

South Asia Tobacco Control Leadership Program, 7-13 May, 2017
Kathmandu

Activity: Organize South Asia Tobacco Control Leadership Program.

Organizing Committee: Ministry of Health, Nepal; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH); The Union (International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease); and Action Nepal

Title: South Asia Tobacco Control Leadership Program, 7-13 May, 2017

Venue: Annapurna Hotel, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal

Date: 7th to 13th May 2017

Aim of Conference: This activity aimed to support and encourage –

- Understanding Tobacco Control in the South Asia Region, and Developing a Strategic Leadership Mind-set
- Overview of WHO FCTC, MPOWER Strategies; Protecting people from second hand smoke; designing strategies to engage key audiences
- The Economics of Tobacco Control; and, Communicating about the Dangers of Tobacco Use and the Need for Tobacco Control
- Warning People about the Dangers of Tobacco Use; Enforcing Bans on Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship; and, Designing Strategies to Engage Key Audiences; Countering the Tobacco Industry; and, Designing Strategies to Engage Key Stakeholders
- Tobacco Control Interventions: Communicating Your Vision - Learning from the tobacco industry and marketing complex public policy

Attended Participants: The attendees from South Asian Country; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal including Members of Parliament, Senior Government Officials, Media, Civil Society and Professional Organizations have participated in the program. All participants have received training to strengthen leadership skills, boost evidence-based policy implementation, and communication to advance tobacco control to build relationships and partnerships to improve public health program at country and regional levels.

Agenda sharing: Key Note Speech, Leadership Action Plan, Panel Discussion, PowerPoint presentation, Group Discussion Session, Group Exercise Session, Vision sharing Session, Photo Voice Exercise

Statement of problem: Current situation of Tobacco Control among Asian Countries.

Focus Point: The program's whole course has focused on a myriad of tobacco topics, including policy development, advocacy, communications, implementation and evaluation, and management and leadership. In 2015, Nepal was presented with the Bloomberg Award for Global Tobacco Control in recognition of its new law on graphic health warnings for tobacco packaging. Covering 90 percent of the surface area of tobacco packs, it has the largest warning labels in the world.

Global Death Rate: 7 million people die due to tobacco consumption. Tobacco use is a serious public health fear across the region, which includes countries with some of the world's highest levels of tobacco use. All countries represented on the course are Parties to the World Health Organization's Framework

Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) – as such they are obliged to advance tobacco control as set out in the agreement but progress differs widely.

Situation of graphic health warning around the globe:

Bangladesh – 50%, **Sri Lanka** – 80%, **Bhutan** – tobacco free country, **Pakistan** – 85%, **India** – 85%, **Afghanistan**–, **Maldives**– , **Nepal** – 90% (Not implemented completely)

Report Summary:

Day 1:

Participants from different countries arrived to hotel venue. The program started from registration. At the end of the day, welcome reception was held in hotel (Banquet Hall).

Day 2:

The program was formally inaugurated by Chief Guest Hon. Gagan Kumar Thapa, MOH with brief introduction as a Master of Ceremonies. Welcome Remarks was deliberated by Ananda B. Chand, Chairman of Action Nepal. He said we expected to help control the use of tobacco products through combined efforts. WHO representative, Dr Jos Vandelaerhas also opined in his remarks that control in tobacco consumption is compulsory and the role played by Nepal for controlling tobacco is commendable. Addressing an event Chief Guest Hon. Gagan Kumar Thapa said the Nepal government aimed to build a tobacco-free generation by 2030. He said he believed that requiring graphic health warnings on tobacco products would reduce demand for such products and contribute to creating a healthier society. He added that the warning pictures should take up 90 percent the packaging of the main surface. Similarly, special guest H. E. Mr. Amjad Husain B. Sial, Secretary General of SAARC, has also deliberated his point of remarks on tobacco control. Tobacco is not only a country-level problem. It is a regional and global problem, and needs to be tackled as such, said Sial. ‘It needs to be addressed collaboratively through implementation of evidence-based strategies. The most powerful of these is increasing tobacco tax. Tara Sing Bam, Deputy Regional Director, The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), Singapore, has welcomed the decision of Health Minister giving a full coverage to the health warning messages including the pictorial against tobacco consumption to its packets within a year. He added more that to reduce the rate of attractiveness and tobacco consumption among new generations, the Law of Tobacco Act should run effectively and promptly. On the same day, different activities like; keynote speech, presentation, action plan, photo voice assessment etc. were done to promote tobacco control leadership program.(Ref.1)

Day 3:

