

## **Tobacco Vendor Licensing - The way forward to strengthening and advancing tobacco control: progress, lessons and challenges**

**Date:** Thursday, 28 October 2021

**Time:** 13:00 to 16:00 CEST

**Registration link for course:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYufuChrIjHNQFaC4b0KgDCmj85-8F7wD1>

**Background:** Tobacco products are widely available throughout the world and unregulated Points-of-Sale (PoS) lead to easy accessibility & availability of tobacco products, especially to youths. In many countries, tobacco vendors are not required to have a dedicated license to operate, consequently tobacco is commonly sold in a variety of vendor types (e.g. convenience shops, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.) and locations (near educational institutions, youth frequented areas - playgrounds, parks etc.). Reducing access to tobacco products and limiting tobacco industry presence in the retail environment is an important tobacco control strategy. In addition, without records of which vendors are selling tobacco, implementing and enforcing retailer tobacco laws, such as advertising bans, is much more challenging.

**Objective:** This workshop will focus on discussing emerging policy measure of Tobacco Vendor Licensing (TVL) to advance tobacco control measures nationally & sub-nationally, with an aim to understand specific opportunities, challenges and way forward.

**Expected outcomes of the workshop:**

1. Examine the principles that support licensing of tobacco retailers.
2. Share experiences, challenges and lessons learned from enacting and implementing Tobacco Vendor Licensing in USA, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ukraine and India.
3. Identify strategies and recommendations to complement progress in enforcing existing tobacco control policies.

**Session sponsor:** The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union)

**Chairs:** Dr. Vinayak Mohan Prasad (WHO); Dr. Joanna Cohen (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health)

**Coordinators:** Dr Nidhi Sejpal Pouranik (The Union); Kathy Wright (The Union)

**Target audience:** Public Health experts, Tobacco Control Advocates, CSO and NGO representatives, Policy makers, Government Authorities, Medical and Dental professionals

**Speakers:**

**Minaj us-Siraj: Tobacco Vendor Licensing and Density: Learnings from Pakistan**

*The West Pakistan Tobacco Vend Act, 1958 (TVA) required retailers to have a license to sell tobacco. However, the TVA was enforced only briefly, and vendors ceased holding licenses in the 1960s. In 2015, the Tobacco Smoke Free Capital (TSFC) project began working with the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) to facilitate implementation of the TVA. The licensing program was envisioned as a means to generate revenue for tobacco control efforts and to raise awareness of current tobacco control laws in retail settings. This presentation will share results from a study of the implementation of the TVA in Islamabad.*

**Syed Mahbubul Alam: TVL Policy in Bangladesh: Best practices, Challenges and Way Forward**

*Sales of tobacco products to minors by informal vendors violates section 6(a) of Bangladesh's National Tobacco Control Law, and poses a major challenge to its full implementation and enforcement. To curb the ubiquitous sale of tobacco and to align with existing tobacco control measures in Bangladesh, Ministry of Local Government issued an order to implement Local Government Tobacco Control Guidelines 2019, which mandates vendors who wish to sell tobacco products are required to obtain a license from the government. This presentation will discuss in detail steps taken by the government, NGOs and CSOs pertaining to TVL activities in Bangladesh.*

**Oleh Dudin: Tobacco Vendor Licensing: Glimpse of Ukraine's Policy and Next Steps**

*Ukraine's tobacco vendor licensing has been governed by the tax authorities since 2000. According to the law, sales of tobacco products can be carried out only under a licensed permit and a license is issued for each place of trade. The cost of licenses for retailers varies (from US\$ 9 (rural) to US\$70), and for wholesales it is US\$1,830. Fines for violating existing tobacco control regulations range from US\$307 to US\$613 (for wholesales), and revocation of licenses. Despite strong measures, complete enforcement of the law remains a challenge. The presentation intends to highlight Ukraine's policy and next steps.*

**Leimapokpam Swasticharan: Indian experience in Tobacco Vendor Licensing - Opportunities and Challenges in Tobacco Control**

*India's national tobacco control law, COTPA, 2003 prohibits the sale of tobacco products to and by minors; bans TAPS and prohibits sale of tobacco within a radius of 100 yards of any educational institution. To complement the existing law and reduce accessibility of tobacco to minors, the Ministry of Health issued a national advisory in 2017 to all states to regulate the sale of tobacco products through Tobacco Vendor Licensing (TVL). This presentation will present the current status of TVL in India, demonstrate challenges ingrained in its enactment & implementation at local level; and deliberate on the way forward.*

**Ryan David Kennedy: USA's Approach to Tobacco Vendor Licensing: Strategies and Lessons**

*It is estimated that there are approximately 380,000 tobacco retailers in the United States. States and territories in the US have the authority to require retailers to obtain a license to sell tobacco products; however, there are differences in how licensing is implemented across the country including licensing fees. In the state of Montana, a tobacco retailer license is US\$5 compared to US\$800 in Connecticut. This presentation will describe state of tobacco retailer licensing in the US and highlight examples of licensing strategies to cap the number of retailers by area, or by population.*

## Chairs and Speakers' biographies



### Chair: Joanna Cohen

Joanna Cohen is the Bloomberg Professor of Disease Prevention and the director of the Institute for Global Tobacco Control at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has been involved in tobacco policy research for more than 20 years.

