

Every year, tobacco kills over 8 million people. Between 2000 and 2016, current tobacco smoking prevalence rates declined from 27% to 20%. However, the pace of action to reduce tobacco demand and related death and disease is lagging behind global and national commitments to reduce tobacco use by 30% by 2025.

WHO | DON'T LET TOBACCO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY, 2019

Statement on the occasion of the International No Tobacco Day

Tobacco control is fundamental to **non-communicable disease (NCD)** prevention and control. NCDs (mainly cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes) are a leading cause of premature death in countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region, responsible for over 1.7 million deaths every year. Two-thirds of these premature deaths are linked to unhealthy behaviors, or risk factors, including tobacco use.

Regarding cancer, it has been demonstrated that all tobacco products contain substances that promote the onset of tumors. Some are constituents of the tobacco plant itself and most of them develop when tobacco is burned. Processing, curing, ageing or storing tobacco can also create cancer-causing agents.

Strong evidences define tobacco smoking as a cause of hematopoietic system's cancer, cervix, colorectum, kidney, larynx, liver, lung, nasal cavity and paranasal sinus, esophagus, oral cavity, ovary, pancreas, pharynx, stomach, ureter and urinary bladder, as well as hepatoblastoma and breast cancer.

Since 2014, **AICS Jerusalem is committed to fight NCDs and related risk factors, first of all tobacco smoking.** The Italian development programme includes in particular three inter-twined projects (**Posit**, **Crono** and **Ring**), that are implementing activities aimed to vocational training, provision of screening and early diagnosis equipment, public awareness campaigns and a technical support for the drafting of a new Law related to public smoking.

