

# Harm Reduction in Asia : Challenges and the Way Forward

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**Singapore**

**CONTEXT**

# Countries with the highest number of deaths from smoking

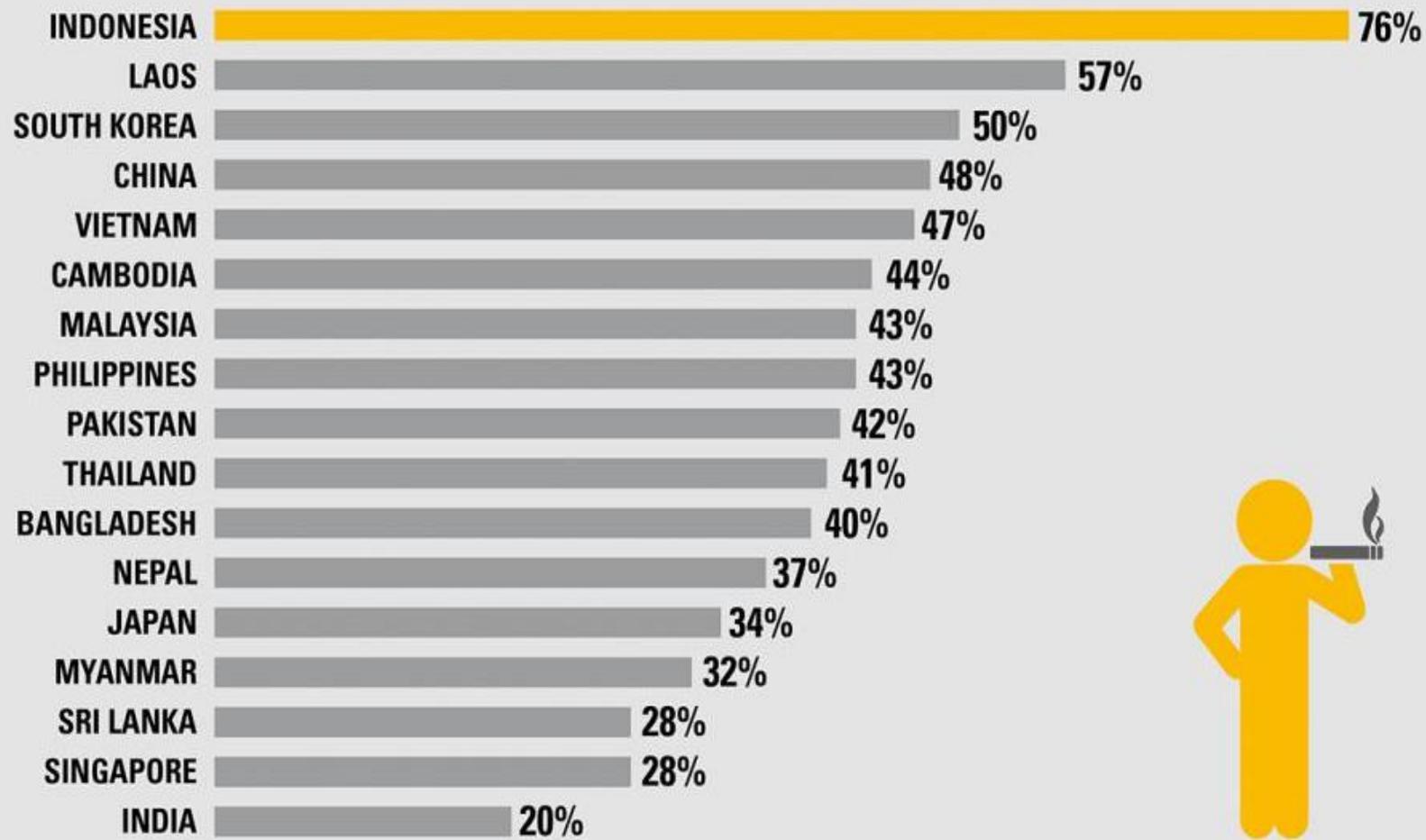
1. China (1.8 million)
2. India (743,000)
3. US (472,000)
4. Russia (283,000)
5. Indonesia (180,000)
6. Japan (166,000)
7. Bangladesh (153,000)
8. Brazil (149,000)
9. Germany (130,000)
10. Pakistan (124,000)

Six out of the 10 countries with the highest number of deaths from smoking are in Asia

