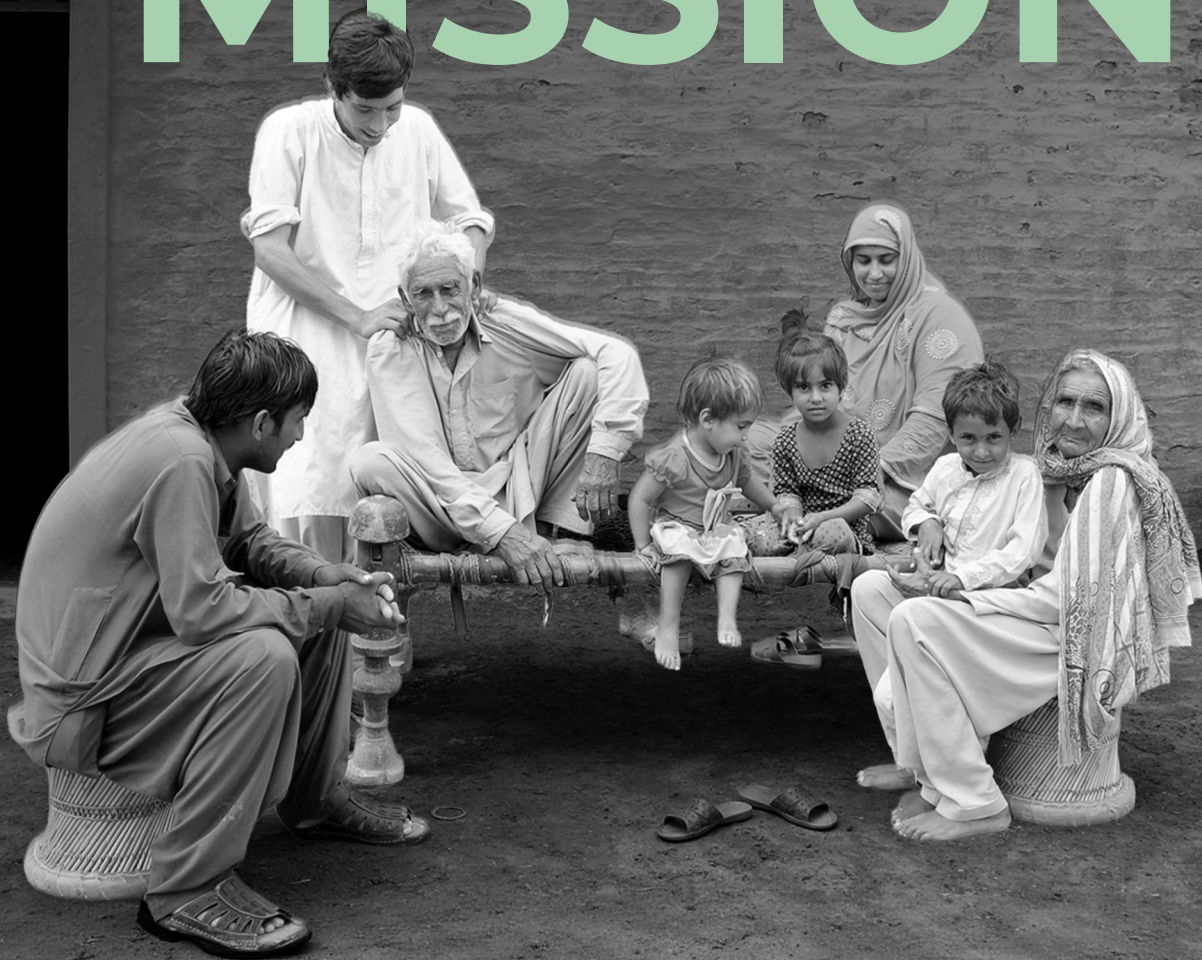


# The Initiative



The Initiative is committed to promote an empowered society, of individuals who are conscious of health, education, and environmental concerns, are competent problem solvers, critical thinkers, agents of change, and are able to take charge of their lives remaining within the prevalent socioeconomic milieu of the country.

