues roughly one fifth—the pm 2.5 levels were so low that there was no evidence of second hand smoke. But for most of venues there was second hand smoke. Looking at table above, there was second hand smoke at outdoor areas of 17 venues, which resulted in an unhealthy level (as deemed by the us environmental protection agency) and for the 67 venues where there was second hand smoke indoors, this was found to be at a level classified as hazardous. Our data collection team visited a subsample of venues, 108 venues. They spent two hours at each venue with a sidepak device that measures air quality. I believe they made repeated visits to each venue at different times of day, to give an average pm 2.5 reading. This shows a pretty concerning situation where despite the new smoke-free law, people attending these venues and working in these venues are being exposed to high levels of second hand smoke.

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