Third day program was started from the keynote speech by Honorable Ministry of Agriculture, Gauri Shankar Chaudhary. He said that government has upraised the offer and support to the farmers who farm vegetables, sugarcane or fruits and eager to quit the tobacco farm. He added that the ministry has provided economic support as well to spread the awareness among farmers about not farming and producing tobacco. He also said that he has already started to provide support to those famers who are interested in farming other crops rather than tobacco. He said his ministry and government jointly do work on control tobacco. Another session was panel discussion. Participated speakers in panel discussion were Tara Sing Bam, the Union; Dr. Gopal Chauhan, NCD, Focal Point; Gan Quan, the Union; M. Aftab

Ahmed, Pakistan; Mahendra Prasad Shrestha, Public Health Officer; Basir Ahmed Sarwari, Afghanistan; Khagraj Adhikari, Former Health Minister of Nepal; and Buddhika Pathirana, Member of Parliament Health Committee, Sri Lanka. The objectives of the panel discussion were presentation and discussion on WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Implementation, Challenges in Implementing Smoke-Free Environments in South Asia Countries, and The Importance of Partnerships and Coalitions in Creating Political Support for Tobacco Control. (Ref.2)

For the day, the program was enclosed by Benjamin Lozare, JHSPH and Annette David, JHSPH by interactive presentation on Identifying and Overcoming Key Constraints and Barriers and Taking Advantage of Opportunities and group exercise on developing a 2017 Action Plan – Analyzing and Prioritizing Key Constraints and Determining Their Root Causes respectively.

Day 4:

On the day key note speech has been deliberated by Honorable Ministry of Industry Mr. Nabindra Raj Joshi on ministry's role in promoting public health program by ensuring implementation of pictorial health warning on tobacco products in Nepal. Frank Chaloupka, University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC), has presented his presentation on 'The Economics of Tobacco Control: Increasing Taxes on Tobacco Products.'(Ref.3).During the panel discussion, the panelists Farida Akter, UBINIG, Bangladesh; Nishan de Mel, Executive Director, Verite Research, Sri Lanka; and, Rijo John, Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur, India have presented discussion on Economic Issues in Tobacco Control - Illicit Trade; Tobacco Farming; Earmarking Tobacco Taxes(Ref. 3).The next session was Photo Voice Exercise- 'out and about Kathmandu'. All participants went out group wise to different location around valley. Meanwhile, the high level meeting was also help with Nepal Government Officials and others (Ref.3). Nagarkot visit was also a part of day. All participant and selected faculty of high level meeting were travelled to Nagarkot for cultural dinner and overnight stay.

Day 5:

The day was started after return back of all participants to Kathmandu. The program was started from group presentation of photo assessment results of compliance with smoke-free rules and regulations in Kathmandu (Ref.4). The second session was panel discussion. The subject was 'Lessons Learned about Tobacco Product Health Warnings – International and Regional Experience' and participated panelist were Badri Bahadur Khadka, Director, NHEICC/MOH, Nepal; Bhavna Mukh opadhyay, VHAI, India; and, Tara S. Bam, The Union(Ref.4). On the day several sessions have been done including ppt presentation, panel discussion and speech on various topics by Nandita Murukutla, Vital Strategies; and, Umesh Chauhan, Executive Editor, Naya Patrika National Daily, Nepal; Bhim Bahadur Poudyel, Focal Point for Tobacco Control, Bhutan Narcotics Control Authority; and, Hassan Mohamed, Ministry of Health, Maldives; Benjamin Lozare, JHSPH(Ref.4).The Secretary of Education, Mr. Shanta Bahadur Shrestha gave keynote speech on role in creating tobacco free generation and ensuring effective implementation of tobacco control Policies in Nepal (Ref.4).

Day 6:

The program formally started with panel discussion. The member of panelist were Hasan Shahriar, PROGGA , Bangladesh; Shahzad Alam Khan, Pakistan; and, Upendra Bhojani, IPH, India; Bobby Ramakant, Citizen News Services, India and the discussion topic were Countering Tobacco Industry Efforts to Impede Tobacco Control -in the Region and Engaging with the Media in Countering Tobacco Industry Efforts to Impede Tobacco Control(Ref.5).The day was ongoing with group exercise by

Benjamin Lozare, JHSPH; Annette David, JHSPH; Steve Tamplin, JHSPH on developing a 2017 Action Plan- stakeholder mapping; developing strategic approaches to influencing key audiences; developing a leadership action plan- what are your communication objectives and key messages? What are the associated channels of communication? Who are your audiences and what do you want them to do? How will we know if we are succeeding? At the end of the day the program evaluation introduction session was given by Naseeb Kibria, JHSPH. Finally, the program closing, certificate ceremony with remarks was conducted by Dr. Rajendra P. Pant, Director General, Department of Health Services, MOH; Ananda B. Chand, Action Nepal; and, Steve Tamplin, JHSPH.

Day 7:

The last day of the program continued with group leadership action plan presentation among the participated participant's country wise. On the day, Benjamin Lozare and Steve Tamplin have given speech on leadership challenge. Afterwards, the closing of program was announced by Naseeb Kibria, JHSPH.