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Global Models for the Evaluation of Tobacco Control Programmes

Tobacco control programmes are designed to ultimately help reduce disease, disability and death related to tobacco use. To determine the effectiveness of these programmes, one must document and measure both their implementation and effect. Evaluation is a tool used to assess the effectiveness of implementation and outcomes of a programme to demonstrate accountability to programme stakeholders (including state and local officials, policy-makers, and community leaders) by showing them that a programme really does contribute to reduced tobacco use and less exposure to second-hand smoke. Evaluation findings can thus be used to show that money is being spent appropriately and effectively, and that further funding, increased support and policy change might lead to even greater improvement in health outcomes. Evaluation helps ensure that only effective approaches are implemented and that resources are not wasted on ineffective programmes.

Features of a tobacco control programme

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified four key measures needed for comprehensive tobacco control:¹⁵

- Reducing accessibility to tobacco products. This would include reducing affordability by raising taxes, and banning sale of tobacco in educational institutions and to minors.
- Ensuring full and free consent among users and potential users of tobacco products. This would mean an end to direct and indirect

advertising, and misleading messages on tobacco product labelling and packaging as well as full disclosure of the toxins and additives present in the product, etc.

- Protecting the health and well-being of those who do not use tobacco products. This would include providing smoke-free public and workplaces.
- Regulating products through legislation. This would include controlling the additives and allowing permissible levels of toxic ingredients found in tobacco products.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA has also identified these goals and, in addition, it also talks about identifying and eliminating the disparities related to tobacco use and its effects among different population groups.^{16,17}

A scheme for evaluating tobacco control programmes should take into account these goals and assess the extent to which they have been accomplished. In the context of tobacco control, the assessment process should include the following components.

Surveillance

Surveillance of the patterns of tobacco consumption by the type of products, region, gender, age and social class should be conducted. Tobacco-related knowledge and attitudes should especially be disaggregated with respect to social class. The existing surveys such as the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the National Survey Sample (NSS) can be further strengthened to obtain more tobacco-related information. The Government of India has recently launched the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP). The programme should incorporate surveillance of tobacco use as well as tobacco-related diseases. Surveys in specific populations, such as the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) which examined tobacco use among youth and its correlates, can be carried out.

The policies of the State and Central

Governments should also be routinely monitored. This includes tracking the development of tobacco control-related ordinances, laws and rules, and their implementation.

The national aggregate indicators which should be studied include: Land area under tobacco cultivation, annual tobacco production, annual domestic consumption of unmanufactured and manufactured tobacco (including major categories of tobacco products), annual export of tobacco, tax revenue from tobacco and cause-specific mortality of tobacco-related diseases.

Periodic statewide surveys of local opinion leaders, government officials and law enforcement personnel should be used to assess policy changes and needs. Difficulties faced by the enforcement agencies in implementing tobacco control programmes must also be looked into.

Health outcome data from various cancer registries, hospitals and other related sources should also be monitored to detect changes and identify the effects of such programmes on the incidence and death rates of tobacco-related cancer and cardiopulmonary disease.

Evaluation

School programmes

Evaluation of school-based education programmes for the prevention of tobacco use should be conducted frequently in both public and private schools.

Local programmes

At least 10% of the budget of each local project should be used for tobacco control. The state programme should ensure the quality of evaluation of local programmes by providing guidance, training and technical assistance to programme evaluators. Experience in California (Box 8.2) and Massachusetts has shown that these funds can be used both for statewide systems and to increase the technical capacity of local programmes to perform evaluation activities.¹⁷

Media campaigns

Evaluation of statewide media campaigns should be based on surveillance data, and a media-tracking study should be done for each campaign.

Tobacco industry's activity

The evaluation should also monitor the tobacco industry's marketing practices and its influence on the social, economic and health environment of the community.

Some examples of best practices in surveillance and evaluation activities are as follows:¹⁷

- National surveillance systems such as the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System enables states in the USA to evaluate programme efforts in relation to ongoing efforts and initiatives in other states. States have enhanced these national systems by adding state-specific questions and modules to capture local data.
- Several states in the USA conduct tobacco-specific surveys to complement the broader surveillance data systems. These include school-based tobacco surveys, surveys of adults, opinion leaders, health care providers, etc. These surveys help to demonstrate to the policy-makers the seriousness of the problem and the types of performance objectives that can be monitored.
- Periodic special statewide surveys of adults and young people have been conducted in several states in the USA to evaluate the exposure to tobacco and participation in major programme elements, particularly the media.

Indicators

Process indicators

The following indicators should be used to assess the extent as well as intensity of programme coverage:¹⁸

1. The level of interest among, and involvement of, community workers,

Box 8.2 The California tobacco control programme evaluation includes the following priorities and indicators¹⁹

Priority area	Core indicator
Counter pro-tobacco influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of communities with policies that control the extent of advertising outside retail stores or that of tobacco advertising outside retail stores in communities with or without a control policy The proportion of schools that provide intensive prevention instructions for tobacco use using a curriculum that provides instruction on the negative physiological and social consequences of tobacco use, social influences on tobacco use, peer norms regarding tobacco use and refusal skills
Reduce exposure to second-hand smoke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of enforcement/compliance with enforcement of state/local smoke-free laws The extent of compliance with the state law that prohibits the use of tobacco by all students, school staff, parents and visitors in schools The proportion of homes with a smoker in the household who report their home is smoke-free The extent of indoor facilities such as restaurants that have policies designating a proportion of or all the indoor areas as smoke-free. The extent of outdoor recreational facilities, e.g. playgrounds, sports stadiums etc., that have policies designating a proportion of or all the outdoor areas as smoke-free
Reduce the availability of tobacco products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of compliance with state laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors
Promote tobacco cessation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of the availability and use of culturally and linguistically appropriate behaviour modification-based tobacco cessation services in the community The number of schools that provide cessation support for students and all staff who use tobacco

- The level of understanding of the staff and community about the various issues, e.g. regarding the factors that promote the spread of tobacco use,
- The way in which tobacco use by team members is seen by them and others,
- The level of active involvement of youth in the work,
- The level of involvement of smokers in the work,
- The interest and commitment of community groups,
- The qualitative improvement in work of the community groups, and
- The proportion of allocated resources which were utilized.
- The number of people who have reduced consumption,
- The number of people who express unhappiness about their own tobacco use,
- The number of people who want to quit tobacco use,
- The number of people who have quit tobacco use,
- The number of people who see smoking as a sign of weakness,
- The number of people who see smoking as a sign of being old-fashioned,
- The number of people who see tobacco use as a sign of poor self-esteem,
- Changes in the way tobacco is perceived,
- Changes in the way the tobacco trade is perceived,
- Changes among persons engaged in promoting tobacco,
- Proportion of schools/workplaces/public places that have smoke-free policies,

Outcome indicators¹⁸

These include:

- The number of people who have quit tobacco use,

13. The community's understanding and resistance to overt and covert tobacco promotions, and
14. Changes in the amount of publicly visible smoking.

Dissemination

The findings of the results of evaluation should be compiled as fact sheets and published in a timely manner as official press releases. This is important as it helps in gaining popular support for the programme. It is also helpful in getting feedback, which can, in turn, help in making changes.

8.4 GLOBAL MODELS FOR THE EVALUATION OF TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAMMES

KEY MESSAGES

- It is important to constantly evaluate tobacco control programmes to ensure that only effective approaches are utilized.
- For an evaluation to be fruitful, it is essential that at least 10% of the total budget be earmarked for it.
- It is also vital that the evaluation reports are disseminated regularly and widely.

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8.4 Global models for the evaluation of tobacco control programmes

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