# MISSION





# VISION

“An empowered society that strives for improved quality of life.”



# OUR COLLABORATORS





# WHAT WE DO

01

## Research & Evidence Generation

Clinical trials, surveys, mixed-methods  
research

Large-scale national and  
multi-country studies

01

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Large-scale national and  
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## Research & Evidence Generation

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# OUR TEAM



We encourage all qualified men and women to work with us and hire staff with suitable qualifications without distinction as to race, gender, religion or any other discriminating factor. We value their efficiency, competence and integrity. Currently our team includes public health specialists, epidemiologists, biostatisticians, qualitative & quantitative researchers, data and financial management experts. This team of professionals brings in a variety of skill sets emanating from experiences working at national and international levels in the field of public health especially in research and showing experience of managing multi-year and multi-county large scale research projects.



# COMPLETED PROJECTS



# 01

**Duration**

**24** Months  
July, 2015 - June, 2017

**Funded Budget**

**\$ 100,829.00**

**Donor**

**GRAND 2015 (Pfizer)**

**Fund Ref No**

**WI194558**

**Sponsor**

**University of York, UK**

## “The efficacy of varenicline in achieving abstinence among Hookah Smokers, A Two-Arm, Double Blind, Randomized, Placebo Controlled Trial”

The Hookah Trial was a clinical trial sponsored by the University of York and funded by GRAND 2014 Researcher Award. In Pakistan, Hookah continues as a common and traditional form of smoking tobacco. A range of behavioral and pharmacological therapies are available to support people in quitting cigarette smoking; however, little evidence exists for the efficacy of these therapies in achieving abstinence among hookah smokers. The objective of this study is to assess the efficacy of varenicline when added to behavioral support for hookah smoking cessation, by measuring biochemically validated continuous abstinence in hookah smokers.



## Duration

**42** Months  
Nov, 2015 - Oct, 2019

## Funded Budget

**€ 434,119.00**

## Donor

**European Commission under the Research & Innovation action, H2020-HCO-2015 Funding scheme**

## Grant No

**680995**

## Sponsor

**University of York, UK**



## “Tobacco cessation within TB programmes: A ‘real world’ solution for countries with dual burden of disease”

Tobacco cessation within TB programmes: A ‘real world’ solution for countries with dual burden of disease was a Clinical Trial of an Investigational Medicinal Product (CTIMP). Its study design was double-blind, randomized, parallel group, placebo-controlled trial in which adults diagnosed with pulmonary TB (PTB) disease have been screened at 13 TB diagnostic and management centers in Federal Capital and two provinces e.g. Punjab and KPK of Pakistan. The primary objective of this study was to assess the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of cytisine when added to behavioral support for tobacco cessation compared to behavioral support alone on tobacco cessation in TB patients who smoke tobacco on a daily basis. This trial is funded by the European Commission under the Research and Innovation action, H2020-HCO-2015 Funding scheme; Grant number 680995. Trial medications are supplied by Aflofarm Pharma Poland. The estimated trial recruitment period was 8 months and total period was about 26 months starting from June, 2017 to September, 2019.



## Collaborative Partners in Project



# STOP Survey

# 03

## Duration

**16** Months  
June, 2019 - Sep, 2020

## Funded Budget

**£ 40,000.00**

## Donor

**European Commission under the Research & Innovation action, H2020-HCO-2015 Funding scheme & RCUK**

## Local Partner

**Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation & Coordination, Pakistan. Tobacco Control Cell, MNHR&C, Pakistan. Agha Khan University, Pakistan. Khyber Medical University, Pakistan**

## Sponsor

**University of York, UK**



## “STUDYING TOBACCO USERS OF PAKISTAN (STOP): REPEATED CROSS-SECTIONAL & LONGITUDINAL SURVEY, STOP SURVEY”

In Pakistan, %19.1 adults consume tobacco causing around 160,000 deaths/year. Tobacco industry constantly interferes in policy making – a key reason for ineffectual tobacco control. For example, a move to impose higher taxes on cigarettes was blocked on the basis of a fictitious industry ‘report’. This report (never made public) asserted that illicit trade constitutes %41 of the cigarette market share and an increase in taxes will lead to more smuggling – a claim often made by the industry and constantly refuted by independent research in other countries. This project aimed at providing unbiased evidence of the scope and magnitude of the illicit tobacco trade in Pakistan. Objectives of this study were as under:

1. Proportion of cigarette smokers who use illicit cigarettes
2. Nicotine dependence and motivation to quit among smokers
3. Triggers to, the methods used in, and
4. The success of quit attempts Attitude of smokers towards tobacco control policies and cessation aides (including willingness to pay) e.g. counselling, medication, e-cigarettes.



