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State program on health protection of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact for 2008-2015

1. Introduction

The problem of tobacco use is a global social problem, which stands in front of Kyrgyzstan and the whole world community. Spread of tobacco use is the danger to the health of the population of the whole world. Smoking all over the world annually takes approximately 5 millions of people's lives. This number, approximately, equals to 13, 5 thousands cases of deaths per day, or 10 cases per minute (WHO, 2002). If preventive measures are not done today, then about after 20 years 10 million of people will die from harmful tobacco impact, and according to expert prognoses of World Health Organization (WHO), smoking will become the major cause of death in the world, 70 percent of which will belong to developing countries. Tobacco is one of the major factors of risk-development for 25 diseases. The danger of tobacco is consequences of its use which gives its effect after 20-30 years, and 50 percent of children and youth, who smoke today, are not able to reach the age of 70.

Cancer and lung emphysema are the most dangerous consequences of smoking. Use of tobacco products doubles the development of atherosclerosis, which leads to insult, stenocardia (angina of exertion), myocardial infarction and many other disorders. Among people who suffer from stomach ulcer 98 percent of them are smokers. Smoking of tobacco products causes 30 percent of male deaths at the age of 35-69, i.e. it negatively impacts the most productive layer of the society. WHO classifies the smoking as dependence (syndrome dependence from tobacco: Classification F 17.2 in International Classification of Diseases). Nicotine, in the setting of psychoactive drugs according to its level of dependence, is on the highest place in comparison to heroin, cocaine, alcohol, caffeine and marijuana.

Smoking harms not only smoker: smoker breaths in only 20 percent of tobacco smoke, all the rest reach the surrounding people. And if to count that one smoker per 3-4 non-smokers, then the health of the whole population is exposed to danger. Serious danger to the health and life of future child is active or passive smoking of parents. The big percentage of chronic poisoning by tobacco products leads to the development of anatomical defects. In one or other organs of fetus (also suffers its functions), which further negatively

influences the life of infant. If pregnant woman smokes or surrounding people (husband, father, brother), then the future child will definitely smoke.

One of the actual problems for the republic is the use of chewing tobacco-nasvay (further nasvay). Use of nasvay like cigarette smoking accelerates the development of many chronic non-communicable diseases, first of all, of mucous tunic cancer of lips and of oral cavity. Cultivation and manufacture of nasvay in the republic is widespread. It is produced illegally, by primitive means, at home; its sale is also illegal on markets, in the streets and in the previous years even in mini-kiosks and pavilions of Bishkek city.

The structure of mortality causes of previous years is the evidence of the fact that the republic is facing the problem of mortality from non-communicable diseases (82-85 cases), where the use of tobacco products is one of the main causes of its development. Considering that between the age of beginning to smoke (nasvay use) and the age of beginning of diseases and death cases, being the result of its use, there is enough long interval, then the burden of future diseases and death cases will depend on current smoking prevalence situation of tobacco use.

Tobacco use causes 6 % of all death cases in the world, according to the index of DALY (disability adjusted life years), which is calculated taking into account index of diseases and mortality. Moreover, the number of death cases from diseases, related to tobacco use, continues to grow, and to 2020, smoking will be the cause of 12 % of death cases in the world if the current tendency remains.

If 23 % of the population of the republic at the age of 18 and above consumed tobacco products according to national research (2002), then in 2005 already 28 % of the population in this age category consumed tobacco products. On the national level in 2002 47 % of male population above 18 consumed tobacco products, and in 2005 this percentage increased to 58 %. 8% of men above 18 consume nasvay, and 75 % of them are male-population of rural regions, and predominant majority, i.e. 70 % of them are population of Batken oblast.

Comparative analysis of smoking (2005), depending on the place of residence, showed that smoking prevalence became higher among population of rural areas (31%), than among urban population (25%). And the percentage among rural male population is 63% in comparison to smoking men, living in the city, which is 51%. This numbers is the evidence of the fact that in the regions, especially in villages, people are not informed properly about the harmfulness of tobacco use. The other picture can be seen among smoking women, 74 % of them live in cities, the large percentage is among age category of 25-34.

