

# **WORKSHOP ON “TOBACCO QUESTIONS FOR SURVEYS (TQS): DATA ANALYSIS & DISSEMINATION”**

**16-17 August 2017**

**Ankara, Republic of Turkey**

**Welcoming Speech by Dr. Pavel URSU, WHO Representative in Turkey**

His Excellency Ambassador, colleagues from WHO and CDC and distinguished guests from OIC member states, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great privilege for me to speak on behalf of the World Health Organization, at the opening of this workshop, on “Tobacco Questions for Surveys (TQS): Data Analysis & Dissemination.

I extend to you, our warmest welcome, to this important international event.

First of all, on behalf of WHO, I would like to express my appreciation to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and SESRIC, for inviting the WHO to take part in this important international workshop. I would also like to congratulate CDC and CDC Foundation for the excellent organization of this workshop in Ankara Turkey. WHO has been looking forward to this unique opportunity, to share experiences and information in the area of monitoring tobacco use and prevention policies.

Tobacco use is the leading single preventable cause of death worldwide, killing over 7 million people each year. Its economic costs are also enormous, totaling more than US\$ 1.4 trillion in health care costs and lost productivity.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was developed in response to the globalization of the tobacco epidemic. The WHO FCTC and its guidelines provide the foundation for countries to implement and manage tobacco control, and sets the baseline for decreasing both demand for and supply of tobacco. To support countries, WHO developed MPOWER package for demand reduction measures contained in the WHO FCTC.

These policies include,

- **Monitor** tobacco use and prevention policies
- **Protect** people from tobacco smoke
- **Offer** help to quit tobacco use
- **Warn** about the dangers of tobacco
- **Enforce** bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship
- **Raise** taxes on tobacco.

According to recent WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2017, 43% of the world’s population (3.2 billion people) are covered by two or more MPOWER measures at the highest level. Eight countries, including five low- and middle-income countries, have implemented four or more MPOWER measures at the highest level (Brazil, Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Madagascar, Malta, Panama, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and only 2 of them OIC member states.

Controlling tobacco use is also a key part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda includes targets to strengthen national implementation of the WHO FCTC and a one third reduction in premature deaths from NCDs, including heart and lung diseases, cancer and diabetes. Tobacco use is a leading common risk factor for NCDs, which kill 40 million people each year, equivalent to 70% of all deaths globally, including 15 million people aged between 30 and 69 years. Over 80% of these "premature" deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.

Only with good measurement systems, problems caused by tobacco can be understood and interventions can be effectively managed and improved.

Comprehensive monitoring informs the leaders of governments and civil society how the tobacco epidemic harms their countries. And helps them allocate tobacco control resources where they are most needed and will be most effective. Monitoring also shows whether the policies are working and how they should be tailored to the needs of different countries. WHO is working with countries to build and expand global and national level monitoring systems.

In order to maintain consistency and comparability in monitoring tobacco use, the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) was developed to meet this need by using standard set of tobacco use surveys questions.

The *Tobacco Questions for Surveys* has been created for countries that are not implementing a full GATS. These questions include a recommended subset of key GATS questions that can be used as a module or included in other existing surveys.

We are hopeful that these survey questions will become the worldwide standard, and increase the capacity of all stakeholders for monitoring and comparing trends in tobacco use and tobacco control interventions.

Once more I would like to remind you that one of the essential components of a comprehensive global tobacco control effort is an efficient and systematic surveillance mechanism to monitor the epidemic. And countries can better protect their citizens, including children, from the tobacco industry and its products when they use tobacco monitoring systems.

WHO looks forward to the opportunity of working closely with the OIC SESRIC and CDC and CDC-F to support your efforts to build and expand global and national level monitoring systems. I stand here with you today to ensure WHO's continued support for your national efforts in the implementation of strong national and international monitoring systems for the fight against the tobacco epidemic.

I would like to thank once more the SESRIC for the kindly invitation and wish you very successful workshop and good outcomes.

Thank you very much.