



## WHO SEARO INITIATIVES

The regional initiatives are based on prevention of harm from alcohol use to the individual, the family and the community. Projects to address these issues in Member States being developed by WHO SEARO include the following:

### Advocacy

*Development of an information document entitled “Public Health Problems Caused by Harmful Use of Alcohol: Gaining Less or Losing More?”*

This document reviews the currently available information on the supply, demand and use of alcohol in the population. Some suggestions are also provided on what can be done to prevent harm from alcohol use in the community. It supplements the WHO Global Report on Alcohol by adding region-specific information.

*Alcohol Control Policies in the South-East Asia Region: Selected Issues*

This document is intended to inform policy-makers about the status of existing alcohol control policies in the Region and to provide a baseline for monitoring progress in prevention of harm from alcohol use. It could also serve as an advocacy tool for identifying existing gaps and raising awareness about the need for additional alcohol control policies.

### Evidence-based community interventions

Many community-based programmes on prevention of harm from alcohol use are implemented based on the ‘opinion’ of technical people or policy-makers. Sometimes this is not readily acceptable to the community, or the programme has not been scientifically evaluated for having a beneficial impact on resolving the problem. Thus evidence-based programmes should be developed and implemented for prevention of harm from alcohol use.

*Burden and Socio-Economic Impact of Alcohol: The Bangalore Study*

In this comprehensive study of 28 507 individuals from four population groups of (rural, town, slum and urban areas), the effect and impact of alcohol consumption was examined in a cross-sectional manner with the combined use of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study shows the phenomenal burden and impact among individuals and families of alcohol-users in the areas studied. Despite limitations, it attempts to extrapolate the findings to the whole of India. The conclusions can be very informative for policy-makers. If all costs are comprehensively examined

The regional initiatives are based on prevention of harm from alcohol use to the individual, the family and the community.





and calculated for all events, the economic impact would be much higher than the conservative estimates noted in the study. In the final analysis, Indian society might be losing more than it is reportedly gaining.

*Development of community-based strategies using self-learning material for community volunteers on prevention of harm from alcohol use entitled: “Reducing Harm from Use of Alcohol: Community Responses.”*

This material has been developed and tested by an expert from Sri Lanka. It contains simple instructions which can be used by a motivated community activist to initiate programmes within a community for prevention of harm from alcohol use.

### **Empowering adolescents**

*Development of a strategy for prevention of harm from alcohol use among adolescents, both in rural and urban areas using the life-skills approach*

Harm from alcohol use is a serious problem among the youth in many Member States. An expert from India has developed strategies to be used in a school setting to empower adolescents not to initiate use of alcohol and certainly not to abuse it. Different strategies have been tested, one of them being life-skills as implemented by peer trainers and another as implemented by school teachers.

*Programme on adolescent mental health promotion*

A life-skills-based programme on adolescent mental health promotion has been developed, consisting of eight modules on different aspects of relevance to adolescents. It also includes one module on prevention of harm from alcohol use. All these modules have been successfully tested in India, Indonesia and Thailand, and are currently being implemented in Bhutan and several states of India.

*Advocacy material for adolescents*

A document entitled “Alcohol use and abuse: What you should know” has been prepared which provides adolescents with brief and clear information on harm from alcohol use and abuse. This document has been extensively tested in India. The information is based on extensive feed back received from adolescents. They are currently being implemented in Bhutan and India.

*Interactive CD-based material for adolescents on prevention of harm from alcohol use*

Interactive CD-based material for adolescents on prevention of harm from alcohol is being prepared. A software development company in India will convert some of the materials developed by WHO into an interactive programme on prevention of harm from alcohol use.