Source: GBD

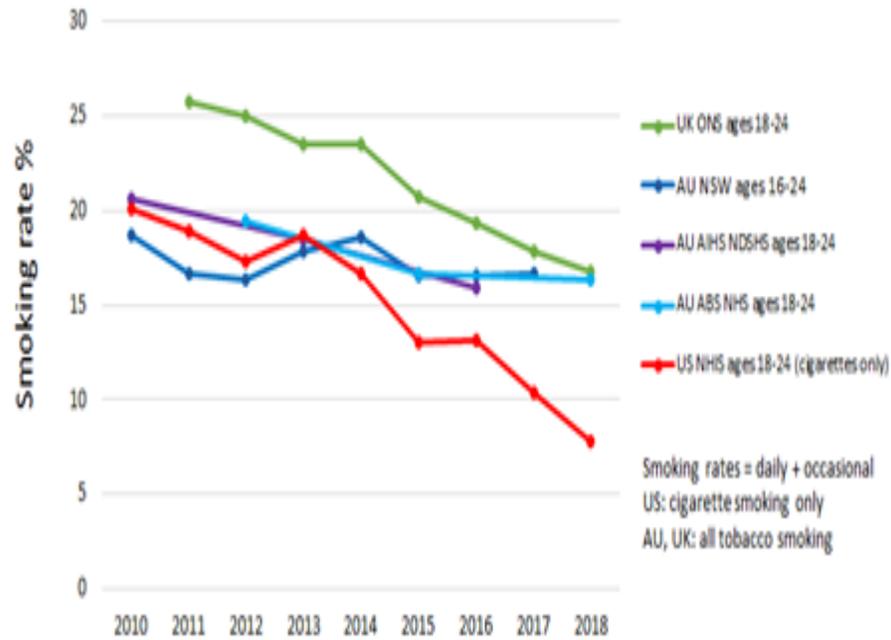
## Asia's **smoking** addiction

Male smoking rate is high in Asian countries, with Indonesian men ranked the world's top smokers as 76% of them smoke.



Source: World Bank

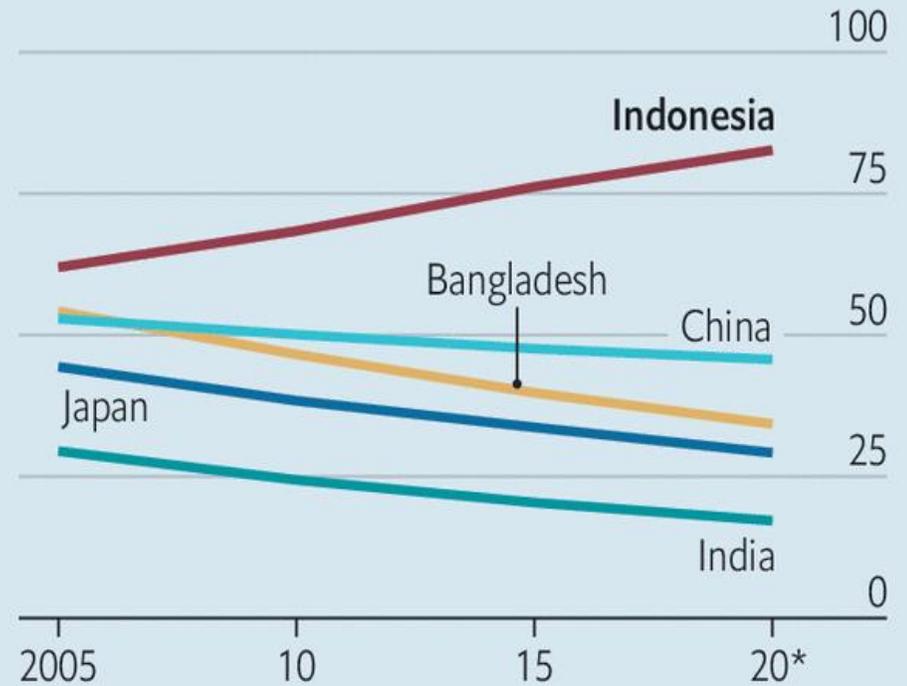
### Young adult current smoking trends AU vs US vs UK



Smoking rates = daily + occasional  
 US: cigarette smoking only  
 AU, UK: all tobacco smoking