## Collaborative Partners in Project



THE UNIVERSITY of York



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



The Initiative



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

# 04

**Duration**

**03** Months  
May, 2020 - July, 2020

**Funded  
Budget**

**£ 30,575.00**

**Donor**

**University of Edinburgh, Scotland**

**Local  
Partner**

**Tobacco Control Cell, MNHSR&C, Pakistan.  
Agha Khan University, Pakistan.  
Khyber Medical University, Pakistan.**

**Sponsor**

**University of York, UK**

## “INVESTIGATING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 EPIDEMIC & ITS RESPONSE IN A COHORT OF SMOKERS IN PAKISTAN”

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost all aspects of life for a large proportion of the world's population. The needs of the population living in low and middle income countries (LMIC) income countries such as Pakistan must be assessed and addressed to avoid widening existing global health inequalities. Pakistan was currently on an early but rising trajectory of the COVID-19 epidemic curve, and therefore assessing and monitoring the impact of COVID-19 is timely. In July 2019, this population based observational study was conducted to investigate the smoking behaviors in Pakistan the STOP survey. The first wave of the survey

recruited 6,027 participants. During consent gathering, survey participants were asked if they would be willing to take part in a future telephone follow-up in six-month's time. This study also presented an opportunity to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on this large nationally-representative population, in order to inform health, social care and policy responses.

**Collaborative  
Partners in  
Project**



THE UNIVERSITY of York



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



The Initiative

## Duration

**09** Months  
July, 2020 - Mar, 2021

## Funded Budget

**£ 9,800.00**

## Donor

**University of Edinburgh, Scotland**

## Local Partner

**Tobacco Control Cell, MNHSR&C, Pakistan.  
Khyber Medical University, Pakistan**

## Sponsor

**University of York, UK**

## “The use and perception of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) in Pakistan: A qualitative exploratory study.”

There is now substantial evidence of the effectiveness and popularity of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) in helping smokers to quit in high-income countries (HIC). ENDS are also now available and becoming popular in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), including Pakistan. There is a great deal of research on the use of ENDS in HICs although their use and role in LMICs is not documented, which may differ due to social, cultural, economic differences and accessibility. We plan to investigate how ENDS are perceived and used in Pakistan a high tobacco burden country. Using qualitative methods, we will explore perspectives of cigarette smokers, ENDS users and sellers, health practitioners, policy makers and civil society.



Duration

**06** Months

December , 2021 - May, 2022

Funded  
Budget

**£ 44,751.00**

Donor

**NIHR, UK**

Local  
Partner

**Tobacco Control Cell, MNHSR&C, Pakistan.  
Khyber Medical University, Pakistan  
Agha Khan University, Pakistan**

Sponsor

**University of York, UK**



## “STUDYING TOBACCO USERS OF PAKISTAN (STOP2-R): REPEATED CROSS-SECTIONAL & LONGITUDINAL SURVEY”

The STOP-R survey aimed to provide objective, regular and timely information on tobacco users (smokeless and smoked forms) living in rural areas of Pakistan to help key policy decisions. The specific objectives for this study were to assess, in rural areas, the:

1. Proportion of tobacco users who use illicit cigarettes
2. Nicotine dependence and motivation to quit among tobacco users .
3. Triggers to, methods used, and success of quit attempts
4. Attitude of tobacco users towards tobacco control policies and cessation aides e.g., counselling, medication.