Today there is already the development of tobacco epidemic, especially among youth and women of the republic: according to survey data, around 35% of students smoke, after verification of respondents with the level of breathed

out carbon single-oxide (CO)- 44, 8% of students, and this percentage among senior-year students is 60%, and after verification with level of CO, 71% of smoking students of senior years (among men- 85,7 % , among women- 58%); according to Global survey on tobacco smoking, 20% of students of Kyrgyzstan at the age of 13-15 already tried to use this or other kind of tobacco products, and about half of them remained as regular consumers of tobacco products.

The solution of this global problem, which has not limits, does not take into account cultures, communities and social layers, purposefully going to the world level as well. The major directions of this integration are in WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), prepared and adopted by more than 190 member-states of WHO at the World Assembly of health protection on May 21 of 2003 and ratified by 150 countries of the world. FCTC is international legal document, aimed at the solution of this problem in all countries, which acceded to this global union in the framework of FCTC. The active mechanism for its implementation in the European region is European Strategy on Tobacco Control, which presupposes the development and implementation of corresponding State strategies. Kyrgyz Republic ratified FCTC on March 2 of 2006, Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact” was adopted which entered into force at the end of 2006.

Despite the fact that tobacco is profitable good and its production and use has certain impact on social and economical resources of the country, the aspects of health should have crucial meaning in any cost-effective analysis of tobacco problems. In successful countries the economy of the state is viewed through the prism of health. If one does not start the policy and strategy against the harmful tobacco impact, then after 25-30 years more than 50% of the future generation will be ill as there is already a tobacco epidemic in the country. For the purpose of health protection and strengthening of the population the adoption of State program and action plan on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact is extremely actual, well-grounded and priority.

2. State program goals.

Short-term goals: organization and guarantee of implementation of Law of the Kyrgyz Republic ‘On the protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact’ and WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control:

- prevention of involuntary subjection to tobacco smoke impact by creating free smoke zones;
- increase of awareness of the population about the harmfulness of tobacco use and disadvantages of nonsmoking, formation of negative societal attitude towards smoking, social mobilization of the society on tobacco control;

- increase of motivation of people for healthy life-style without smoking;
- creation of national potential of the country for tobacco control.

Medium-term goals: decrease of consumption level of tobacco products, warning on passive smoking impact among population of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Long-term (strategic, remote) goal: decrease of level of morbidity, disablement and mortality from diseases, caused by tobacco use.

3. Strategic directions of activity of State program on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact

3.1. Price and tax measures on the reduction of demand on tobacco and tobacco products

3.1.1. Reduction of demand on tobacco products by increase of indirect tax rate on tobacco products and legalization of sale of all kinds of tobacco products, which are demanded

One of the more cost-effective methods of tobacco use reduction and efficient element of complex policy on tobacco control is increase of indirect tax rate on tobacco products. In most countries the demand on tobacco products does not have price elasticity. Price elasticity vary from 0,8 (in developing countries). It means that the increase of prices on cigarettes to 10 % will decrease its use to 4 % in developed countries and to 8% in developing countries.

In countries where tax on tobacco products is increased, at the same time reached two goals: decrease of smoking level among population and increase of revenues from taxes to the state budget. This policy fully justified itself in Ukraine: from 1996 to 1999 state revenues from excise tax on tobacco in dollars increased to 4 times. Increase of tax on tobacco products influences prices: when price increases, more the one third of smokers quit smoking, the rest smokers reduce the number of consumed tobacco products.

