

Current status in smokeless tobacco use and policy options for regulation

Webinar of the Secretariat of the WHO FCTC and the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco

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Global studies
series

Implementation Practices in Smokeless Tobacco Control



Article 20 of the WHO FCTC

Surveillance

Research

Exchange of information

Surveillance

- Market surveillance of tobacco SLT products
- Tobacco use surveillance
 - product wise
 - Age wise
 - Consequence of use by **quantity/ frequency/time/reversal**
- Surveillance of other SLT use indicators
knowledge, risk perception

Research

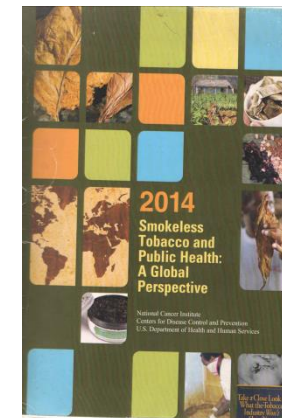
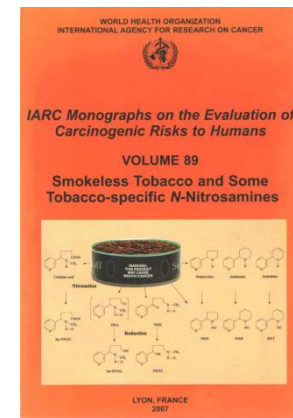
- Prevalence
- Comparable SLT tax incidence rate 19.4%(n=35) Parties,
- SLT attributable morbidity and mortality risks of major diseases 5% (n=10) of Parties.
- Reversal of disease- almost grey

Data dissemination

- Not in Public domain
- Publications encouraged
- Case reports and follow up

Best examples

- IARC Monographs 85,89, 100E
- IARC Handbook
- FCTC Progress reports/ short reports
- WHO MPOWER reports
- SLT and public health global: A global perspective
- SLT and public health in India
- Global SLT control policies and their Implementation
- Several SLT special issues of Journals



Exchange of information

- Production
- Trade practices
- Black Marketing

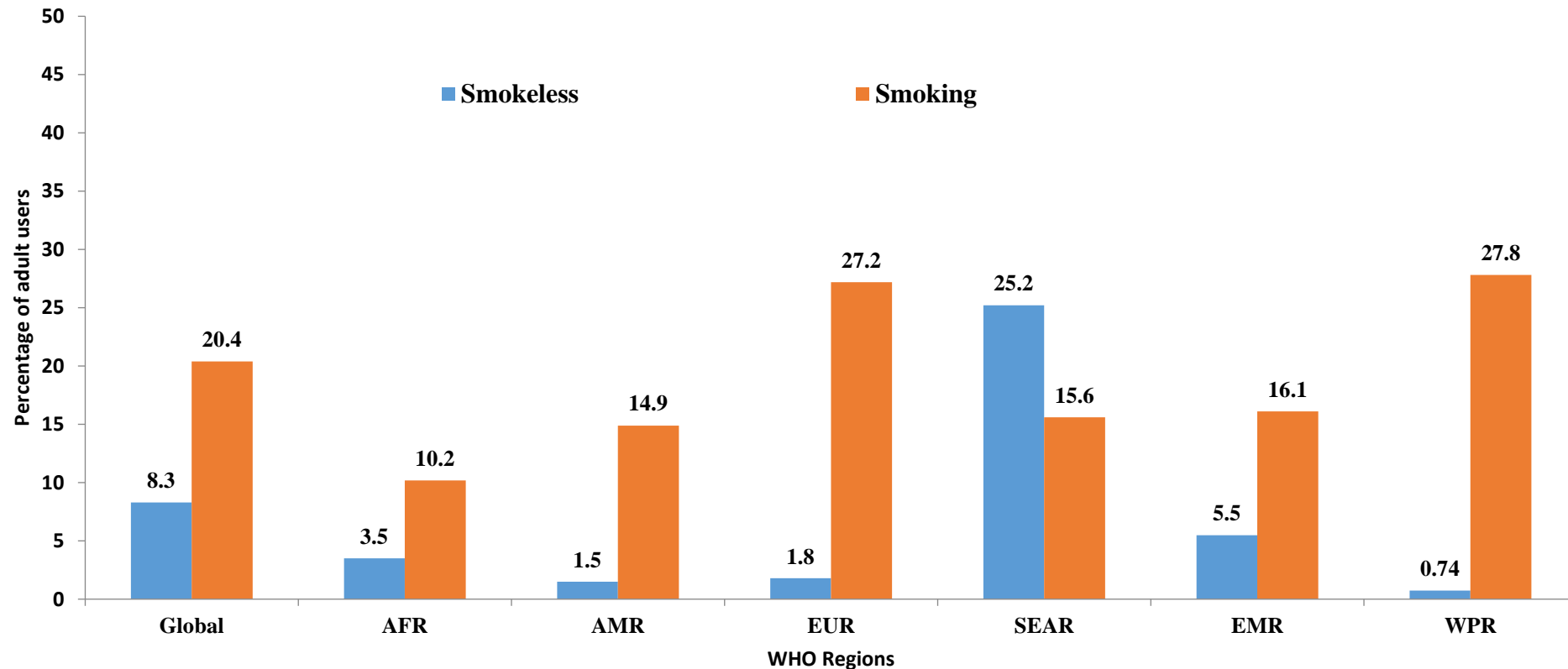
- Continued advocacy on implementation of Article 20

Policy options for SLT regulation

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Prevalence of SLT use and smoking among adults by WHO Region



- 23 Parties having >1 million SLT users are home to 95% of global SLT users.
- Parties in South-East Asia Region (SEAR) are home to >80% of global SLT users.

