

Journey from Smoke Free Himachal Pradesh to Tobacco Free to Eco-Friendly Hills of the Adolescent State

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Abstract

Background: The hill state of Himachal Pradesh with a varied geographical terrain has a higher incidence of smoking for men (33.6%) as compared to the national average (32.7%). As per Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS 2010), 21.2% of adults consume tobacco in some form or other. About 40% of the adult males and adolescents consume tobacco of which 33% smoke and 3.8% women of adult women consume tobacco with majority smoking. The exposure to second hand smoke at home is 83% in HP and is among the highest in India. **Interventions:** For creating an environment of safe and fresh air, Health department with budding Himachal Pradesh Voluntary Health Association (HPVHA) focused on capacity building/empowering of stakeholders for inter sectoral collaborations, creation of effective coalitions. It initiated policy advocacy for formation of Steering Committees at State and District level, creation of flying squads and advocated for notification of courts for compounding the fines and trial for offence on tobacco advertising. It focused on stakeholder sensitization on smoke free laws and conducted about 100 workshop/trainings amongst the authorized personnel. The momentum has now been taken to all district/ sub district levels and through rural penetration, panchayat resolutions of smoke free are being passed. **Results and Lessons learnt:** Micro level networks and collaborations upto the grassroots with cross sectional stakeholders formed. All district/ development blocks are complying with the smoke free provisions, more than 40000 violators fined in the state in 2 years and about Rs. 5 million amount have been collected as fine by the enforcement officials. About 36000 stakeholders/enforcement officials sensitized at workshops and meetings. 90% Panchayats have passed smoke free resolutions and compliance of smoke free in the state reached to 83%. A cadre of sensitized stakeholders from cross section departments, community based institutions has been formed and combined effect of health department and HPVHA have realized that the social legislation of smoke free laws has to be initiated from the top focusing on policy advocacy and go down gradually in the hierarchy by strengthening the enforcement mechanism and community awareness. **Conclusions:** Unless a resolute effort is made to implement smoke free laws, it will have no concrete consequence. It needs to be efficiently executed and enforced with cross sectional stakeholders with an incorporation of knowledge sharing, information exchange, coalition-building, networking, advocacy with policymakers and enforcement agencies, capacity building, monitoring and reporting, media advocacy.

Keywords: Smoke free; Second hand smoker; COTPA; Networking; Himachal Pradesh.

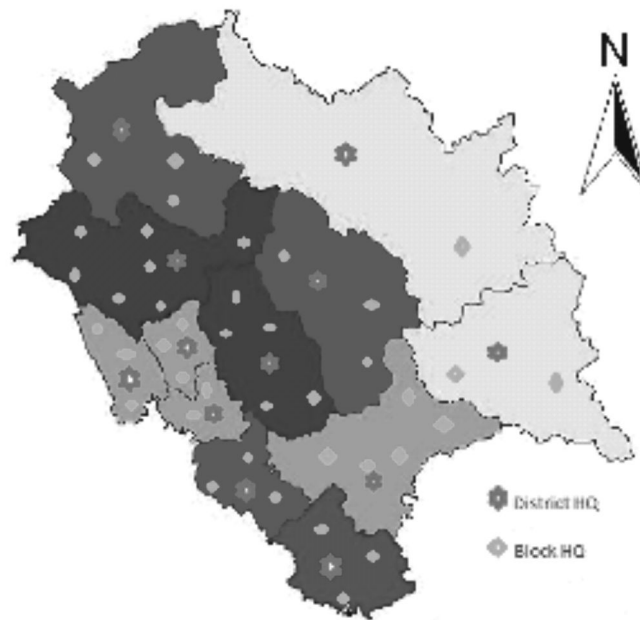
Introduction

The hill state of young and adolescent Himachal Pradesh with a varied geographical

terrain has a higher incidence of smoking for men (33.6%) as compared to the national average (32.7%). As per the GATS, 2010, 33% males and 3.8% females smoke. Second hand

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Area Covered in Base Line/ Compliance Survey



exposure to tobacco at home is highest in Himachal Pradesh, that is 83% and highest in India. That is why it is one of the burning public health problems. In Himachal Pradesh, the smoking is a part of culture in cold hills. Bidis and cigarettes are often offered in marriages and local functions as a mark of respect. Britishers used to smoke cigar as status symbol. Shimla, the queen of hills was very famous for PAN shops. But for last over two years much water has flowed down the hills in controlling and containing the tobacco products all round.