Trained in epidemiology and health policy, her research interests focus on the factors that affect the adoption and implementation of public health policies and on evaluating the beneficial effects and the unintended consequences of such policies. She has worked on studies of both Canadian and US legislators regarding tobacco and tobacco control policy, a longitudinal cohort of smokers focusing on factors influencing quitting behavior, tobacco promotion at the point of sale, tobacco prices including taxes, tobacco packaging, options for reducing the physical availability of tobacco products, and tobacco industry interference in tobacco control. She is Deputy Editor of the journal Tobacco Control.



### Chair: Dr Vinayak Prasad

Dr Vinayak M Prasad, Unit Head leads the WHO No Tobacco (TFI) team and is responsible for the overall coordination of global tobacco control programme in WHO, including liaison with WHO Regions and with the Convention Secretariat to WHO-FCTC.

He joined WHO TFI in December 2009 to manage the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-funded project for building capacity for tobacco control in WHO's African region. As global head, Dr Prasad also coordinates the tobacco control program (Implementation of key demand reduction measures (MPOWER), Tobacco Product regulation, Cessation, etc.

An expert in trade, taxes and anti-smuggling, he was invited in 2006 to help WHO develop a template protocol on illicit trade in tobacco products. He also advised the Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on intergovernmental negotiations. He holds a master's degree in business administration with a specialization in public service from the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, and a bachelor's degree in medicine from Maulana Azad Medical College, University of Delhi, India.



### Dr Ryan David Kennedy

Dr Ryan David Kennedy, PhD, is a tobacco control researcher and Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr Kenney is interested in the role policy plays in addressing the global tobacco epidemic. He works in low- and middle-income countries in many regulatory domains including tobacco advertising at the point-of-sale, health warning labels, and clean air laws. In the US, Kennedy has a program of research with the FDA's Center for Tobacco Programs, funded through the Hopkins CERSI (Center for Excellence in Regulatory Science and Innovation) working to understand e-cigarette advertising of product features including flavors. Additionally, Dr

Kennedy oversees a global policy scan to understand how countries/jurisdictions are regulating these emerging nicotine delivery systems.



**SYED MAHBUBUL ALAM, Technical Advisor for The Union, Bangladesh**

Mr Syed Mahbubul Alam is a public health and environment policy lawyer who has worked on policy advocacy issues for over 19 years. Currently he works as a Technical Advisor for The Union, Bangladesh. Throughout his career, he has supported and led tobacco control law and policy development. He served as a legal expert on tobacco control law and policy, drafting committees of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh. He holds an LLM from the World University of Bangladesh. He actively supports CSOs on Urbanization, Transportation, Child and Women Rights, Water, Economic and Social Justice related law and Policy. He received Global leadership in Tobacco Control Course from John Hopkins School of Public Health and Advocacy training from Advocacy Institute.



**Dr. L Swasticharan**

Dr. L Swasticharan, Additional DDG & Director (Emergency Medical Relief) currently, leads three national level Non-Communicable Disease programmes in the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India: National Tobacco Control Programme, National Oral Health Programme, and National Programme for NCDs (NPCDCS Program). He obtained his medical degree in Community Health Administration from Delhi University, India, and his MPH from Massey University, New Zealand. His primary focus includes prioritizing evidence based public health issues and adapting & implementing global best practices to improve and augment the National Programmes for management of NCDs in India.



**Dr Oleh Dudin**

Dr. Oleh Dudin is currently, the Chief Specialist on Behavioral Risk Factors, Public Health Center for the Ministry of Health, Ukraine. He has more than 6 years' experience in developing legislation and providing expertise on documentation about food safety, tobacco control, deregulation, and implementation of EU legislation. He was the National coordinator for tobacco control for the Ministry of Health of Ukraine from 2012 - 2018. He also, served as an advisor for the Minister of Health of Ukraine in the year 2018-2019. Dr Dudin has been a National expert for de-institutionalization of orphanages in Ukraine from 2018 until 2020.

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## **Dr. Minhaj us-Siraj**

Dr. Minhaj us-Siraj is currently serving the Federal Government of Pakistan, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination, as The Executive Director at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad. He has over 10 years' experience in tobacco control policy planning and implementation. Since 2013, Dr. Siraj spearheaded the successful Tobacco-Smoke Free Cities project in Islamabad, which is now being replicated in 11 other major districts across Pakistan. Overall, Dr. Siraj's tobacco control work has continually revolved around developing a strong network of energized forces at local, national, and international levels. Dr. Siraj started his career as an Ophthalmologist.