The Indian market of smoking tobacco is dominated by bidis (also known as beedis and biris) which actually consists of shredded tobacco, hand rolled in a tendu leaf secured with a colorful string at one end. Bidi are usually smoked by men, but produced mainly by women and young children who roll them in their homes. Bidis outsell cigarettes by a ratio of eight to one (8:1) in India.

**Bidi smoking kills**

- Bidi smoking has been shown to increase the risk of chronic bronchitis, tuberculosis, and respiratory diseases.

- A study in Bangalore found that smokers of 10 or more bidis per day were over 4 times more likely to have a heart attack than nonsmokers.

- Studies in India show that bidi smokers have 5 – 6 times greater risk of lung cancer than nonsmokers as well as high risks of oral cancer.

- A study in Tamil Nadu demonstrates that about half (47%) of deaths of rural men from tuberculosis (TB) are caused by bidi smoking.

- A study in Mumbai reported death rates to be 64% higher among bidi smokers compared to non-tobacco users. Even among smokers of less than 5 bidis a day, the death rates were 42% higher.

- Bidi smoke delivers more tar, carbon monoxide and nicotine than western-style cigarettes, and therefore Bidis are more or equally harmful as cigarettes.

**Tobacco cultivation and bidi-rolling cause serious occupational hazards to the workers and their families**

- Studies show that those working in tobacco harvesting have evidence of nicotine in their urine. Exposure to nicotine facilitates addiction.

- Bidi rollers experience exacerbation of tuberculosis, asthma, anaemia, giddiness, postural and eye problems, and gynecological difficulties.

- When bidis are stored in the house, food spoils quicker and family members experience nausea and headaches.

**Women and children share the greatest burden of bidi production**

- Nearly 225,000 children are engaged in bidi making.

- Women constitute 76 – 95% of total employment in bidi manufacturing.

- Female bidi rollers report verbal and physical abuse based on gender and caste differences.