



सत्यमेव जयते



*Indicative depiction of the countries where SLT is used globally.

Source: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntx276>.

WHO FCTC Global Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco (KH-SLT)

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WHO FCTC Global Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco

ICMR - National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research, Noida

Plot No. I-7, Sector 39, Noida

Gautam Budhha Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301, India

Phone: 0120 244 6900

Establishment of the Knowledge Hub

Smokeless Tobacco (SLT), is consumed in the unburnt form, either orally or nasally, and is commonly known as chewing tobacco, oral tobacco, spit or spitting tobacco, dip, chew, or snuff⁽¹⁾. SLT use is a recognized public health challenge with more than 350 million users in over 140 countries especially in South-East Asia. It constitutes a plethora of unregulated, under-researched and unidentified products. Given the growing socio-economic and health concerns related to SLT, particularly in low- and lower-middle-income countries, a need for research on various aspects, including effective regulation of SLT use, has been highlighted in various sessions of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

With this backdrop, and the decision taken at the sixth session of the COP, a dedicated knowledge hub was proposed to be established to generate and share evidence, expertise and knowledge on SLT. Given the high burden of SLT use in India and its efforts to effectively regulate SLT use, the WHO FCTC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India established the WHO FCTC Global Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco (KH-SLT) at the ICMR-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research (ICMR-NICPR), Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India on 6th April, 2016.

1. National Cancer Institute, USA. Factsheet. Smokeless tobacco and Cancer. Available from: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/smokeless-fact-sheet#q1>, accessed on 10/12/17

Mandate of the KH-SLT

The KH-SLT is established with a mandate to:

1. Generate and share expertise, information, knowledge and provide training, regionally and globally on SLT, as appropriate;
2. Promote and facilitate, as appropriate, communication among the Parties to the Convention, observers to the COP, including Inter-governmental organizations, Non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders on SLT; and
3. Support the Convention Secretariat in hosting meetings, prepare technical materials and participate in technical and subsidiary body meetings on SLT as appropriate.

Vision and Mission

To generate awareness around the world on harms of SLT use and support global SLT control efforts through scientific evidence and technical research inputs in coordination with all relevant disciplines and stakeholders globally, especially among Parties with high SLT burden.



Thematic Areas of Focus for the KH-SLT

Surveillance and Monitoring: Focus on comprehensive surveillance to assess the range of SLT use, changes in patterns of use, as well as evaluate the impact of policies, interventions, and other steps taken to address its use.

Policy Reform: Undertake SLT relevant policy research for Parties to accord due priority on SLT control as mandated under the WHO FCTC. Such research to support policy reforms beyond cigarettes as may be needed.

Products: Undertake more comprehensive characterization of the properties of different SLT products and their constituents. Additionally, focus on non-tobacco products (such as areca nut) that are frequently used in conjunction with SLT.

Health Effects: Contribute to and expand on the research body on specific health effects of various SLT products.

Economics and Marketing: Collate and compile information on pricing and sales volume of SLT, to understand patterns of use and develop effective public health interventions on SLT control.

Interventions: Design, develop, test and implement new interventions for SLT use prevention and cessation at both the population and individual levels.

Strategic Priorities

- Generate and share expertise, information and knowledge with Parties on SLT control
- Assess and evaluate national level policies on SLT taxation and ban on SLT advertisements, promotions and sponsorships (TAPS)
- Monitor and encourage inclusion of SLT indicators under existing domestic and global surveillance systems
- Organize specific training programs and webinars on SLT for national tobacco control focal points and other stakeholders
- Establish a network between existing laboratories for profiling of SLT products; add upcoming labs to this network

Knowledge Hub Website

[\(http://untobaccocontrol.org/kh/smokeless-tobacco/\)](http://untobaccocontrol.org/kh/smokeless-tobacco/)

This website is an exclusive portal for all information on SLT gathered by the Hub. The website is envisaged to provide a one stop knowledge and solution hub on various aspects of SLT.



Global Progress in SLT Control Policy

In accordance with the adopted work plan for the KH-SLT a comprehensive status report was prepared and shared with global and regional experts during the Inter-Country Meeting on SLT Control Policy held in New Delhi from August 16-18, 2017. The report includes key observations from the experts about the global SLT policy scenario and their proposals on the way forward to address the identified challenges in SLT control globally.



Media coverage



In a short span of time, the knowledge hub has generated phenomenal media (print and social media) presence covering various aspects of SLT use and its control. The leading newspapers, in English and vernacular language, with daily readership in millions across the country, have covered various activities of the hub.



KH-SLT Activities

- Organized workshop on “Formatting roadmap for Development of Comprehensive Information Plan on SLT”, on August 11, 2016.
- Organized a lunch time seminar on KH-SLT activities in COP7 during 7-12 Nov, 2016.
- Organized workshop on Tobacco Control and Health Informatics from March 29-30, 2017.
- Organized Inter-country Meeting on SLT Control Policy from Aug 16-18, 2017.
- SLT hub team participated and presented at the World NCD Congress 2017, held in Chandigarh India from November 3-7, 2017.
- Participated and presented at the Third International Conference on Waterpipe Tobacco Smoking Research: Moving towards Action, held at American University of Beirut, Lebanon from November 9-11, 2017.
- Organized workshop on Priorities in SLT Control: Research & Training Needs from November 27-28, 2017.
- Organized a special session on SLT at the 1st National Conference on Addiction Psychiatry, held at AIIMS New Delhi from November 27-29 2017.
- Coordinating and contributing to publication of a special edition on SLT by the Indian Journal of Medical Research.
- Training and awareness programme for armed forces and para-military personnel at the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Research and Referral Hospital, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh on December 28, 2017.
- Publication of factsheets on the various aspects of SLT use and its control vis-à-vis WHO FCTC provisions.
- Publication of several articles on different aspects of SLT in various high impact-factor national and international journals.

Way forward

KH-SLT is dedicated to further SLT research, as well as support Parties and other stakeholders globally for effective implementation of SLT control policies in line with the mandate of WHO FCTC. The Hub envisages achieving this through interaction and collaboration with international and in-country tobacco control experts and organizations.

The Advisory Committee (MoHFW)

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India has constituted the Advisory Committee for Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco under the Chairmanship of Director General of Health Services (DGHS) with following members:

1.	Dr. B. D. Athani	Director General of Health Service	Chair
2.	Dr. N S Dharamshaktu	Advisor	Co-Chair
3.	Dr. Mohd. Shaukat	Advisor, NCD	Member
4.	Sh. Arun Kumar Jha	Economic Advisor	Member
5.	Sh. Devesh Deval	Director (Tobacco Control)	Member
6.	Dr. O.P. Kharbanda	Prof. and Head, CDER, AIIMS	Member
7.	Prof. Ravi Mehrotra	Director, NICPR, GKH (SLT)	Member
8.	Ms. Vineet Gill Munish	National Professional Officer, WHO India	Member
9.	Prof. H. M. Chawla	National Advisor (NTTL)	Member
10.	Dr. L. Swasticharan	Chief Medical Officer, Dte. G.H.S.	Member Secretary

Snapshot of KH-SLT



Inter-country Meeting on Smokeless Tobacco Control Policy; 16-18 August 2017

KH-SLT Team



Prof. (Dr.) Ravi Mehrotra
Director



Dr. Sanjay Gupta
Nodal Officer



Dr. Amit Yadav
Senior Consultant



Ms. Anshika Chandra
Project Officer



Mr. Kumar Chandan
Research Associate

WHO FCTC Global Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco
ICMR-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research
I-7, Sector 39
Noida-201301
Uttar Pradesh, India



9 788193 644911