



As Pakistan lacks updated data on tobacco use, both smoking and smokeless, the Government of Pakistan implemented GATS to systematically monitor adult tobacco use and track key tobacco control indicators in collaboration with WHO, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and CDC Foundation. A five-day pilot test training for the implementation of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) was held in Islamabad from 14 to 18 April 2014. The training was organized by the WHO country office, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MNHSR and C) and the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The training was attended by the IT team and field interviewers from the PBS.

The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) is a nationally representative household survey that was launched in February 2007 as a new component of the ongoing Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS).

### **What is GATS?**

GATS enables countries to collect data on adult tobacco use and key tobacco control measures. Results from the GATS assist countries in the formulation, tracking and implementation of effective tobacco control interventions, and countries are able to compare results of their survey with results from other countries. GATS data is collected using the iPAQs (hand-held machines).

GATS has already been implemented in more than 19 low- and middle-income countries with highest burden of tobacco use.

### **Topics covered in GATS**

- Tobacco use prevalence (smoking and smokeless tobacco products)
- Second-hand tobacco smoke exposure and policies
- Cessation
- Knowledge, attitudes and perceptions
- Exposure to media
- Economics of tobacco

## **Objectives of the survey**

The objectives of the survey are to:

- estimate the prevalence of different forms of tobacco use; smoking and smokeless tobacco products with special consideration to urban versus rural as well as gender differences in Pakistan
- track exposure to secondhand smoke, cessation, risk perceptions, knowledge and attitudes, exposure to media, price and taxation issues at the national level
- provide nationally representative data on adult tobacco use and key tobacco control measures in Pakistan that can be compared across countries
- monitor implementation of the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and WHO recommended strategies for tobacco control; MPOWER, in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the pilot test training followed a two-day field work to do the pre-test. The next steps included a full survey training followed by extensive field work. The survey is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

## **Expected results**

The GATS implementation would not only strengthen tobacco surveillance but also support WHO/MPOWER strategies by making available the reliable data on the over 15 years age group on tobacco. The survey will estimate the prevalence of different forms of tobacco use; smoking and smokeless tobacco products, with special consideration to urban versus rural areas, as well as gender differences in Pakistan. It will also track exposure to secondhand smoke, cessation, risk perceptions, knowledge and attitudes, exposure to media, price and taxation issues at the national level and provide nationally representative data on adult tobacco use and key tobacco control measures in Pakistan that can be compared across countries. It will also monitor implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

A GATS mission comprising experts from CDC Atlanta, USA and WHO facilitated the training.

Officials from Tobacco Control Cell (MNHSR and C) also attended the proceedings. Mr. Asif Bajwa, Chief Statistician PBS, was the chief guest at the concluding session. D Quamrul Hasan, Acting WHO Representative, presented the votes of thanks. The participants were also given certificates at the end of the training.

**Related link**

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