

Smokeless tobacco policy in Bangladesh: A stakeholder study of compatibility with the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

Naznin, E., Wynne, O., George, J., Denham, A.M.J., Hoque, M.E., Milton, A.H., Bonevski, B., & Stewart, K.

Abstract

Introduction: Smokeless tobacco (ST) is the predominant form of tobacco used in Bangladesh and is associated with adverse health outcomes. Bangladesh ratified the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in 2004. There are concerns that FCTC legislation and implementation of ST control policy is insufficient in Bangladesh. The aim of this study was to investigate the achievements and challenges of ST policy in Bangladesh and its alignment with the FCTC.

Methods: We conducted semi-structured key informant interviews with 20 stakeholders from government and non-government offices and international funding agencies, including tobacco control advocates, policy makers and non-governmental organisation workers. We used NVivo software to create key themes and the framework method for thematic analysis.

Results: Our findings revealed a lack of national policy in terms of disclosure of harmful contents, illicit trade and standardised packaging of ST. Legislation remains ineffective in relation to graphical health warnings and tax measures. Challenges to ST control identified included inadequate law enforcement; paucity of research, surveillance, and evidence generation; and supply chain control. We identified lack of congruence of ST policies with FCTC due to slow progress in implementation of FCTC measures, lack of a country-specific policy and industry interference. To comply with FCTC, participants recommended strong leadership and political commitment, co-ordination between public and private sectors and proper use of tobacco control resources.

Discussion and conclusions: Bangladesh has adopted several important FCTC measures, but further strengthening of ST policy is needed to enable full implementation of FCTC.

Recommended Citation

Naznin, E., Wynne, O., George, J., Denham, A.M.J., Hoque, M.E., Milton, A.H., Bonevski, B., Stewart, K. (2021). Smokeless tobacco policy in Bangladesh: A stakeholder study of compatibility with the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 40(5), 856-863.

Link To PDF: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dar.13243>