Department of Community Medicine, Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla and Population Research Center, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla conducted the End line Compliance Survey independently which observed 85.42% compliance under section 4 of Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA) in Himachal Pradesh. Out of the twelve districts in the state, Bilaspur stands first with score as 93% and the biggest Kangra district rolls down to the bottom with score as 80%. The Total Fertility Rate of Himachal Pradesh is 1.9 and hence is heading towards population stabilization and more than 80% smokers are adolescents and young people.

On basis of scientific/technical survey, Himachal Pradesh has been validated as the Smoke Free State. On 3rd July, 2013 the state was declared as *Smoke Free*. The journey from smoke free state to tobacco free state has now started¹ Initially, when we started this program of tobacco control in the state and the objectives were: To reduce the second hand smoke at home in Himachal Pradesh and to make the state SMOKE FREE. In this campaign, there were many research questions: Is tobacco control a priority presently? What will we gain if we control tobacco? What about the rights of smokers? Why don't we stop the manufacturing of tobacco products? What is the alternate of tobacco? Still we examined the context, content and implementation of the smoke free laws in the State of Himachal Pradesh (HP) focusing first on the Capital of the State, Shimla and its

- Challenges
- The role of leadership, campaigns, initiatives, key partners
- Opinion poll, Enforcement and compliance
- The impact of the law

- Lessons learned
- Future plans

Methodology/Interventions

Smoke Free Himachal

Creation of Smoke Free Himachal Pradesh through (1st May, 2011 – 30th April, 2013)

To achieve the objective of Smoke Free (SF) Himachal, four interventions were employed:

1. Sensitization and building of capacity of the stakeholders;
2. Awareness generation among the public;
3. Community participation and
4. Effective enforcement of SF provision of Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA) and then revised rules, 2008

In addition to above noted four interventions, Focused Strategies were also employed:

- a. Important part was institutionalizing mechanisms of implementation at every department, district, block and upto panchayat level.
- b. Facilitation in creation/ strengthening/ capacity building of enforcement officials and flying squads
- c. Capacity building/ sensitization of key stakeholders/authorized personnel;
- d. Political advocacy,
- e. Networking and Liaisoning;
- f. Developing and Disseminating Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material;
- g. Reporting Violations and finally media sensitization were different significant variables for this project.

Results and Discussion

Smoke Free Campaign in Shimla was initiated in 2007 with signature campaign and submission of memorandum to then Governor and Chief Minister. It was the turning point in the tobacco control in Himachal Pradesh when a north zone workshop 16-17 Jan 2009 was organized by WHO/ Govt of India and addressed by the Health Minister of Himachal Pradesh at Chandigarh. The health minister in his address said that a comprehensive approach for tobacco control is the need of hour. This is the right time to address this issue in a proper way through awareness and enforcement. He said the issue is very serious and Himachal will set standards in tobacco control and will become a model state in the country. Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh appealed to the people of the state to make Himachal a Tobacco Free State on the World Anti Tobacco Day on 31.5.09.

Campaigns

5.5.09 –The 2nd major step was the State level advocacy workshop held in the HP secretariat on 5.5.09 under the chairpersonship of chief secretary to the Govt of HP, which was organized by HPVHA in collaboration with the Health Department and was funded by South East Asia Union. The workshop was attended by about 100 participants, Principal Secretaries, Secretaries, Head of Departments, Director General of Police, media persons. Before that a preparatory meeting of the state steering committee was held at Health Family Welfare Training Centre, Parimahal under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary (Health). Chief Secretary held the meeting regarding the issues in her chamber on 6.5.09 with Secretary Health and gave the necessary directions. The next step was the establishment of new

Directorate of Health Safety and Regulations by the Govt to deal with the regulatory issues of health

In the month of August, the police persons of the rank of Head constable and above were authorized to take action under section 4 & 6. Simultaneously, the directions were passed to all the institutions to print the receipt and challans at their own and deposit the fine/compounding fee in a bank account at local level and the institutions/authorities were authorized to utilize the funds for anti tobacco activities.