Collaborative  
Partners in  
Project



The Initiative



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



# 07

Duration

**12** Months  
Jan, 2022 - Jan, 2023

Funded Budget

**£ 32,835.00**

Fund Ref No

**MR/V033433**

Sponsor

**National Institute of Healthcare Research UK & University of York**



## The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on people with severe mental illness and on mental health provision in South Asia (IMPASS)

Severe mental illnesses (SMI) are chronic disorders (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder), which typically cause considerable impairment in ability to engage in functional and occupational activities, and affect around 1% of the population, globally. SMI lowers life expectancy by approximately 20-10 years. The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly affected people's lives and access to healthcare in low- and middle-income countries, including in Bangladesh & Pakistan. People with SMI are at particularly high risk of being affected, as are poorly resourced mental health services. The IMPASS study therefore investigated the impact of the pandemic on people with SMI, and sought to understand how to support this vulnerable group in such public health emergencies in future.



Collaborative Partners in Project





Duration

**12** Months  
Jan, 2022 - Jan, 2023

Funded Budget

**\$21,428.00**

Fund Ref No

**MR/V033433**

Sponsor

**National Institute of Healthcare Research UK & University of York**

# 08

## Pakistan Waste recycle Cigarette Stores study



The waste recycle cigarette pack survey aims to assess the effectiveness of the tax stamp policy in combating the illegal trade of tobacco products. This survey can provide valuable insights into whether the tax stamp policy is being implemented correctly and whether it has had any impact on reducing the illicit trade. Additionally, the survey can help to understand the compliance of tobacco companies with the tax stamp policy.

### Objectives:

1. To determine the proportion of illicit cigarettes in the cigarette market in Pakistan
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the tax stamp policy vis-à-vis tobacco tax evasion
3. To identify regional patterns in tax stamps compliance on cigarette packs.



# 09

**Duration**

**12** Months  
Jan, 2022 - Jan, 2023

**Funded  
Budget**

**£ 32,835.00**

**Fund  
Ref No**

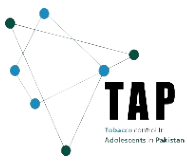
**MR/V033433**

**Sponsor**

**National Institute of Healthcare Research UK  
& University of York**

## Equity in immunization coverage ensuring fair access and distribution of vaccination services

This implementation research explored how closer collaboration between the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) and the Balochistan Health Card Programme (BHCP) can improve fair access to vaccines for newborns in Balochistan. The study found that while most vaccinations are provided in public facilities, the majority of births take place in private hospitals, leading to missed opportunities for vaccination at birth. By integrating EPI services into BHCP-affiliated private hospitals and strengthening data and cold-chain systems, the initiative highlights a practical, cost-effective pathway to reduce inequities, build community trust, and ensure more newborns receive life-saving vaccines on time.



Duration

**12** Months  
Jan , 2022 - Jan, 2023

Funded  
Budget

**£ 32,835.00**

Fund  
Ref No

**MR/V033433**

Sponsor

**National Institute of Healthcare  
Research UK & University of  
York**



## Tobacco control policies and the health of Adolescents in Pakistan (TAP)

The waste recycle cigarette pack survey aims to assess the effectiveness of the tax stamp policy in combating the illegal trade of tobacco products. This survey can provide valuable insights into whether the tax stamp policy is being implemented correctly and whether it has had any impact on reducing the illicit trade. Additionally, the survey can help to understand the compliance of tobacco companies with the tax stamp policy.

### Objectives:

1. To determine the proportion of illicit cigarettes in the cigarette market in Pakistan
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the tax stamp policy vis-à-vis tobacco tax evasion
3. To identify regional patterns in tax stamps compliance on cigarette packs.



Duration

**12** Months  
Jan, 2022 - Jan, 2023

Funded Budget

**£ 32,835.00**

Fund Ref No

**MR/V033433**

Sponsor

**National Institute of Healthcare Research UK & University of York**



## An mHealth intervention (mTB-Tobacco) for smoking cessation in people with drug-sensitive pulmonary tuberculosis in Bangladesh & Pakistan

The aim of this study is to explore the effectiveness of this mHealth intervention in the context of two low-middle-income countries, Bangladesh and Pakistan. We wish to explore the best method to help TB patients quit smoking. The study is funded by the National Institute of Health Research, UK and is sponsored by the University of Edinburgh, UK. In Pakistan, this study is being conducted by The Initiative (a non-profit research organization in Islamabad) in collaboration with the National/Provincial TB control programs. The primary objective is to assess the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of mHealth to achieve continuous abstinence from smoking for at least 6 months. To assess improvements in TB treatment adherence and clinical outcomes simultaneously are two of its secondary objectives.