### Up in smoke

Prevalence of smoking any tobacco product among males aged 15 years and over, %



Source: WHO

\*Forecast

REGULATIONS  
& LEGISLATION  
ON *ENDS*



HEALTH AND SCIENCE

# India bans e-cigarettes in setback for Juul and Philip Morris

PUBLISHED WED, SEP 18 2019 • 8:19 AM EDT

REUTERS

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## KEY POINTS

- India banned the production, import, and sale of electronic cigarettes on Wednesday.
- It was a public health decision that will dash the expansion plans of companies such as Juul Labs and Philip Morris in the country.
- The ban will be imposed through an executive order and will include jail terms of up to three years for offenders. It was not clear whether the use of such products would be prohibited.

India banned the production, import and sale of electronic cigarettes on Wednesday, a public health decision that will dash the expansion plans of companies such as Juul Labs and [Philip Morris](#) in the country.

The ban will be imposed through an executive order and will include jail terms of up to three years for offenders. It was not clear whether the use of such products would be prohibited.

Perth  
ECONOMY CLASS AB  
EUR **1,079\***  
HIN- UND RÖCKFLUG

Melbourne  
ECONOMY CLASS AB  
EUR **1,139\***  
HIN- UND RÖCKFLUG

## TRENDING NOW



This man  
\$200 a r  
sold a 'w  
for \$1.5 i



Fed lose  
own inte  
rates —  
look goo

## Malaysia pushes for strict law to police vapes, e-cigarettes

3 MIN READ



KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Malaysia is planning to introduce strict regulations on the sale and use of electronic cigarettes and vaporisers, health officials said on Tuesday, as countries around the world move to ban devices that have been linked to deaths and youth addiction.



AJ Impact / HEALTH

## South Korea considers banning e-cigarettes on health worries

*More countries are pulling e-cigarettes from their markets and restricting advertising.*

23 Oct 2019



South Korea's health ministry promised to tighten vaping product regulations such as strengthening customs procedures for importing liquids for e-cigarettes [File: Mike Blake/Reuters]

Politics

# China Bans Online Sales of E-Cigarettes

Rachel Chang and Lisa Du

November 1, 2019, 1:45 AM PDT *Updated on November 1, 2019, 2:51 AM PDT*

- 
- ▶ China joins other nations in pushing back on e-cigarettes
  - ▶ Mysterious lung disease linked to vaping has killed 37 people
- 

China has banned  online sales of e-cigarettes in the latest blow for the nascent vaping industry, which has come under intensifying scrutiny around the globe.

All websites and apps selling e-cigarettes should be shut down and all online marketing campaigns halted, according to a statement by the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration and State Administration for Market Regulation on Friday. The measures are aimed at protecting adolescents from vaping, it said.

The directive also ordered online shopping platforms to remove e-cigarette products from their sites. China's e-cigarette market size rose from \$451 million in 2016 to \$718 million in 2018, according to estimates from L.E.K. Consulting, as lack of specific regulations on e-cigarettes allowed for their proliferation.

**CHALLENGES**

# Six challenges for THR in Asia

- 1. Misinformed & misguided policy makers**
- 2. Position of WHO on harm reduction**

“Youth who have used e-cigarettes are more likely to become regular smokers. E-cigarettes do not represent a healthier alternative to cigarettes nor do they help people quit smoking”

Senior Parliamentary Secretary

Health & Home Affairs

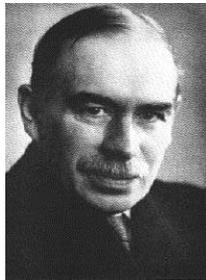
Jan 27, 2019

“Everyone is entitled to  
his own opinion but  
not to his own facts”

