

This bulletin highlights the key activities, focusing on Tobacco Control and TB, carried out in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal and Philippines during April 2023.

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INDONESIA

HIGHLIGHT

National Tobacco Control

Indonesian Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection supports prohibition of tobacco advertising and promotion

Mrs I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati, the Indonesian Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, has stated her strong support for the prohibition of tobacco advertising and promotion. She firmly believes that this measure is crucial for the protection and well-being of women and children in the country. The Minister aims to protect women and children from the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and reduce the prevalence of smoking by supporting restrictions on tobacco advertising. In line with this, the Indonesia Child Protection Agency, supported by a group of 274 youths, has issued a declaration calling for a more rigorous ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. The declaration also emphasizes the importance of implementing larger pictorial health warnings to enhance public awareness. The Minister will actively advocate to the President and Vice-President, stressing the urgent need for a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship within the Omnibus Health Bill.



Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati, with National Children Ambassadors and TC Warriors

The Union engages with Parliamentary Commission IX to discuss tobacco control measures

The Union team had a meeting with Mrs Netty Prasetyani Heryawan and Mr H. Suir Syam, members of Parliament from Commission IX, which is overseeing the Omnibus Health Bill. Both parliamentarians expressed their firm commitment to enhancing tobacco control provisions within the bill during its ongoing discussions at the Indonesian Parliament.



Meeting with Parliamentary Members of Commission IX, Netty Prasetyani Heryawan (Left photo) and H. Suir Syam (Right photo) to gain support for Omnibus Bill

Call for strong national tobacco control in Indonesia

On April 14, 2023, the Indonesian Child Protection Agency, in collaboration with five other prominent organizations, held a press conference. Together, they urged the government to prioritize strong tobacco control measures within the Omnibus bill, including a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, larger pictorial health warnings, and the implementation of comprehensive smoke-free policies.

The event featured diverse perspectives, including arguments centered around child protection, human rights, and public health. As a result of this event, a total of 24 articles were published in various national and subnational media outlets, amplifying the message of the importance of stringent tobacco control measures.



Press conference held to call for a strong national tobacco control in Indonesia

Multi-Stakeholder Workshop explores pathways for advancing tobacco control in Indonesia

A workshop was conducted by the Indonesian Institute for Social Development (IISD), a grantee of The Union, involving 55 participants, including parliamentarians, mayors, human rights activists, civil society members, and media representatives. The workshop aimed to assess the existing tobacco control provisions, discuss recent developments, and strategize ways to progress further in improving tobacco control provisions of the omnibus health bill.



Participants of the multi-stakeholders workshop

The government of Indonesia has initiated an Omnibus health bill, which will encompass at least 14 laws related to the health sector and aims to accelerate health transformation efforts. The Union and its partners are following the legal process to ensure that the articles related to tobacco control do not fall prey to the influence of the tobacco industry and its supporters.

Combating TB and Smoking: National Webinar Calls for Multisectoral Collaboration

The Union and Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT), in collaboration with Indonesia's Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs, All Indonesia Public Health Services Association (ADINKES) and Indonesian TB Research Network (JetSet TB) hosted an Indonesian National Webinar titled "Yes! We can end TB and smoking" on 6 April 2023, with the aim to address the link between TB and smoking and increase sustainable investments and foster multisectoral collaboration to put an end to both TB and smoking. Indonesia's Minister of Health Budi Gunadi Sadikin graced the keynote speech and called for stronger actions to end all forms of tobacco smoking in the country to progress towards ending TB. Tobacco smoking is the biggest preventable cause of TB and several other life-threatening diseases in Indonesia, and globally. The webinar was attended by over 1,840 participants.



Promotional flyer of Indonesian National Webinar titled "Yes! We can end TB and smoking"

Sub- National Tobacco Control

- **Bali moving towards tobacco-free:** Governor of Bali issued circular letter B.18.440/2488/Kesmas/Diskes to all cities and districts in Bali Province to immediately implement ban of outdoor tobacco advertising.
- **Strengthening tobacco control enforcement in Banda Aceh:** Banda Aceh Health Office along with The Union's grantee Aceh Institute met with The Investment Board and One Stop Service Agency to improve the enforcement of the ban on tobacco advertisements on the arterial roads of Banda Aceh. The team agreed to work hand-in-hand to strengthen overall smoke-free implementation in Banda Aceh city.



