



in association with



The Diani Declaration

Striving for Education and Advocacy in Harm Reduction
in Africa

1ST August 2025

scihria.org.za | harmreductionsocietykenya.org



Preamble

In the spirit of advancing the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and better health, **SCiHRiA, in partnership with the Harm Reduction Society Kenya (HRSK)**, hosted the **Less Harm, Science-Based Insights Workshop**—a dedicated forum on harm reduction—held in Diani, Kwale, Kenya, from 31 July to 2 August 2025.

The collaboration between the two societies was based on the advocacy of the outcomes of the Harm Reduction Declaration of Cape Town, August 2024.



**At the heart of harm reduction
is the simple, powerful idea: shifting
misinformation with education.**

**The aim has always been to assist the legislature and government in delivering
world-class public health legislation for the benefit of the people of
Sub-Saharan Africa.**

This position statement affirms our commitment to education, public health, and advocacy by leveraging the expertise of harm reduction professionals.



Education

Support
Services

Advocacy

Outreach

About SCiHRiA and about HRSK

Scientific Insights in Harm Reduction in Africa (SCiHRiA)



The **Scientific Insights in Harm Reduction in Africa society** (SCiHRiA) is a non-profit organisation **dedicated to delivering appropriate, quality patient care** supported with the **latest scientific evidence based data**.



The society is administered by **harm reduction experts** and as such has a latitudinous collaboration across both African and global harm reduction focus groups and research networks.



Patient advocacy and Public Health are an integral focus of the Society and to this end, information and resources are made available to patients and their families on all aspects of harm reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Harm Reduction Society Kenya (HRSK)



is dedicated to the uptake of **harm reduction** interventions among communities in Kenya.



Our vision is a country where **no one lives afflicted by the harmful effects of drug abuse and/or pesticides**. Our Society is constituted by harm reduction experts with a **wide range of expertise** in Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Health/Paediatrics, Public Health, Health Economics and Law.



We focus on **research, policy advocacy and community awareness** on evidence-based strategies for reducing harms from alcohol, pesticides, tobacco and cannabis.

Our Alcohol Harm Reduction focuses on three pillars:

- 1 **reducing demand,**
- 2 **regulating supply,**
- 3 **minimising risks linked to drinking**



We advocate for **safer farming** through the improved regulation of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs); adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), biocontrol and biopesticides.



We advocate for **safer alternatives** that significantly **lower the health risks linked to cigarettes**.



We advocate for **evidence-based cannabis laws** that unlock medical benefits and safeguard communities.



The urgency of this Declaration is that every four seconds, someone dies from tobacco use or exposure to second-hand smoke – that's over 8 million deaths each year worldwide, the vast majority occurring in low- and middle-income countries.



In Africa, tobacco-related deaths are projected to double by 2030 if current trends continue. Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) bear a disproportionate share of the global tobacco-related disease burden.



Over 80% of the world's 1.3 billion tobacco users **live in LMICs**, where health systems are already strained by infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV.



In these resource-limited settings, smoking exacerbates vulnerability to respiratory infections, cardiovascular disease, and cancers, **leading to millions of preventable deaths** each year.



The **dual burden** of smoking-related non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases **compounds healthcare costs, deepens poverty, and slows progress towards development goals.**

Calls to action

May we suggest the following to strengthen the integration of harm reduction principles within clinical practice, public health education, and health policy development:

01 Enactment and implementation of 'risk proportionate' regulation of tobacco and tobacco products building of global best practices

All members support legislation that implements 'risk-proportionate regulation' – policy differentiation. This approach would enforce the strictest regulations on cigarettes and other combustible tobacco products, while simultaneously encouraging consumers to transition to low-risk, legal, and regulated forms of nicotine—either as a safer alternative to smoking or as a cessation aid.

02 Need for context specific research to inform THR practices.

In the absence of abstinence, **highlighting the science of alternative harm reduction tools** i.e., non-combustible products (low-risk) do not have the same harm as combustible cigarettes (high-risk).

Adaptability to develop country-specific THR profiles is imperative, strategies and unmet needs assessments – supported by the SCiHRiA society and associations such as the HRSK.

03 Enactment and implementation of 'risk proportionate' regulation of tobacco and tobacco products building of global best practices



Restoring the original intent of 'tobacco harm reduction' by **educating stakeholders** on its true meaning, and **correcting the widespread distortions and misrepresentations** that currently define the term.



Exposing the truth and education on the current trends of misinformation surrounding so-called 'citizen-led' harm reduction campaigns, organisations, opinion-leaders that are, in reality, driven by billionaire-funded interests.



Utilisation of education tools, such as the use of evidence based psychological interventions such as cognitive behaviour therapy, motivational interviewing and other relevant psychosocial interventions for smoking cessation; Professor Glover's "Snakes & Ladders Smoking Cessation Theory Training" for healthcare workers in Public and Private Healthcare settings. Created by Prof Marewa Glover. This approach would form part of a "Gamification unification" educative outreach healthcare training programme.

Without collective action, smoking rates in Sub-Saharan Africa will continue to rise, triggering serious health and economic issues.



IMAGE SOURCE: FREEPIK.COM



www.scihria.org.za
office@scihria.org.za

Postal Address
PO Box 78992,
Sandton City,
Gauteng, 2146



www.harmreductionsocietykenya.org
info@harmreductionsocietykenya.org

Postal Address
P.O. Box 15320 -00100,
Nairobi,
Kenya

ADVOCACY IN
ACTION