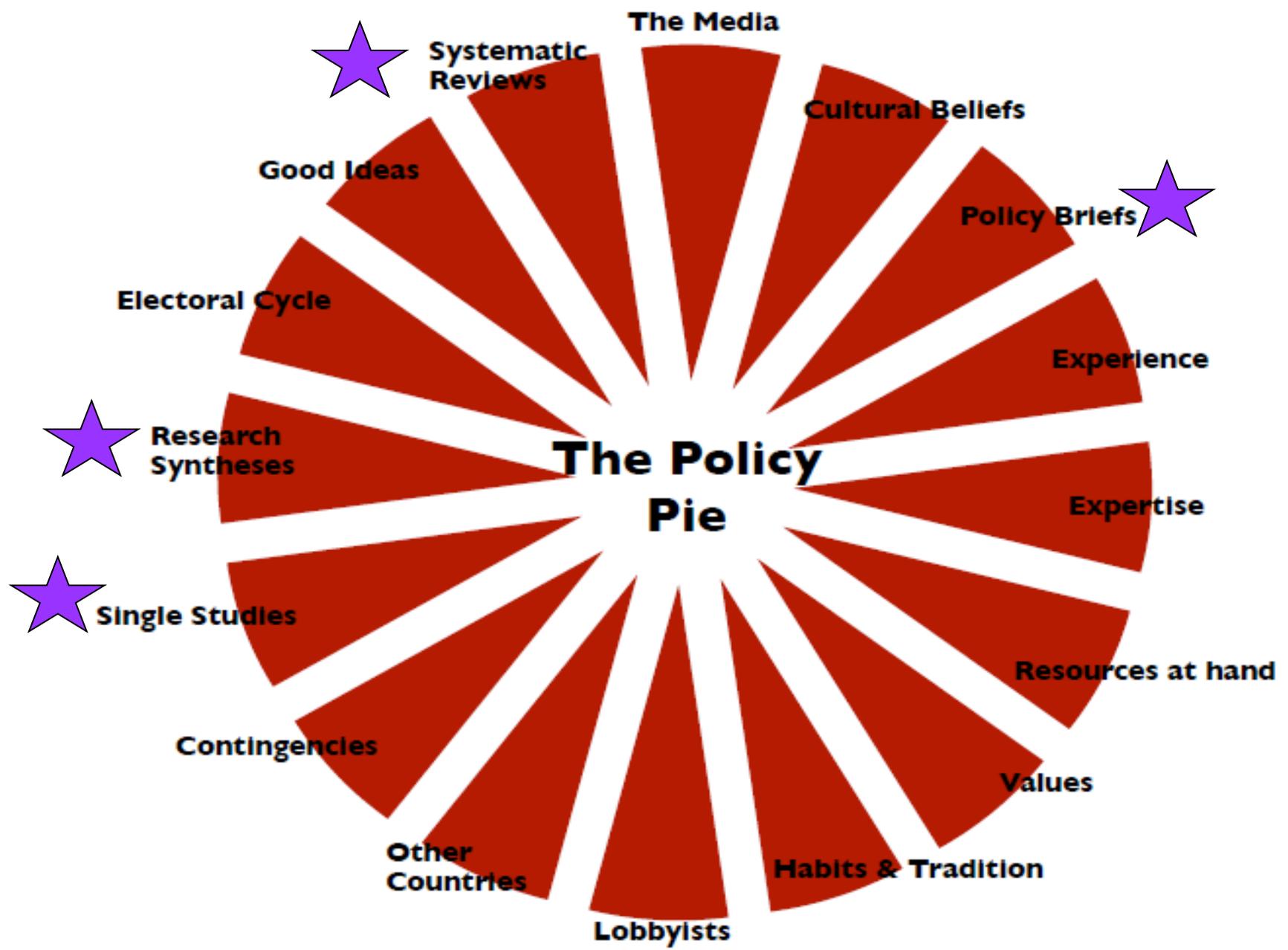


Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
US politician, sociologist & diplomat  
(1927-2003)

“There is nothing a politician likes less than to be well informed - it makes decision making so much more complex and difficult.”



John Maynard Keynes  
(1883-1946)



“Scientific findings do not fall on blank minds that get made up as a result. Science engages with busy minds that have strong views about how things are and ought to be”



Sir Michael Marmot  
Chair,  
WHO Commission on Social Determinants in Health





World Health  
Organization

WHO REPORT ON THE GLOBAL TOBACCO EPIDEMIC, 2019

Offer help to quit tobacco use

fresh and alive

mpower



**Given the scarcity and low quality of scientific evidence, it cannot be determined whether ENDS may help most smokers to quit or prevent them from doing so (FCTC/COP7/11).**

## Key information and recommendations for countries

- ENDS should be carefully and clearly defined in the legislation in order that countries can regulate ENDS effectively.
- ■ Countries often have the option of classifying ENDS as tobacco products. If this is possible then countries should ensure that existing tobacco control laws adequately protect people from the potential harms of ENDS.
- ■ ENDS products may serve as a gateway to conventional smoking among young people or the renormalization of smoking in society.
- Countries should apply bans on advertising and flavouring of products to deter use by young people.
- Countries should consider introducing policies to force manufacturers to make products unattractive to young people in order to discourage uptake, such as plain packaging.

