

TOBACCO PREVENTION IN EGYPT: POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKING YOUTH

American Public Health Association
135th Annual Meeting
Washington DC
November 3-7 2007

Christina Marie Hanna
Christopher Loffredo, Ph.D.
Irene Jillson, Ph.D.
Georgetown University

Mostafa Mohamed, Ph.D.
Maged El Setouhy, Ph.D.
Egyptian Smoking Prevention Research Institute

TOBACCO USE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Tobacco consumption is now the second major cause of death in the world
- Tobacco consumption has historically been more prevalent in developed than developing countries.
 - It is now a significant problem in developing countries where 84% of smokers live

World Bank, 2003

TOBACCO USE IN EGYPT

- Egypt has the highest prevalence of tobacco consumption in the Arab world.
- The tobacco consumption rate in Egypt is increasing at 4-5% a year.

Tobacco Control, 1999

- The prevalence of smoking among adult males in Egypt in 2002 was estimated to be 47%.

WHO, 2006

DESCRIBING WORKING BOYS

- **Street youth** are defined by UNICEF as children less than 18 who spend all or most of their time on the street, maintain minimal contact with their families or have no contact, and lack supervision, protection, or guidance.
- The estimates of the size of this population in Egypt range widely, from 93,000 to two million.

UNICEF, 2001

TOBACCO USE AMONG EGYPTIAN YOUTH

- 4% of boys aged 12 and 15% of boys aged 17 years were estimated to use cigarettes in 2005
- 14% of males < 20 years of age living in Cairo reported using tobacco products
 - cigarettes and waterpipe
- Just 0.5% of women 15-19-year old reported smoking or using other forms of tobacco

MOHP, 2006

TOBACCO USE AMONG WORKING BOYS

- 22% of **working boys** ages 12-17 in the rural Nile Delta region of Egypt were current smokers in 2005

MOHP, 2006

- 57% of **street youth** in Cairo reported frequent use of tobacco –cigarettes and/or waterpipe

UNICEF, 2001

FACTORS RELATED TO TOBACCO USE

- Lack of parental influence
- Encouragement by employers to smoke
- Working boys are out of school
 - Lack of access to health and other services, including
 - Behavioral health campaigns generally
 - Tobacco control messages specifically

SOCIAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Personal health consequences from smoking
- Societal consequences
 - Health care system
 - Increased financial and human resource requirements
 - Negatively impacting the already-burdened health care system.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PREVENTION OF TOBACCO USE AMONG WORKING BOYS

- Engaging working boys in designing focused prevention programs
- Integrating prevention messages and activities in youth clubs
- Training community health workers to engage in prevention activities with working boys

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enforcement of youth restrictions regarding access to tobacco
- Development and enforcement of workplace restrictions on tobacco use
 - Capacity-building of employers and government occupational health inspectors
- Increase MOHP budget allocation to tobacco control
 - Integration of tobacco use prevention services in primary care centers
 - National and governorate-level prevention campaigns