Article 6: SLT Taxation

- In majority of the countries having SLT, the price of a 20 gm SLT product is less than a dollar.
- Tax rates applied to SLT products are generally lower.
- Studies from India and Bangladesh have shown that increasing the price of SLT products reduces SLT consumption significantly.

Article 9 & 10: SLT product regulation

- Steps to reduce the appeal of and addiction to SLT products are needed.
- Need for regulation of the levels of toxicants in SLT products.
- Need to finalise the standard operating procedures for measuring nicotine, tobacco-specific nitrosamines.
- Need to identify any available technical approaches to reduce toxicants in SLT.

Article 11: Pictorial health warnings on SLT products

- There is inconsistency in implementing pictorial health warnings on SLT in comparison to cigarettes.
- As per study published in 2019, only 14 Parties mandated pictorial health warnings larger than 50% of the pack size on SLT products, while 67 Parties required the same for cigarettes.

Article 12: Education and awareness on harms of SLT use

- Mukesh and Sunita mass media campaigns in India and betel nut campaign in Myanmar.
 - 30 second documentary, referred to as 'Surgeon' in 2009.
 - Followed up by 'Mukesh' the story of a 24 year old SLT user in 2011.
 - Another campaign featuring Sunita, suffering from mouth cancer in 2014.
 - Betel Nut ill effect in Myanmar in 2017

