



3-7 FEBRUARY  
2013

# Iran (Islamic Republic of)

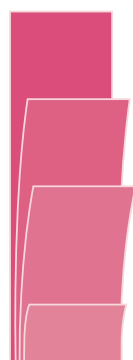
## NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION



### Introduction

The needs assessment mission for the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was conducted February 3-7, 2013, by the Convention Secretariat jointly with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The international team, which came at the government's invitation, included representatives of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO). The team met with the leaders of government agencies, NGOs and civil society who are involved in implementing the WHO FCTC at country level.

### Tobacco control milestones in the Islamic Republic of Iran



- 2005** The Islamic Republic of Iran ratifies the WHO FCTC.
- 2006** The WHO FCTC enters into force in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- 2006** Comprehensive Act on National Control and Campaign against Tobacco.
- 2007** Executive Bylaw of the Comprehensive Act on National Control and Campaign against Tobacco.

### Tobacco taxation in 2013

- 39%** import duty on tobacco products
- 5%** on the manufacturing price of tobacco products
- 12%** VAT tax based on the manufacturing price
- 3%** municipal tax on manufacturing price

### Key facts



**11.79%**  
of **adults** aged 15-64 use tobacco.



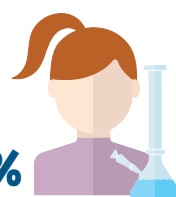
**22.06%**  
of **males** aged 15-64 use tobacco.



**4.7%**  
of **males** aged 15-64 smoke a **water pipe** daily.



**1.26%**  
of **females** aged 15-64 use tobacco.



**2.3%**  
of **females** aged 15-64 smoke a **water pipe** daily.



**Tobacco use** increased from **13%** to **26.6%** among **youth** aged 13-15 from 2003 to 2007, with use by **boys** increasing from **17.6% to 32.9%** and by **girls** from **8.9% to 19.5%**.



**31 billion** cigarettes a year are produced by the Iran Tobacco Company monopoly.



**44.8%** of students are exposed to tobacco **smoke** in **public places**.

**50%**

of the front and back of **tobacco packages** must be covered with pictorial **health warnings**.



**2%**



of total **tobacco taxation** is allocated to **tobacco control activities**.

## Main findings and recommendations

● The Islamic Republic of Iran passed the Comprehensive Act on National Control and Campaign against Tobacco in 2006 and the Executive Bylaw to the Comprehensive Act on National Control and Campaign against Tobacco in 2007. These laws address obligations under the WHO FCTC. Provisions establishing and financing a national multi-sectoral coordination mechanism, banning tobacco consumption in public places, banning all kinds of direct and indirect tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, integrating cessation and treatment of tobacco dependence into primary healthcare and banning sales to and by minors are mostly compliant with WHO FCTC obligations, though implementation and enforcement of the act have room for improvement.

**Recommendation:** Consider amending these laws to exclude the Islamic Republic of Iran Tobacco Company from policy making.

● The Islamic Republic of Iran established its tobacco control focal point even before it signed the WHO FCTC. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education heads the focal point and has established effective coordination with other stakeholders.

**Recommendation:** Include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance for international coordination and price and tax measures.

● The National Health Plan (2011-2015) set a target of reducing water pipe prevalence by 10% and tobacco consumption by 1%.

Iran privatized the Iran Tobacco Company, which was previously a state monopoly and was involved in tobacco control policy-making.

**Recommendation:** Remove Iran Tobacco Company from any role in tobacco control and raise awareness on protection of public health policy from the vested interests of the tobacco industry.

**Recommendation:** Highlight implementation of the WHO FCTC in the Sixth Development Plan as an effective tool to prevent and control noncommunicable diseases, as well as finalize the multisectoral National Tobacco Control Action Plan using the Needs Assessment report as an important reference.

● The Ministry of Finance fully recognizes the importance of price and tax measures to reduce tobacco consumption, though tobacco taxation and the price of tobacco products still remain low. The Ministry of Finance is developing new tax legislation and has requested information about international best practices in this area.

**Recommendation:** Further increase tobacco taxation and prices above the inflation rate. Consider introducing a retail sales tax on tobacco products.

● The Iran Standard and Research Institute has issued a series of standards on tobacco product contents, generally complying with ISO standards.

**Recommendation:** The Iran Standard and Research Institute should review the current standards in accordance with WHO FCTC guidelines and amend them accordingly.

● The Islamic Republic of Iran has introduced pictorial health warnings, which are required to cover 50% of both the front and back of packaging. As implemented, most pictorial health warnings cover less than 50% because the frame and other elements take

up too much space. Some brands use misleading words on packaging or suggest their brand is less harmful.

**Recommendation:** Coordinate efforts to prohibit misleading words and a plan for rotating the pictorial health warnings. Consider introducing plain packaging. Conduct evaluations to improve the effectiveness of pictorial health warnings.

● Considerable public education and training about tobacco dangers has been conducted, with the involvement of a wide range of media.

**Recommendation:** Pretest and evaluate the impact of these activities to improve outcomes.

● The Islamic Republic of Iran has successfully integrated free tobacco cessation services into its primary healthcare system. 158 cessation centers have been established.

**Recommendation:** Share the Islamic Republic of Iran's successful implementation of cessation services with other developing country Parties.

● The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is a strategic program framework jointly agreed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the UN system, outlining priorities in national development. The current UNDAF (2012-2016) includes noncommunicable disease prevention and control.

**Recommendation:** Include tobacco control in future UNDAF programs.

## Post needs assessment assistance available from the Convention Secretariat

● Providing technical assistance in the areas where it is needed.

● Facilitating the process of engaging potential partners and identifying internationally available resources for implementing the WHO FCTC.

## Outcomes



1) The needs assessment was crucially useful to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2) It helped to identify gaps and strengthen the commitment of relevant stakeholders that could better understand their duties in the implementation of the Convention.

3) Building on the support received from international experts on the economics of tobacco, Iran made remarkable progress on the development and implementation of new taxation legislation after the needs assessment mission.