Meeting with Banda Aceh The Investment Board and One Stop Service Agency

PHILIPPINES

Integration of smoking cessation in TB control programs

On March 22, 2023, The Union met with the Department of Health to discuss the proposed integration of smoking cessation and TB programs. The meeting has identified potential next steps that The Union can support to help realize the integration, including development of guidelines.



Meeting with DOH to propose integration of smoking cessation and TB programs

In 2010, The Union developed a guide to integrate smoking cessation and TB programs. The Union advocates simplifying smoking cessation, expanding it widely through the health services and working with communities in order to reach more people. 'ABC for TB' can be delivered by any health care worker in the TB services - it does not require specialized staff or facilities. It can be delivered systematically within the existing programme activities and can be done within as little as 2-5 mins. Read more [here](#).

Training of trainers enhances WHO FCTC implementation in the Philippines



TOT for the capacity building of local implementers of WHO FCTC

The Union, in collaboration with Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) and HealthJustice Philippines, organized a training of trainers (TOT) to build the capacity of local implementers of WHO FCTC on March 30-31, 2023 at Makati City, Philippines.

The training focused on national tobacco control policy development, subnational policy development and enforcement, ENDS, and sin tax. The TOT was attended by 27 individuals representing the grantees and partners of The Union and CTFK, as well as representatives from the Department of Health.



In January 2023, Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, re-emphasized her determination to make Bangladesh tobacco-free by 2040. One of the strategies is to amend the Tobacco Control Act in line with the World Health Organizations Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Advancing the national tobacco control advocacy in Bangladesh

- **Building support from MPs to strengthen tobacco control:** Member of Parliaments expressed their support for tobacco tax increase and legislative amendments in a meeting with The Union's grantee AID foundation.
- **Protecting youths to build tobacco-free Bangladesh:** State Minister of Youth and Sports expressed his support to create a healthy tobacco-free environment for youth during a meeting with The Union's grantee Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (MANAS) .



Meeting with Honorable Members of Parliament, Mrs. Afroza Haque Reen



Meeting with the Hon'ble State Minister of Youth and Sports

Bangladesh Mayor Alliance sustainable tobacco control strategies

The chair of the Bangladesh Mayor Alliance for Healthy Cities (MAHC) organized a meeting involving 17 mayors to deliberate on the long-term viability of tobacco control programs within their respective jurisdictions. One of the key strategies discussed was the establishment of dedicated budget allocations for annual tobacco control activities. Notably, the mayors of Rangpur City Corporation and Savar Municipality demonstrated their commitment by allocating 10,000 USD and 5,000 USD, respectively, towards these initiatives. The Union plays a crucial role in providing MAHC with technical assistance and strategic guidance to enhance tobacco control efforts at the subnational level.



MAHC meeting with 17 mayors

CAMBODIA

Ministry of Health trains healthcare providers on tobacco cessation

The National Centre for Health Promotion, Ministry of Health conducted training to build the capacity of healthcare providers in tobacco cessation and counseling services. The session increased knowledge and skills of personnel to deliver seven steps to quit smoking and 5A & 5R approach of brief tobacco interventions (WHO FCTC article 14) in health centers at a community level. 48 healthcare providers from 17 health centers and 1 district referral hospital in Kep and Pursat provinces attended the training.



Capacity building training for tobacco cessation

Posing Penalties for Violation of TC Law

In 2022, Ministry of Health, Cambodia won legal battle against four tobacco companies, including VINITON GROUP Co., Ltd for violation of TAPS ban and Pictorial Health Warning requirements. The court sentenced those companies to pay a fine of Riel 30,000,000 (~7300 USD) and ordered to reimburse the government in the amount of Riel 20,000,000 (~4850 USD). Since then, NCHP has been working with the prosecutor team to ensure the companies adhere to the verdict.

NEPAL

Advancing tobacco control at Badimalika Municipality

The Union's grantee, Action Nepal team had a meeting with Mayor of Badimalika Municipality, to discuss about the ways to effectively execute tobacco control regulations there. The Mayor has made the commitment to endorse the concept of a tobacco-free city in coming fiscal year budget and planning.



Meeting with Mayor of Badimalika Municipality

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