Why is this important?

“Health bureaucrats and regulators in Latin America look at the WHO and the FDA like Catholic priests look at the Vatican, or like old time communist parties looked at the politburo of the Soviet Union”



Roberto A. Sussman  
Institute of Nuclear Sciences  
National Autonomous University of Mexico  
Nicotine Policy Blog 8/8/2019

WHO Technical Report Series

1015

## WHO study group on tobacco product regulation

Report on the scientific basis of tobacco product regulation:  
Seventh report of a WHO study group



World Health  
Organization

“....Though there is much to disagree with, there is also a reasonable attempt to recognize 'harm reduction' concepts and not treat them like witchcraft...”

Clive Bates,  
The Counterfactual,  
United Kingdom

# Six challenges for THR in Asia

1. Misinformed & misguided policy makers
2. Position of WHO on harm reduction
- 3. Political & economic drivers**
- 4. 'Fear' factor among potential beneficiaries and sympathizers**

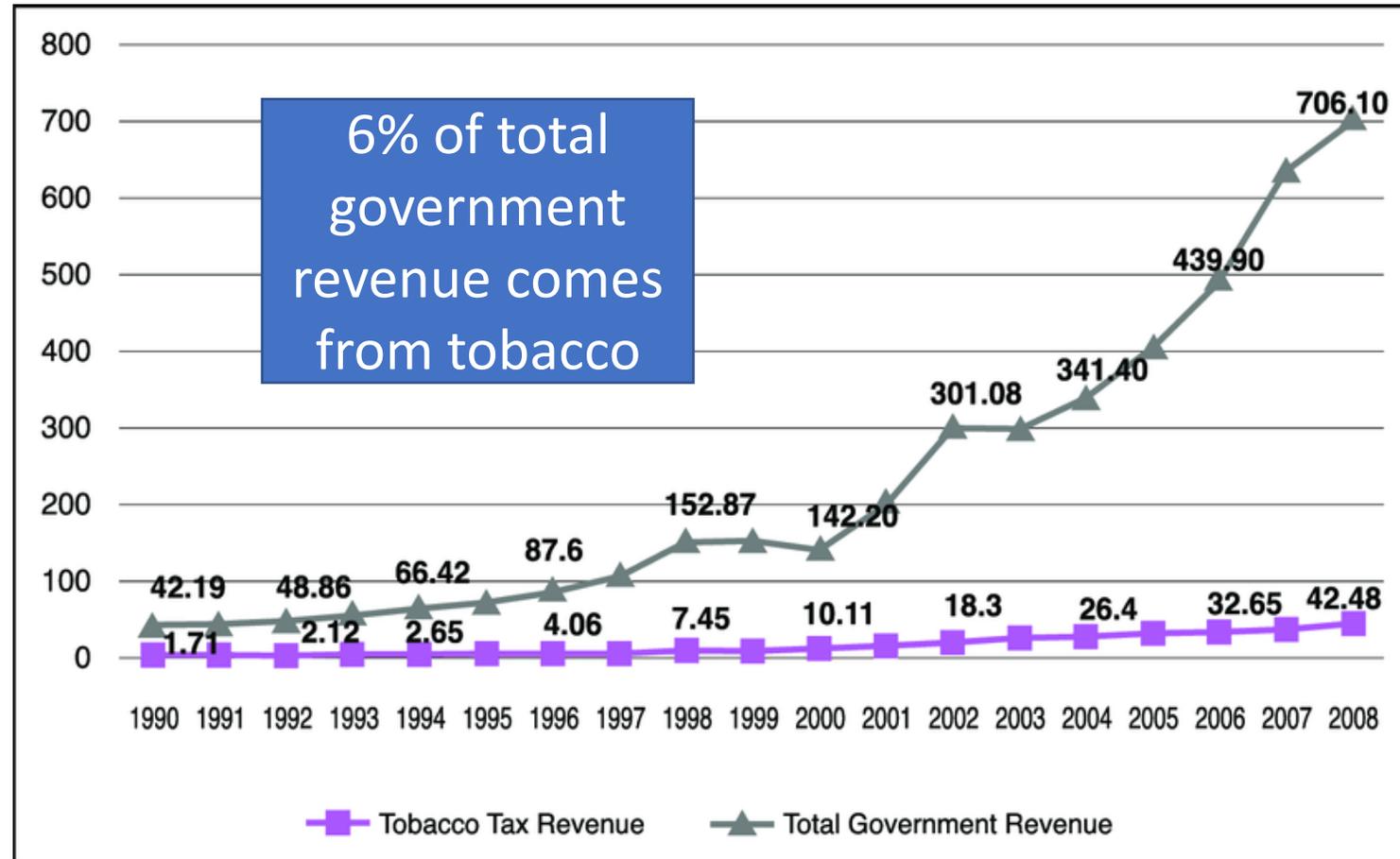
Rank	Country	Production Quantity (MT)	Production Value (in \$)
1	China, mainland	3157000	\$5,028,355,000
2	Brazil	951933	\$1,516,204,000
3	India	830000	\$1,321,994,000
4	United States of America	271363	\$432,217,000
5	Malawi	174928	\$278,619,000
6	Argentina	145000	\$230,950,000
7	Indonesia	130300	\$207,537,000
8	United Republic of Tanzania	130000	\$207,059,000
9	Zimbabwe	111570	\$177,704,000
10	Pakistan	102834	\$163,790,000
11	Italy	82175	\$130,885,000
12	Bangladesh	79234	\$126,201,000
13	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	79000	\$125,828,000
14	Mozambique	70000	\$111,493,000
15	Thailand	67900	\$108,148,000
16	Zambia	60329	\$96,089,000
17	Viet Nam	49395	\$78,675,000
18	Turkey	45000	\$71,674,000
19	Philippines	44944	\$71,585,000
20	Lao People's Democratic Republic	43000	\$68,488,000