Surgeon – Tata Memorial Hospital



Testimony: Mukesh Harane



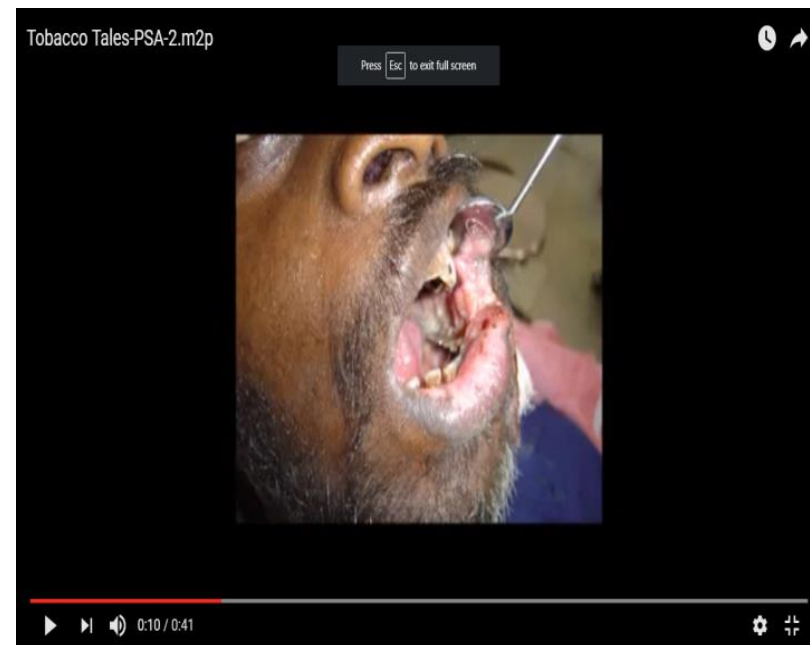
Testimony: Sunita Tomar



Nepal



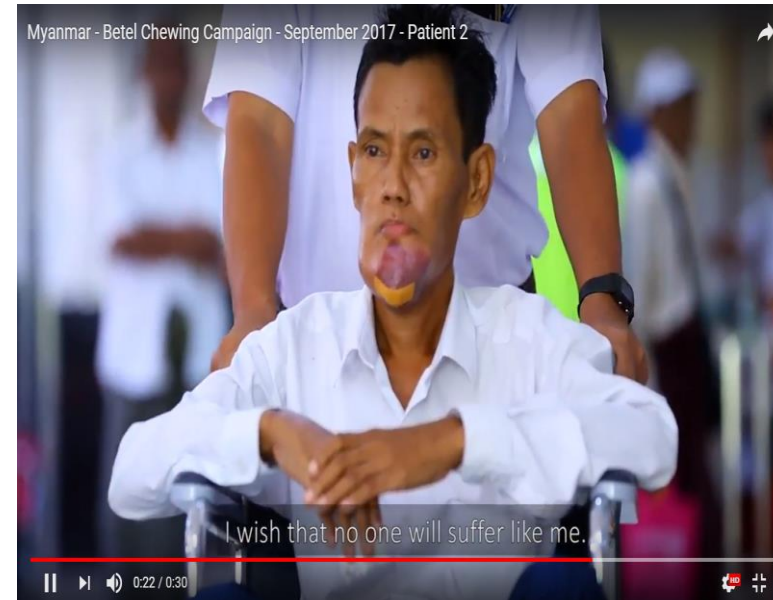
Bangladesh



- Myanmar – Patient-1



- Myanmar – Patient-2



Article 13: Ban on SLT advertising

- There is suggestive evidence that SLT advertising is more likely to influence consumption in women than men.
- As per the study published in Lancet Oncology:
 - Only 9% of the Parties have a comprehensive ban on TAPS of SLT products.
 - Only 26% Parties have complete ban on SLT sponsorship.
 - Advertisements at the point of sale is banned only in 43% of the Parties

Article 14: SLT Cessation

- Poor access to cessation services compared to smokers, especially in countries like India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan, Thailand and Uganda.
- Percentage of smokers advised to quit by a health care provider higher than that of SLT users in these countries.
- Only 21% Parties include NRT in essential medicines list.
- Training and e-learning for advancing tobacco cessation should be considered.

Article 15: Illicit trade in SLT products

- Governmental sale licenses: Several countries require license for sale of SLT products
- Several countries regulate the production, distribution, and sale of cottage industry manufactured SLT products as well.
- Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products to adhere to the protocol mandates of:
 - Licence, equivalent approval or control system
 - Due diligence
 - Tracking and tracing
 - Record-keeping
 - Security and preventive measures
 - Sale by Internet, telecommunication or any other evolving technology
 - Free zones and international transit
 - Duty free sales

Article 16: Access of SLT products to minors

- Key requirements to prevent access to minors
 - Placing warning boards at the point of sale;
 - Prohibition of tobacco product display in such a manner that it is directly accessible;
 - Ban on tobacco products in the form of sweets, toys, candies, etc.; and,
 - Prohibition of vending machines
- Only 13% parties meet all four requirements
- Direct access to tobacco products at the point of sale and sale of loose products remains the key concern areas.

Ban on SLT products

- Australia, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Singapore have complete ban on sale, manufacture and import of SLT products.
- 45 other Parties have full or partial ban on sale of SLT products, 11 have banned manufacture and 6 have banned import.



Prohibition on spitting in public places

- Prohibition on spitting in public places have been imposed for:
 - Controlling communicable diseases;
 - Maintaining public cleanliness and hygiene;
 - Preventing/reducing SLT use; and
 - During COVID-19 to prevent its transmission.

Prohibition on spitting in public places

- United Kingdom: To maintain clean pavements, the London Borough of Brent, in 2010, classified spitting paan/khilli paan juice as criminal damage attracting a fixed-penalty.
- Australia: The Sydney suburb of Fairfield implemented a regulation against spitting in 2006. Violation attracted fines ranging from AUD110 to AUD1100.
- Singapore: Spitting is prohibited in coffee shops and markets, public roads, sideways and any other place that's open to the public. Any violation of the law attracts a fine of up to SGD1,000.

Prohibition on spitting in public places

- Nepal is the only country which has banned use of any kind of tobacco products in public places (2011).
- In Bhutan, a 2012 regulation prohibits smearing lime and spitting *doma* in public area.
- Hangzhou, a city in China, spitting and littering in public places was banned in 2016.
- In Myanmar, there is a ban on spitting red betel juice in the streets and public places
- In Papua New Guinea (PNG), since 2013, chewing betel nuts and spitting betel nut juices has been banned from the streets.

Spitting ban in India

- ▶ Indian Railways ban spitting on its premises since 2012
- ▶ Metro Rail Corporations across India have also prohibited spitting in metro
- ▶ Several states have implemented ban on spitting both for cleanliness and to reduce SLT use.
- ▶ Most recently the Uttar Pradesh Government has banned spitting in public buildings.
- ▶ The Karnataka municipal law prevents spitting in public and violation attracts fine of INR 100 the first time and INR 200 subsequently.
- ▶ The Bombay Police Act, Section 116, prohibits smoking and spitting in government premises in Maharashtra.
- ▶ The Greater Hyderabad municipal law prescribes action against violators under its sanitation bye-laws with fine of INR 500 upwards.
- ▶ The Bihar municipal law makes spitting an offence with a penalty of INR. 200.

Key message

- All provisions of WHO FCTC apply to SLT products as well and parties must implement them in full.
- However, SLT use coupled with areca nut use present a complex policy and regulatory challenge.
- In India Tobacco Control Law applies equally to all SLT products
- Several Parties go beyond FCTC and have taken stronger legal and policy steps to control SLT
- Government of India has also taken steps under other laws on SLT control (e.g. Food Safety, Juvenile Justice, Consumer Protection etc.)
- Several Parties to the WHO FCTC have implemented complete and partial ban on manufacture, sale and import etc. of SLT products.

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