Nasvay is not a product, the production of which is officially permitted on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic, as there are no normative-legal documents on production of nasvay, it is not levied by tax, but manufactured primitively by separate households and is sold in many trade points of the republic. Legislative ban most likely increases activity of 'black' market. Therefore there is a need for study of issue of legalization of manufacture, sale of nasvay and its taxing by excise tax, because it like cigarettes, poses a risk for health of person and should be levied by tax. Legalization of manufacture and sale of nasvay will increase tax proceeds to state budget, from one side, and will give an opportunity of control of tobacco content and other ingredients, which increase the quality of monitoring and assessment of its consumption level.

Structure analysis of tax fees of tobacco industry of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the other corresponding tendencies, in the whole industry and also in OJSC 'Reemtsma-Kyrgyzstan' allowed making following conclusions:

- if in 1995-1999 the share of fees of tobacco industry on profit tax in the whole structure of fees was on the level of 2,2%, then in 2000-2005 during the period of monopoly activity of OJSC 'Reemtsma-Kyrgyzstan' on production of tobacco products in the Kyrgyz Republic, the share of fees of corresponding tax in the whole on industry constituted 0,0%

- in the period of 1995-1999 the share of fees on excise tax in relation to total sum of taxes, paid by tobacco industry, was high and constituted 84,6%. However, in 2000-2005 the share of excise tax decreased in average to the level of 64,3 %, and in 2005 the share of excise tax constituted 41,4%.

- Tobacco industry (production and cultivation of tobacco) in sum of its fees through indirect taxes constitutes 2% of all fees to state budget through indirect taxes;

- results by mathematical modeling means of state budget revenues from tobacco with the use of two methods- price elasticity and econometrical (co-integration) equation allow to conclude that if the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic increases excise tax rate to 50%, then it will lead to the increase of proceeds to the state budget, approximately to the same percentages and price increase of tobacco products, approximately, totally to 5 %. Revenues of state budget are increasing proportionately to the increase of excise tax rate, where prices on tobacco products are exposed to minimal change.

Results of cost-effective research of tobacco consumption allowed making conclusions that in the use of taxation and pricing policy of tobacco consumption control, despite to expected decrease of consumption level of tobacco products, decrease of revenues to state budget will not occur, but in the contrary, will be provided by tax proceeds to budget of the republic, even if price elasticity exceeds 1.0, as the increase of tax rate considerably proceeds resulted by it price increase.

Main directions

- organization of taxation policy for systematic increase of excise tax rate on tobacco products in a way so that price growth on tobacco products gradually will leave behind average inflation growth and revenue growth for the ensuring constant decrease of its availability;

- Sale realization of all kinds of tobacco products in the republic, ban on all kinds of non-taxed and non-customed sales of tobacco products.

3.2 Non-price measures to reduce the demand for tobacco and tobacco products.

3.2.1 Development of measures on protection against repeated tobacco smoke impact

Cumulative factual data on danger and consequences for the health of forced smoking (passive smoking) is the evidence of the need for adoption of more harsh normative and legal norms for the protection of health of non-smokers, especially of children.

Main directions

- application of measures on creation of public places, including public transportation, free from tobacco smoke;
- creation of tobacco smoke free premises, especially in educational, cultural, sport institutions, in all health organizations and on its territory;
- creation of smoke free zones in restaurants and bars and other public places providing with food (separation of premises for smokers and non-smokers) for the protection of health of owners, personnel and clients against harmful impact;
- ban on smoking in all working premises, where general service to the population is provided.

3.2.2 Regulation of tobacco advertisement, which stimulates the sale of tobacco products and sponsorship of tobacco products

Research results in various countries on tobacco advertisement impact relative to the total demand on tobacco products show that following tobacco advertisement ban there was a decrease of cigarette consumption per person in average to 25%. Total ban on all kinds of direct and indirect tobacco advertisement in mass media decreases social attraction of smoking and promote the decrease of consumption of tobacco products, especially among youth. Legislative advertisement regulation promotes not only cleaning of environment from tobacco smoke, but also the 'non-smoking' to become a social norm.

