

This bulletin highlights the key activities, focusing on Tobacco Control and TB, carried out in Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Timor-Leste during August 2022.

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## NEPAL

## HIGHLIGHTS

## Public Health Win: Supreme court of Nepal dismisses Industry challenge to 90% Pictorial Health Warning

On 28 August, following eight years of legal battle, the Nepal Supreme Court has ruled in favour of public health protection. The tobacco industry must now print 90% pictorial health warnings (PHW) on all tobacco packs.

Nepal had passed the rules to enlarge its PHWs to 90% in 2015, up from the previous 75%. However, Perfect Blend Pvt. Ltd., backed by tobacco giant Surya Nepal, Pvt. Ltd., filed a petition to the Supreme Court against the government rules. Public health advocate, Action Nepal, filed a counter suit appealing for an order to implement 90% PHW rules. After over 40 hearings, the Supreme Court dismissed the petition of the tobacco industry and gave verdict for immediate implementation of 90% PHW. The Union provides technical and legal assistance, evidence, and building capacity of government and non-government on tobacco control.



Tobacco Pack with 90% Pictorial Health Warnings

## INDONESIA



Vice Minister of Health at the Multistakeholder Meeting

## Vice-Minister of Health demands higher taxes

Vice Minister Ministry of Health has appealed to the Coordinating Ministry of Human and Cultural Development Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Communication and Informatics, Ministry of Development and Planning, and Ministry of Industry, to raise tax and prices on tobacco products. This meeting was organised by The Union and the University of Indonesia.

## Countering Tobacco Industry Interference

In response to Sampoerna's sponsorship of the B20 Summit, part of the G20 in Indonesia, 47 civil society and professional organisations sent a letter to the President of Indonesia to immediately remove Sampoerna as a sponsor and ensure no future sponsorship or collaboration with the tobacco industry.



Meeting with Vice Minister of Manpower

## Vice-Minister of Ministry of Manpower engaged in Tobacco Control

The Union, Indonesian Public Health Association, Tobacco Control Support Centre, and Rumah Mediasi Indonesia met with the Vice-Minister of Manpower to build policy awareness on tobacco control. The meeting focused on tobacco workers and farmers and the benefits of farming other commodities.

## Tobacco Control and Human Rights

The Union and Rumah Mediasi Indonesia are working together to highlight the link between human rights and tobacco control. A workshop was held featuring prominent human rights activists, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Foreign Affairs speakers. More than 40 participants were present, consisting of civil society and National Commission for Disabilities leaders.



Workshop on Human Rights and Tobacco Control



Regent of Kulon Progo, Mr Trisaktiyana, removed the tobacco advertising banner

## With Mayor of Kulon Progo - Taking a lead on smoke-free enforcement

The Mayor of Kulon Progo, Indonesia, personally led the removal of 75 tobacco advertising banners that were disguised as coffee ads in 25 local retail shops. Kulon Progo has had a ban of tobacco advertising promotion and sponsorship since 2014. This enforcement activity is a demonstration of strong commitments from local leaders in Indonesia. The Union provides technical support to Kulon Progo.

## No Smoking Signage Campaign Conducted in Banda Aceh City





## Youth: Protect our health and environment from Tobacco



The Union and ASPEKSINDO (an organization of cooperation and partnership between the Islands and Coastal Regional Governments) engaged youth ambassadors to hold an event in Jakarta calling for stronger public participation and awareness of tobacco control.

Smoking has an adverse effect on the welfare of coastal communities due to pollution.



Youth Ambassadors for tobacco-free maritime tourism

## CAMBODIA

### Tobacco Cessation Training in Siem Reap and Kampong Thom

Capacity building training on tobacco cessation and counselling services in the context of COVID-19 for health professionals were conducted at health centres in two provinces (Siem Reap and Kampong Thom). Over 50 healthcare professionals from 26 health centres and district referral hospitals attended.



Capacity building training in Siem Reap Province



Capacity building training in Kampong Thom Province



## Capacity Building Training for Countering Tobacco Industry Interference

The Union, CTFK, Gerry Roxas Foundation and the Department of Health organized a two-day capacity building program on 8-9 August. The purpose was to equip 14 national and subnational WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) implementers with the knowledge to promote, protect and defend local tobacco control policies from tobacco industry interference.

Two-day capacity building program for countering attacks of tobacco industry

## MPOWER & Smoke-Free Deputization Training

On 7 July, The Union grantee, Transcending Institution and Communities, Inc. (Transcend), conducted an MPOWER and Smoke-Free Deputization Training with Kibungan Local Government. The training discussed tobacco control policy enforcement, effective communications, and the implementation of the Municipal Ordinance. It was attended by 36 participants, including barangay (village) chiefs, nurses, midwives, and personnel from the Philippine National Police, Department of Education, and Bureau of Fire Protection.



MPOWER and Smoke-Free Deputization Training in Kibungan



## Tobacco Intervention/Cessation Training

ASH Philippines provided support to regional tobacco control networks through two tobacco intervention and cessation training sessions. The first, an intensive smoking cessation training session for Region 8, and the second, a cessation with MPOWER training session for Region 12. The training sessions were attended by a total of 67 participants.

Tobacco Intervention/Cessation Training in Region 8



# BANGLADESH

## Imposing Specific Taxes on Tobacco Product to Reduce Revenue Evasion

On 24 August, the Bureau of Economic Research, the University of Dhaka and the Bangladesh Network for Tobacco Tax Policy (BNTTP) jointly organized a national seminar on 'Specific Taxation on Tobacco Products to Protect Public Health'. The Honourable Minister of Planning, M. A. Mannan MP, was present as the chief guest. Representatives from the National Tobacco Control Cell, the World Health Organization, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and The Union were present as special discussants.

Some recommendations from the seminar include banning the retail sale of single-stick cigarettes and bidis, imposing specific taxes and raise the tax rate on tobacco products and bringing down the four-tiered tax structure to one to reduce revenue evasion.



Minister of Planning at the National Seminar on Specific Taxation on Tobacco Products

# VIETNAM

## Consultation Meeting on National Tobacco Control Strategy 2022-2030

A consultation meeting was organized by the Ministry of Health (MoH) to get comments and feedback on the National Tobacco Control Strategy 2022-2030 (NTCS). The meeting was chaired by MoH Vice-Minister and attended by representatives from different ministries. The draft NTCS is expected to be approved this year to guide tobacco control work over the next eight years. The Union has been providing technical support to MoH during evaluation of the previous NTCS as well the development of the new one.



Vice Minister of Health attending the consultation meeting on NTCS



Random Monitoring of a Cafe in Ha Noi

## Piloting Mobile App to Monitor Violations of Tobacco Control Law

The Union supported the Vietnam Tobacco Control Fund to pilot the use of a mobile app in which the public can report violations of the tobacco control policies.

A multi-sectoral inspection and monitoring mission was also conducted in two districts of Ha Noi. The inspection team consists of food safety inspectors, Police and Health Department staff. The team visited 125 public places, including cafés, restaurants and hotels, which are places with the highest exposure to second-hand smoking. The inspection team monitored the compliance with indicators such as presence of no-smoking signs, presence of people smoking, ashtrays provided and etc.



## Meeting with Cabinet of Vice Prime Minister

The Union grantee, National Alliance for tobacco control Timor-Leste, along with civil society partners held a meeting with Cabinet of Vice Prime Minister to discuss the importance of strong tobacco control interventions.

Meeting with Cabinet of Vice Prime Minister



Director of NCD in discussion with civil society to make effective implementation of tobacco control in Timor-Leste



Enforcement agencies in random inspection and Seizing of Illicit Cigarettes

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