The State level advocacy workshop on Tobacco control Laws and related issues was organized at Hotel Peterhoffs, SHIMLA and Health Minister of Himachal Pradesh was the Chief Guest. In the workshop all HODs, Officers of District Administration, Police, Health, Ayurveda, Food, Excise, Drug, were invited including 30 media persons and NGOs. There were about 130 participants in the workshop. Health Minister directed all the departments to implement the provisions of COTPA 2003 and directed the authorities to display the boards and signages before 31.1.2010. It was decided in the workshop that such follow-up of workshops would be organized in each district. There was series of workshops in the districts as:

6.1.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Hamirpur under the Chairmanship of ADM, Hamirpur and it was attended by 40 officers of distt/ block level.

7.1.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Dharamshala under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Kangra and it was attended by 50 officers of district/block level.

17.1.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Solan under the Chairmanship of Health Minister of HP and it was attended by 60 officers of distt/ block level.

20.3.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Chief Medical Officer, Conference Hall Mandi under the Chairmanship of PWD

Minister of HP and it was attended by 60 officers of distt/ block level.

22.3.10 - District level Law Enforcer Training at Bachat bhawan Shimla under the Chairmanship of Mayor, MC Shimla and it was attended by 30 officers of distt/ block level.

25.3.10 - District level Law Enforcer Training at Bachat bhawan Shimla under the Chairmanship of Sh. Suresh Bharadwaj, MLA Shimla and Mayor, MC Shimla. It was attended by 30 officers of distt/block level.

29.4.10 - Block level Advocacy Workshop at BDO Conference Hall Karsog, Mandi under the Chairmanship of SDM Karsog and it was attended by 30 officers of block level

30.4.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Kinnaur under the Chairmanship of DC Kinnaur and it was attended by 30 officers of Distt / block level.

10.5.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Una under the Chairmanship of DC Una and it was attended by 30 officers of Distt / block level.

11.5.10 - District level Advocacy Workshop at Bachat Bhawan, Kullu under the Chairmanship of DC Kullu and it was attended by 40 officers of District / block level.

17.5.10 - State Level Meeting- The workshop was organized in the HP secretariat under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary (Health) Himachal Pradesh.

On 2nd October, 2010 Shimla city was declared as Smoke Free by Honorable Chief Minister, Prem K Dhumal.

World Health Organisation recognised on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day (31st May, 2011) to HPVHA and on World No Tobacco Day_WNTD (31st May, 2012) to Govt of Himachal Pradesh. Having got declared Shimla SF, enthused the training programs in all twelve district headquarters and forty block head quarters of Himachal Pradesh were got started:

Smoke Free Project-Activities Vs

Trainings-District and Block Planned/Conducted

S. No.	Name of District/ Head Quarter	Name of Block Head Quarters Covered	No of Blocks
1	Bilaspur	Jhanduta, Ghumarwin	2
2	Chamba	Salooni, Bhatiyat/Dalhousie, Bharmour	3
3	Hamirpur	Sujanpur, Nadoun, Bijhadi	3
4	Kangra/ Dharmshala	Nurpur, Nagrota Surian, Indora, Bhawarna/Palampur, Bajnath, Lamba Gaon, Sulah	7
5	Kinnour/ Rekong Peo	Kalpa/Nichar, Poch	2
6	Kullu	Ani, Banjar, Nagar/Manali	3
7	Lahaul Spiti/ Keylong	Kaza	1
8	Mandi	Dhampur, Siraj, Drang/Paddar, Sundemagar, Karsog	5
9	Shimla	Rampur, Theog, Chauhara/Rohroo, Chaupal, Shimla Rural	5
10	Sirmour/Nahan	Shilai, Sagrah, Paonta	3
11	Solan	Nalagarh/Badli, Dhampur, Kunihar	3
12	Una	Haroli, Gagret, Bangan	3
	12 DHQ	40 BHQ	40

Date : 2.10.2010

Chief Minister
Himachal Pradesh

Achievements were begun, e.g., About 30,000 Public Places and 12,000 Enforcement officials at Block/District Head Quarter/Panchayat were mapped. Opinion Poll and Baseline Survey and Analysis were conducted in 12 Districts HQ and 40 Block HQ. 15000 copies were distributed for Dhumrpaan Mukta Himachal, Pamphlet, Folders on COTPA,

Meetings upto Panchayat level were held. Flying squads in 32 districts were formed. Smoke free agenda was placed gram sabhas in over 600 meetings were successfully put.