Main directions

- development and application of measures in implementation of ban on all kinds of direct and indirect advertisement of smoking, tobacco and tobacco products;
- development and application of corresponding rules on implementation of ban on sponsorship of cultural-sport and health-improving activities, contest conduct, actions and other cultural-massive activities by tobacco companies for the sale of tobacco products and stimulation of sale, and use of tobacco trademarks on non-tobacco products.

3.2.3. Potential creation of the republic on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact and staff training

Successful development and strategy implementation on health protection of citizens against harmful tobacco impact can be carried out only with the assistance of state program of consistent and intensive staff training and creation of developed country potential on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact.

Main directions

- creation and ensuring the work of inter-sectoral partnership (coordination Board) for effective solution and implementation of measures, prescribed by Law of the Kyrgyz Republic 'On protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact' and WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control;

- development and application of effective educational programs on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact for decision-making politicians, workers of health protection, students, teachers and mentors, other corresponding layers of the society;

- motivation strengthening of health and social employees, pedagogues, their involvement in the solution of issues on implementation of Law of the Kyrgyz Republic 'On the protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact' and WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control;

- assistance to the participation of public organizations (PO) and civil society in the development and application of strategy on the protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact;

- ensuring coordination efforts, made by PO and professional health associations.

3.2.4. Development and application of programs of education and awareness-raising of population, directed to smoking prevention

Every citizen has a right to get information on harmfulness of consumption of tobacco products for health.

Preventive activities can be effective, if health-improving life-style is actively advocated. Education of the population with the use of all approaches and levels of impact is the main approach in opposition to tactic tricks of tobacco producers, including misinformation of the population and advertisement of tobacco and tobacco products.

Main directions

- development and application of effective basic educational programs on issues of consumption control of tobacco products, health protection and strengthening, for people, working with issues of awareness-raising and education of the population, including workers of the health protection, students,

teachers and mentors, employees of professional health associations, public organizations, dealing with the solution of social problems, related to the health protection and strengthening of the populations;

- assistance in carrying out educational campaigns, staff training and awareness-raising of the population, including campaigns on counter-advertisement through mass media;

- ensuring the information to the population, especially children, youth and vulnerable groups on health and social consequences of tobacco use and impact of repeated tobacco smoke, tobacco dependence, and also on advantages of refusal from smoking and life-style without smoking;

- assistance to the involvement of public organizations of civil society in awareness-raising of the population on the harmfulness of tobacco products and advantages of non-smoking.

3.2.5. Creation and application of programs on smoking reduction

Experience of many foreign countries and data of WHO show that conduct of short (2-3 min) of consultations with local doctors of health protection efficiently help smokers to quit, and the application of nicotine-substitutes drugs contribute to the successful work of programs on smoking reduction.

Main directions

- implementation of education and training programs, prepared taking into account gender and age peculiarities of certain groups of the population and directed to the refusal from smoking;

- development of more efficient approaches of tobacco dependence treatment and warning of smoking renewal among people who quitted (for example, support of doctors, family, consultation service by phone for all, who want to quit, consultation of patients about the need for quitting by local doctors and/or nurses of the health protection etc) and their inclusion to other target programs, plans and strategies of health protection;

- improvement of training programs on methods of smoking cessation for health workers, including doctors, nurses, and teachers and social workers;

- creation of programs on diagnostics, consultation and treatment against tobacco dependence in health organizations, especially on first level of health protection.

3.2.6. Regulation of content of tobacco products and awareness-raising of consumers

The mandatory requirements of danger reduction attributable to carcinogens and toxic components, which are present in the smoke of cigarettes and other tobacco products, are more accurate assessment and more harsh regulation of substances, which gets into organism of smokers. Usage of well

seen, clearly formulated health warnings on packs and packages of tobacco products improve the awareness of consumers on danger, which it poses.

