



Every year on 31 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners observe World No Tobacco Day (WNTD), advocating for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. This year, WNTD draws attention to tobacco use as a leading risk factor for the development of cardiovascular diseases. In Bangladesh, tobacco kills more than 161 000 people every year, which is 19% of all deaths. The most common causes of these tobacco-attributable deaths – over 65 000 – are cardiovascular diseases, including heart attacks and strokes.

The implementation of evidence-based tobacco control policies will prevent the devastating deaths and disabilities caused by tobacco. In Bangladesh, priority must be given to increasing the price of tobacco through reform of the tax structure, which will save lives and generate extra revenue for health and development. Also, providing brief intervention cessation services in primary health care as part of the Package of Essential Noncommunicable Disease Interventions (PEN), increasing access to nicotine replacement therapy, and introducing cessation support through mobile phone technology (mTobaccoCessation) will help tobacco users to quit.

The Government of Bangladesh has made great strides to reduce tobacco use by implementing the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in 2030 and a tobacco-free Bangladesh by 2040 requires sustained, unwavering commitment and acceleration of action. Taking such bold steps will bring us closer to a healthier and more prosperous Bangladesh.

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