

# *“BREAKING THE CYCLE: WATERPIPE TOBACCO CONTROL IN THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK”*

THE WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING (WTS) KNOWLEDGE HUB (KH)

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# Objectives:

- 1.Understand the Landscape: Provide an overview of water pipe tobacco use, prevalence, and cultural significance in Egypt**
- 2.Explore Regulatory Efforts: Current policies and regulations addressing water pipe tobacco in Egypt**
- 3. Review enforcement mechanisms, successes, and challenges in implementation.**

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# OUTLINE

- Water pipe use spiraled globally at the start of the 21st century, starting from the Middle East and spreading in the United States and Europe.
- In several parts of the world, water pipe smoking has quickly replaced cigarettes as the primary mode of smoking, especially amongst the youth.
- The main misperception associated with this rise has been the assumption that water pipe smoking is a 'healthier' tobacco product alternative because harmful substances get 'filtered' out by water.



- Water pipe use is predominant among the youth, males and in urban settings. Water pipe smoking is also characterized by its intermittent and social use.
- Significant motives for water pipe smoking have been socialization, relaxation, pleasure and entertainment. And thus, the cafes and clubs serving water pipe have become classified as hip among the youth.
- The addition of flavorings to the tobacco product has reduced its harshness, thus rendering it widely acceptable to youth.





- Water pipe tobacco smoking (WTS) is prevalent worldwide and policies to address it need to take into consideration its specificities as a mode of smoking.
- The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) offers guidance on evidence-based policies to reduce tobacco consumption and its burden of disease.
- Recently, it has provided guidance for alternative tobacco products, such as the water pipe.



- Inconsistencies were also observed as to how water pipe tobacco products were considered by the Parties. In many cases, water pipe tobacco products were considered as any other tobacco products and included in the relevant regulations, while in other cases, they were excluded from certain regulations.
- Many national laws and regulations do not have a clear definition of water pipe tobacco, which has led to in conflicting interpretation of measures, and therefore their implementation.

# WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS SUBJECT ?

- The increase in water pipe tobacco smoking (WTS) globally has been linked to a variety of factors, one of which is the lack of water pipe-specific policies and regulations.
- A growing body of literature has documented the need for regulatory practices to control WTS.
- Previous global analysis of country tobacco control policies in 2015 indicated that very few country policies addressed WTS.







- The guiding document for global tobacco control regulation is the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the world's first global health treaty, which includes evidence-based policy recommendations translated through required 'articles'.
- Research evidence and reports from the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the FCTC on global regulatory practices have documented potentially effective regulatory practices for WTS, such as using water pipe-specific health warning labels.
- As a result, global health guidance is emerging on WTS-specific policies.



**Table 1. Overview of Identified Country Regulatory Practices.**

Country	WHO FCTC Ratification Date	Smoke Free Policies	Text Warning Label	Pictorial Warning Label	Waterpipe Specific Health Warnings
<i>Afghanistan</i>	13 August 2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Bahrain</i>	20 March 2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Egypt</i>	25 February 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Lebanon</i>	7 December 2005	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<i>Pakistan</i>	3 November 2004	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	9 May 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	7 November 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Belize</i>	15 December 2005	No	Yes	No	No
<i>Brazil</i>	5 November 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Canada</i>	26 November 2004	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Colombia</i>	10 April 2008	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Jamaica</i>	7 July 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

- **In Egypt**, there is also a high report of water pipe usage, with the initiation age to be very low
- Smoking, including water pipes, is prohibited in Egypt's health and educational facilities, governmental venues, sporting and social clubs, youth centers, and public transport.
- Textual and pictorial health warnings are to occupy 50% of the front and back of the tobacco products; these warnings have been specifically applied on packs of water pipe tobacco but not on the device itself which people use.
- In 2017, the Government of Egypt requested the use of a new set of pictorial warnings.



## 1. Examine Public Health Strategies:

- The public Health Campaigns is always about cigarette smoking with few limited repetitive information about hazards of Water pipe and other forms.
- Ain shams university and Egypt Health foundation conducted research in collaboration with AUB about impact of Health warnings on water pipe
- We need more specific campaigns as by observation many smoking shisha especially the flavored is highly prevalent as a social norm especially among youth and women. There is many misconceptions about it which include that it is less harmful

## 2. Learn from Challenges:

- Cultural acceptance, social norms, and economic factors increase the prevalence among many cultures and need more research and studies especially about knowledge, perceptions and attitudes.



# • SELF-REPORTED ADDICTION TO AND PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL OF WATER PIPE TOBACCO SMOKING AND ITS PATTERNS IN EGYPT: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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- QUITTING, QUIT ATTEMPTS AND INTENTION TO QUIT).

- RESULTS: A QUARTER (25.8%) OF THE PARTICIPANTS SELF-REPORTED ADDICTION TO WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING (MALES 27.1%, FEMALES 11.6%). PARTICIPANTS WHO CONSIDERED THEMSELVES ADDICTED REPORTED LESS CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO QUIT, FEWER QUIT ATTEMPTS, LESS INTENTION TO QUIT AND LESS PERCEIVED HARM OF WATERPIPE SMOKING THAN THOSE NOT ADDICTED ( $P < 0.001$ ). VARIABLES ASSOCIATED WITH SELF-REPORTED ADDICTION WERE: YOUNGER AGE AT STARTING WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING (ORA = 2.2, 95% CI: 1.7–2.9), DAILY WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING (ORA = 2.0, 95% CI: 1.1–3.5), SMOKING ALONE (ORA = 2.0, 95% CI: 1.4–2.8), BEING MARRIED (ORA = 1.8, 95% CI: 1.2–2.9), AND MONTHLY SPENDING ON WATERPIPE SMOKING OF  $\geq 150$  EGYPTIAN POUNDS (US\$ 8.6) (ORA = 4.1, 95% CI: 2.9–5.6).

- CONCLUSIONS: COMPREHENSIVE WATERPIPE-SPECIFIC POLICIES ARE NEEDED INCLUDING EDUCATION ON WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING DEPENDENCY, INCREASED TAXATION TO DECREASE AFFORDABILITY OF WATERPIPE TOBACCO AND CESSATION PROGRAMMES ADDRESSING PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY AND ADDICTION TO WATERPIPE TOBACCO SMOKING.

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**3.Promote Regional Collaboration:** Discuss opportunities Egypt can work in collaboration with other countries which will help to share experiences and overcome challenges.

#### 4.Encourage Actionable Outcomes:

- Design communication material with innovative approaches We need to define clearly what is water pipe and develop specific policies which includes smoke free, Health warning, cessation, flavors and taxes policies.
- develop policy briefs and factsheets to encourage policy makers to adopt evidence-based strategies and advocate for stronger regulatory measures.