Main directions

- annual approval and application of reducing to the admissible limits of norms of nicotine, tar and carbon oxide yields per tobacco product;
- availability of information to the population on major ingredients of tobacco smoke per tobacco product, including its toxic, carcinogen substances;
- development, application of and ensuring compliance with rules on accounting of all tobacco companies in front of Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic about the content of realized by them tobacco products on the market of the republic, and also assistance to the public in getting clear and important corresponding information;
- ban on use of terms ‘with low tar content’, ‘light’, ‘ultra-light’, ‘mild’ or any other analogical misleading terms, which are purposefully misleading consumers of tobacco products and creation of wrong perception about the harmfulness of one or other tobacco products in comparison to others;
- implementation of measures on design and marking of each pack and package of tobacco products, implemented in the republic in compliance with Law of the Kyrgyz Republic ‘On the protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact’;
- development and application of new pictorial health warning on harmfulness of tobacco use, occupying not less than 40 % of both sides of the pack of the tobacco products.

3.3. Development and application of measures, directed to supply reduction of tobacco products

3.3.1. Regulation of illicit trade- limitation of illegal import (smuggling) of tobacco products

Data of various countries in relation to inter-connectedness of high taxes and illegal import (smuggling) of tobacco products continues to be debated. There is no country in the world regardless of its operating tax rates, which didn't face in one or other degree the smuggling of tobacco products. In the report of World Bank (WB) ‘Epidemics control: Government and Economy on tobacco control’ it is said that reduction of tax rate does not promote the control of smuggling activity. According to data of research of WB, low level of smuggling of tobacco products can be seen in countries with low level of corruption. Difference in price, purchasing capacity of citizens and acceptance of illegally imported tobacco products in the society are contributory factors, and state commitment to health protection and strengthening of citizens against harmful tobacco impact and level of corruption are the leading factors of smuggling activity.

Regressive econometrical analysis was done for determination of factors of smuggling of tobacco products with use of data of State Customs Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic through construction of mathematical modeling on binary assessment and modeling on method of the least squares, with use of methods on issues of tobacco consumption, sufficiently popular in cost-effective researches.

As variables of potentially important in the determination of level of smuggling of tobacco products were taken the factors, which were used as arguments of tobacco producers in its lobbying, i.e. financial fees to state budget from sum of import. Financial fees are VAT fees on import, excise tax fees in the import of tobacco products, customs duty fees. The results of econometrical analysis showed that the level of smuggling and illegal circulation of tobacco products in the Kyrgyz Republic does not depend on considered key indexes (indirect tax rates), which are referred as arguments of tobacco producers, which are not willing to accept the measures on increase of tax burden on tobacco products.

Main directions

- application and monitoring of measures, which allow to trace effectively the movement in the market of all tobacco products on information on package and its marking;
- monitoring and data collection on illicit trade, including smuggling of tobacco products, and also information exchange with corresponding national and international organizations;
- development of corresponding normative-legal acts for the application of FCTC and laws, regulating consumption of tobacco products.

3.3.2 Access limit of youth to tobacco products

Nowadays in the Kyrgyz Republic tobacco products are not licensed goods, majority of tobacco products, including nasvay, are sold in packs or by pieces in the streets. Many of street dealers are located in crowded places-nearby to schools, hospitals, culturally entertaining complexes, where teenagers and youth have an access to cigarettes and nasvay. In Law of the Kyrgyz Republic 'On protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact' prescribes the sale ban on tobacco products to:

- persons under 18;
- by persons under 18;
- in buildings of health protection organizations and education, sport halls and constructions, in stadiums and its close-fitting places and shops within a radius of 100 meters;
- on packs, including less than 20 cigarettes, or their sale by piece;
- without documentary stamps

Cigarette sale by piece makes it available by price, especially for school students, students. The major opposing measure is licensing of legal sale of tobacco products, including nasvay. Nasvay is available good by price, especially for teenagers and youth.