# ONGOING PROJECTS



# National Institute for Health and care Research (NIHR), UK

# 01

## Duration

**12** Months  
Jan , 2022 - Jan, 2023

## Funded Budget

**£ 32,835.00**

## Fund Ref No

**MR/V033433**

## Sponsor

**National Institute of Healthcare Research UK & University of York**

Centre for IMPACT aims at promoting mental and physical health in Afghanistan and Pakistan by reducing premature deaths and disabilities caused by NCDs. In this proposal, it focuses on three of the four key NCDs: common mental disorders (depression and anxiety), heart conditions, and diabetes. Through evaluating the key approaches to prevent and treat these, targeting those most at risk, and –uniquely– giving mental health parity alongside physical health.



Duration

**12** Months  
Jan, 2022 - Jan, 2023

Funded  
Budget

**£ 32,835.00**

Fund  
Ref No

**MR/V033433**

Sponsor

**National Institute of  
Healthcare Research UK  
& University of York**



FA4LIFE is a 4-year implementation research study, covering a research area of high uncertainty that, considering the increasing NCD burden, will become even more important in years to come. The objective of this project is to empower adolescents for a healthier future by concurrently addressing tobacco control and promoting awareness about air quality. We will employ innovative, robust research methods that meaningfully engage those that matter youth, families, providers, managers and authorities. Using these methods, we will improve our understanding on what is important to implement sustainable NCD prevention packages targeting young people in disadvantaged populations. The target group for this project is mid- to late-adolescents (aged 14 to 21 years old), providers (e.g., healthcare, education) and other stakeholders (e.g., family members, community leaders, policymakers).

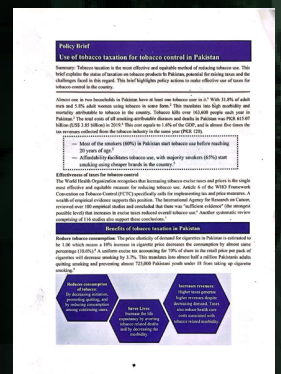




# POLICY BRIEF

01

Use of tobacco taxation for tobacco control in Pakistan- MoNHSR&C, University of Stirling, University of York, The Initiative



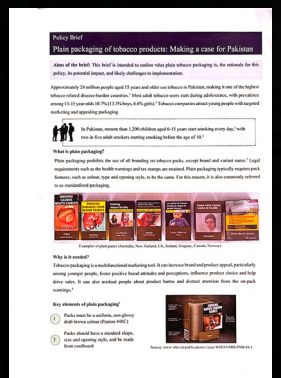
01

Use of tobacco taxation for tobacco control in Pakistan- MoNHSR&C, University of Stirling, University of York, The Initiative



01

Use of tobacco taxation for tobacco control in Pakistan- MoNHSR&C, University of Stirling, University of York, The Initiative



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3. Siddiqi, K., Scammell, K., Huque, R., Khan, A., Baral, S., Ali, S., & Watt, I. (2015). Smokeless tobacco supply chain in South Asia: A comparative analysis using the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, ntv067.
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# OUR PUBLICATIONS



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8. Siddiqi, Kamran, Faraz Siddiqui, Amina Khan, Saeed Ansaari, Mona Kanaan, Mariam Khokhar, Ziauddin Islam, Masuma Pervin Mishu, and Linda Bauld. 2020. "The Impact of COVID-19 on Smoking Patterns in Pakistan: Findings from a Longitudinal Survey of Smokers." *Nicotine & Tobacco Research: Official Journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*, October. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntaa207>.
  
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# OUR PUBLICATIONS