Half of the largest tobacco producing countries are in Asia

**State owned** tobacco monopolies account for 40% of global cigarette production

<https://www.worldlistmania.com/largest-tobacco-producing-countries-in-the-world/>

## Tobacco excise tax revenue in Indonesia in RpBn (1990-2008)





PREMIUM

## Vaping: 67 offenders nabbed since 2018's ban on e-vaporiser use



"Nicotine Containing Products" shown at an e-cigarette meet at the Royal Academy in London in 2013. The HSA advised the public not to buy e-vaporisers, either from the Internet or from overseas. They should also discard those in their possession. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

🕒 PUBLISHED JAN 14, 2019, 5:00 AM SGT

# Six challenges for THR in Asia

1. Misinformed & misguided policy makers
2. Position of WHO on harm reduction
3. Political & economic drivers
4. 'Fear' factor among potential beneficiaries and sympathizers
- 5. Affordability of ENDS (e-cigarettes, HNB devices)**
- 6. Lack of quality local research in LICs and LMICs due to scarce resources and limited capacity**

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## A Randomized Trial of E-Cigarettes versus Nicotine-Replacement Therapy

Peter Hajek, Ph.D., Anna Phillips-Waller, B.Sc., Dunja Przulj, Ph.D., Francesca Pesola, Ph.D., Katie Myers Smith, D.Psych., Natalie Bisal, M.Sc., Jinshuo Li, M.Phil., Steve Parrott, M.Sc., Peter Sasieni, Ph.D., Lynne Dawkins, Ph.D., Louise Ross, Maciej Goniewicz, Ph.D., Pharm.D., Qi Wu, M.Sc., and Hayden J. McRobbie, Ph.D.

### ABSTRACT

#### BACKGROUND

E-cigarettes are commonly used in attempts to stop smoking, but evidence is limited regarding their effectiveness as compared with that of nicotine products approved as smoking-cessation treatments.

#### METHODS

We randomly assigned adults attending U.K. National Health Service stop-smoking services to either nicotine-replacement products of their choice, including product combinations, provided for up to 3 months, or an e-cigarette starter pack (a second-generation refillable e-cigarette with one bottle of nicotine e-liquid [18 mg per milli-

Why is this  
important?