Nodal Officers for all the departments were notified. 5849 notices were served to violators under sections 4,5,6 and 7 of COTPA, 2003.

Total violations were 39157 and the amount realized was over Rs. 50 lacs approx.

Special highlights include closure of Bidi industry in district Hamirpur;

-Advocacy of tax on tobacco increased from 9% to 40% for cigarettes and 4% to 26% (Bidi)

By the end of April, 2013, 11 districts were declared as Smoke Free by respective Deputy Commissioners excepting Kangra.

If we happen to observe the ranking based upon the independent survey, Bilaspur stands first with score as 93% and the biggest Kangra district rolls down to the bottom with score as 80%, a step heading towards smoke free status. India has done well in some areas of tobacco control but needs to do much more in others. Uttar Pradesh in 2003 bans all forms of tobacco advertising other than at the point of sale.

Ranking of Districts based on Compliance Survey

District Rank as per Compliance Survey

District	Overall %	Rank
Himachal Pradesh	85.42	
Bilaspur	92.76	1
Shimla	92.17	2
Mandi	91.23	3
Kullu	88.46	4
Lahaul & Spiti	87.73	5
Kinnour	85.57	6
Solan	85.19	7
Una	82.95	8
Sirmour	81.06	9
Hamirpur	80.86	10
Chamba	80.30	11
Kangra	80.17	12

Round the globe, the various countries like Tasmania which has announced a 'Tobacco-Free Millennium Generation' policy, wherein no one born after 2000 will be ever sold tobacco legally. Singapore is likely to follow suit. Bhutan has already banned the sale of all tobacco products. Some countries have been more ambitious and have set a target of reducing such prevalence to less than 5% – New Zealand and a group of Pacific Island Nations (2025), Finland (2030), Scotland (2034).

Bulging reproductive age group (15–49 years) with mild upward shift of the geriatric population is the root cause for steadily

State Declaration Function



increasing population in hills of Himachal but heading towards stabilization and of course, not exploding like India with booming fertility rate and 80% of the smokers fall in the group of adolescence and youth period². Here a point of note is that on basis of scientific/technical survey, Himachal Pradesh has been validated as the Smoke Free State. On 3rd July, 2013, Health Minister, Thakur Kaul Singh declared the state as SMOKE FREE

Now we have challenges ahead, more dreams to be fulfilled:

- a. Complete ownership by the Government
- b. Introduction of Special Budget for Tobacco Control in National Health Mission/ Department of Health and Family Welfare Department
- c. To stop second hand smoking at Homes;
- d. To reduce Tobacco Consumption from 22.2% to 15%.

What we have achieved as Smoke free status for HP, now it is important to sustain section 4 in 2nd phase till April 2015 and at the same time, effective implementation of sections 5, 6 and 7 of COTPA is extremely important.

A few lines from Robert Frost poem:

Woods are dark and deep;

But I have the promises to keep.

Miles to go before I sleep,

Miles to go before I sleep,

Our Journey From Smoke Free State To Tobacco Free State Has Now Started.

Acknowledgements

Our profuse thanks to Dr. Gopal Chauhan, State Tobacco Program officer, Shimla for intellectual outputs in the manuscripts. Our thanks are also to:

Key Partners

1. *HPVHA* - The voluntary health association in Himachal Pradesh has been the most effective partner with the Govt all the time. They organized a lot of workshops, in the various parts of the state especially in Shimla made a political consensus and also organized the training workshops for the law enforcers. They played the key role in displaying the signage's and awareness of the people in Shimla town.
2. *The Union South East Asia* - The Union South East Asia provided the technical support, trainings of international standards and funding for the Smoke Free Shimla Project. The Union organized the sensitization workshops in Shimla. The Union helped in conducting the OPINION Poll and compliance survey of smoke free rules in Shimla.
3. *WHO* - The WHO supported financially and technically to organize the largest workshop in the state. In the workshop the major decisions for tobacco control were taken. The program percolated to the District levels after this workshop i.e. 11.12.09.

4. *Government of India* - The officers and officials from Government of India helped a lot in encouraging us and responded to the quarries raised by the people and us immediately.

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