Main directions

-strict compliance with norms of Law of the Kyrgyz Republic ‘On protection of health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic against harmful tobacco impact’ on sale ban of tobacco products to persons/by persons under eighteen, in buildings of organizations of health protection and education, sport halls and constructions, in stadiums and its close-fitting places and shops in the radius of 100 meters, in packs, containing less than 20 cigarettes, or their sale by piece, and also without documentary stamps;

- awareness-raising and ensuring dealers with information on tobacco products for ensuring implementation of norms of Law on ban on sale of tobacco products to minors;

- implementation of norms of aforementioned Law on ban on free distribution of cigarettes for the advertisement and trade promotion of one or other mark of tobacco products;

- development of recommendations on introduction of licensed sale of tobacco products, including nasvay.

3.3.3 Tobacco subsidies and support of alternative agricultural cultures

Re-orientation of producers of tobacco leaf for cultivation of alternative agricultural cultures is appropriate, only if profitability of manufacturing of alternative cultures is equal to or exceeds profitability of manufacturing of tobacco leaf. Transition to cultivation of alternative cultures actively considered by many countries of the world, which are large-scale producers of tobacco leaf in the world, like Brazil.

Main directions

- study, adaptation and application of useful experience of other countries in the question of transition to cultivation of alternative cultures, substituting tobacco;

- development and presentation to the consideration of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of recommendations and possible mechanisms of support of alternative forms of economic activity, substituting the cultivation of tobacco, and phases of its gradual application.

3.4. Monitoring, scientific research, assessment and accountability

Effective application of State program on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact will be ensured by primary situation assessment in the field of tobacco consumption and further monitoring. Monitoring and

assessment will give an opportunity to expose one or other specific needs and to correct properly the main strategy and tactics of State program.

Main directions

- creation of monitoring system, based on the use of standardized methods of epidemiological and cost-effective research for assessment of level of tobacco use;

- spread of research results among public leaders, mass media and health protection workers.

- conduct of conferences, international seminars on experience exchange, development of activity on creation of partnerships and implementation of program on control of tobacco use;

- ensuring regular Conference report of Parties of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on tobacco use situation in the Kyrgyz Republic.

3.5. International cooperation, adaptation, application of effective experience and results of scientific researches of international programs in the practical health protection

Consumption of tobacco products is a global problem. The solution of the problem needs to be done on the global- intersectional and world levels.

International cooperation will improve:

- coordination of efforts, directed to ensuring strict regulation of content components, contained in the content of tobacco products;

- strategy coordination, related to taxing of tobacco products;

- application of effective measures against smuggling of tobacco products and regulation of transboundary advertisement, done through global media communications, and adoption of corresponding counter measures;

- monitoring implementation of tobacco epidemic's scale and course of strategy implementation on protection of health of citizens against harmful tobacco impact in countries of Central Asian Republics, member-states of CIS, Europe, and also member-states of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Main directions

- cooperation with member-states of FCTC in the framework of its application;

- study, development and reinforcement of international cooperation, contributing to information exchange, technical cooperation and monitoring, application of principles of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

4. State program tasks

1. Development and application of measures, directed to demand decrease for tobacco products.
2. Development and application of measures, directed to demand reduction for tobacco products.
3. Monitoring implementation of tobacco use control, assessment and accountability.
4. Study, application of useful experience and results of scientific researches of international programs in practical health protection of the republic.

5. Management organization and control on the course of State program implementation

Management and control on implementation of State program and action plan on tobacco use control in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2008-2015 is accomplished by the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic and Intersectoral Coordination Board under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on Tobacco Control.

6. Assessment of the efficiency of state program implementation and expected final results

Efficiency of given Action Plan will be assessed by the following monitoring indexes:

- national country potential was created and developed on consumption control of tobacco products and protection of health of population against its harmful impact;
- monitoring system was developed on consumption prevalence of tobacco products.

- health and psychological assistance was carried out to all who wants to quit.
- control on manufacture and sale of tobacco products was established;
- active consumption of tobacco products (prevalence) was reduced and passive smoking was warned, which should be reflected in index of sickness and mortality rate from diseases attributable to tobacco use.