Photo: UNICEF

**Whether or not  
knowledge is global,  
the use of knowledge  
is always local**



# Five ways forward

1. Continue efforts to **establish civil & constructive dialogue** between key stakeholders, i.e. policy & decision makers, parliamentarians, scientists, health workforce, professional associations, **community & religious leaders**, smokers, **industry**/manufacturers, media, **civil society**, constitutional & legal experts (legal challenges/petitions)
2. More QUALITY local **research** & a good understanding of local contextual factors
3. More effective **communication** & advocacy based on **less hubris** on the part of us scientists



**Komunitas Pecalang akan Minimalisir  
Asap Rokok di Kawasan Wisata Bali**



## LAKPESDAM NU: Produk Tembakau Alternatif Lebih Banyak Kebaikannya

Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia (Lakpesdam) Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) menyosialisasikan hasil rekomendasi Munas Alim Ulama Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), yang dilaksanakan akhir Februari lalu, tentang produk tembakau alternatif kepada para pemangku kepentingan. Produk tembakau alternatif perlu mendapatkan dukungan dari semua pihak karena memberikan manfaat (kemaslahatan) kepada perokok dewasa.

Ketua Lakpesdam PBNU Rumadi Ahmad menjelaskan, produk tembakau alternatif merupakan hasil pengembangan dari inovasi teknologi di industri hasil tembakau (IHT). Produk ini, menurut riset ilmiah di negara maju, berpotensi mengurangi zat kimia berbahaya hingga 95 persen dibandingkan rokok konvensional.



Harm  
reduction  
communities

Tobacco  
control  
communities

The Solution?

# *Musyawarah*





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Less hubris on the  
part of us scientists....

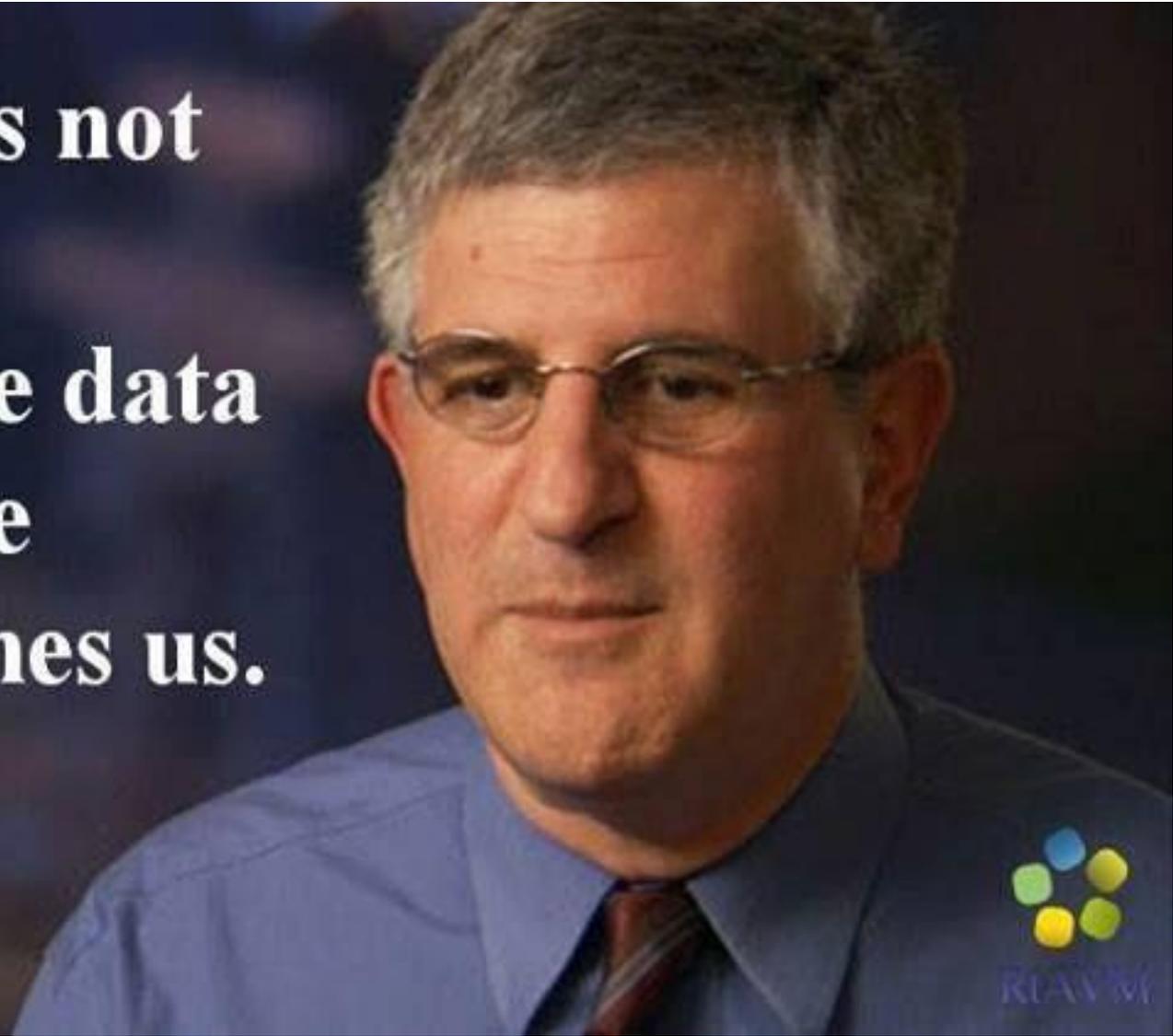
***Vaccines. It's not  
about sides:  
it's about the data  
and what the  
science teaches us.***

**Paul Offit, MD**

*Voices for Vaccines call,*

**14 January 2014**

**<http://tinyurl.com/itsaboutdata>**



# Why fiction trumps truth

We humans know more truths than any species on earth. Yet we also believe the most falsehoods.

Yuval Noah Harari

Many people believe that truth conveys power. If some leaders, religions or ideologies misrepresent reality, they will eventually lose to more clear-sighted rivals. Hence sticking with the truth is the best strategy for gaining power. Unfortunately, this is just a comforting myth. In fact, truth and power have a far more complicated relationship, because in human society, power means two very different things.

On the one hand, power means having the ability to manipulate objective realities: to hunt animals, to construct bridges, to cure diseases, to build atom bombs. This kind of power is closely tied to truth. If you believe a false physical theory, you won't be able to build an atom bomb.

On the other hand, power also means having the ability to manipulate human beliefs, thereby getting lots of people to cooperate effectively. Building atom bombs requires not just a good understanding of physics, but also the coordinated labor of millions of humans. Planet Earth was conquered by Homo sapiens rather than by chimpanzees or elephants, because we are the only mammals that can cooperate in very large numbers. And large-scale cooperation depends on believing common stories. But these stories need not be true. You can unite millions of people by making them believe in completely fictional stories about God, about race or about economics.

The dual nature of power and truth results in the curious fact that we humans know many more truths than any other animal, but we also believe in much more nonsense. We are both the



**“We humans know more truths than any species on earth. Yet we also believe the most falsehoods”**

The New York Times May 27, 2019

# Overcoming the risk of hubris....

1. As scientists we must stop taking the 'high moral ground' that science & evidence speaks for itself
2. We must be more pro-active & learn to communicate with more warmth & empathy, and with **fewer statistics** and with **more stories**
3. We must acknowledge the importance of **personal autonomy** as a foundation for effective policy, and the power and value of emphatic listening and true dialogue

# Five ways forward

1. Continue efforts to establish civil & constructive dialogue between key stakeholders, i.e. policy & decision makers, parliamentarians, scientists, health workforce, **community & religious leaders**, smokers, industry/manufacturers, media, civil society, constitutional & legal experts (legal challenges & petitions)
2. More QUALITY local research and a good understanding of local contextual factors
3. More effective communication & advocacy; **less hubris** on the part of us scientists
4. Stronger links & collaboration between Asian scientists and the international harm reduction community (E-Cigarette Summit in Malaysia, July 2020)
5. Work with sympathetic governments to influence and change WHO's position and stance on harm reduction

# World Health Assembly, Geneva, May 2019



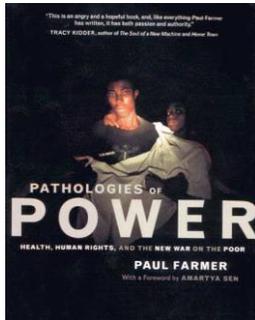




## MISSION

The attainment by **all** peoples of the highest possible level of health

**“The divorce of research and analysis from pragmatic efforts to remediate inequalities of access is a tactical and moral error - it may be an error that constitutes, in and of itself, a human rights abuse”**



Paul Farmer  
US physician/anthropologist  
“Pathologies of Power”  
University of California Press, 2003



Thank  
You