

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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

August 2023

Vol. 012

INDONESIA

HIGHLIGHTS

High-Level Meeting: Collaborative efforts for TB and Tobacco Control

On 9 August 2023, The Union's Director of Tobacco Control Department, Director of Asia Pacific Office and colleagues held a high-level meeting with Vice Minister of Health HE Dante Saksono Harbuwono and his team. In attendance were the Director of Communicable Disease Control, Health Promotion Centre, and Non-Communicable Disease Control. The purpose of this meeting was to express gratitude and assure ongoing support to the Ministry of Health (MOH) for their efforts in addressing tuberculosis (TB) and tobacco control in Indonesia.

HE Vice Minister acknowledged the current status of smoking cessation in Indonesia and emphasized the importance of evaluating it. Additionally, there are plans to develop a national guideline for smoking cessation. As for TB control, 10 cities will be selected as pilot incorporating both TB and tobacco control measures and strengthen their implementation. Key steps were identified, including improvements in TB recording and reporting.

The MOH is currently in the process of adopting government regulations derived from the omnibus law, keeping tobacco control as a top priority. Moreover, The Union reaffirmed its commitment to collaborating with and supporting the Ministry of Health in integrating TB and tobacco control efforts in Indonesia.



Meeting with Vice-Minister of Health, Indonesia

National Tobacco Control

The Union taking an active role at ASEAN Youth Workshop on Tobacco Control



ASEAN Youth Workshop on Tobacco Control (Photo from MOH)

The Union and PP IPM actively participated in the ASEAN Youth Workshop on Tobacco Control, co-hosted by ASEAN and the Ministry of Health. This collaborative event aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco consumption among youth in the ASEAN region and promote tobacco control campaigns. The workshop took place from August 23 to 27 in Jakarta and also served to support Indonesia as the Chair of ASEAN 2023 under the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth". Additionally, the event included ASEAN Car Free Day on its last day, attended by Minister of Health Budi Gunadi Sadikin and other health ministry representatives, promoting healthy lifestyles through physical and community activities during a traffic-free period.

Workshop in Bali: Empowering tobacco tax and price monitoring in Indonesia



Participants of workshop on tobacco tax & price monitoring

A two-day workshop on tobacco tax and price monitoring was held in Bali, Indonesia, with 27 participants. The primary objectives of the workshop were to develop advanced data analysis techniques, generate comprehensive reports, and devise strategies for effectively using and sharing price monitoring data with policymakers and stakeholders. The Union team discussed the protocol and results of price monitoring of tobacco products in the past years.

This collaborative event was organized by The Union and its partners, including Udayana University, the Center of Human and Development, University of Indonesia-Demographic Institute, Tobacco Control Support Center Ikatan Ahli Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia, and the Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development. It also involved key government bodies such as the Ministry of Health, Fiscal Policy Agency of the Ministry of Finance, Directorate General of Customs and Excise, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of National Development Planning.

Collaborative efforts in drafting government regulations for Health Omnibus Law

Experts from The Union's grantees such as , All Indonesia Public Health Services Association (ADINKES), RAYA Indonesia, Rumah Mediasi Indonesia (RMI) and Indonesian Child Protection Agency (LPAI), are collaborating closely with the MOH as the main team responsible for developing Government Regulations (PP) derived from the Health Omnibus Law. Indonesia Institute for Social Development (IISD), together with 22 partner organizations signed the expression letter to the government to demonstrate their backing for the drafting of PP stemming from the Health Omnibus Law.

Youth Movement for smoke-free beaches

ASPEKSINDO, the association of the regional governments of coastal and island areas, conducted the Youth Movement called "Duta Maritim". The youth ambassadors stand up for the creating smoke-free beaches and promotes a smoke-free lifestyle for youngsters. To celebrate the Indonesian Independent Day, they got support from the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Mr Sandiaga Uno, who emphasized the importance of a smoke-free environment, especially in the tourism area.



Youths advocating for smoke-free beach and public places

Collaboration to protect children from tobacco hazards through radio broadcasts

Indonesian Child Protection Agency (LPAI), in partnership with Indonesian Tobacco Control Network (ITCN) and various community organizations beyond the TC Network, has reinforced its efforts to protect children from the hazards of tobacco by broadcasting regular sessions on Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI). This month's discussion focused on guiding families in setting up smoke-free homes and choosing to be healthy without tobacco.



LPAI Radio broadcasting activity on Radio Republik Indonesia

Strengthening tobacco control policies enforcement at sub-national level



FGD with the Council of Muslim Consultative Assembly

discussed successful local smoke-free implementations (including bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship - TAPS) in various Indonesian regions, emphasizing their benefits for tobacco farmers. The law is set to be signed this year, with ongoing efforts to finalize the draft, incorporating bans on TAPS and point-of-sale display.

Depok: Two recent meetings in Depok City aimed to strengthen the smoke-free initiative. A high-level meeting was held on 28 August, involving Depok City Secretary, Head of Civil Police, and Head of the Health Office to strengthen collaboration within the smoke-free task force. Newly appointed leaders will lead the initiative. The second meeting, on 22 August, assessed the overall enforcement program and Depok's ASEAN Smoke-Free Award nomination.

Jakarta: A new feature allowing the public to report violations of smoke-free regulations is now available on the JAKI app, a platform administered by the Jakarta provincial government. This development is the outcome of collaboration between Smoke-free Jakarta and Jakarta Smart City in Jakarta Provincial Government.



High level meeting with the Depok City Secretary



Random inspection led by Makassar Mayor Assistant

Makassar: Makassar Mayor Assistant led the random inspection during this month of 17 venues, including workplaces, restaurants, cafes, and shopping malls, which was covered by various printed and online media. Additionally, The Union, in collaboration with the city government and Hasanuddin Contact, organized training for 34 Civil Police officers from 14 subdistricts on August 2nd to enhance their technical skills for better enforcement.

Palembang: A total of 302 establishments were subject to inspections this month, and 15 of them were found to be non-compliant with smoke-free regulations. The city is also actively pursuing a campaign to promote the display of "no smoking" signage. As a results of this intensive campaign, more than 1,200 signage has been put by the end of August.

Pontianak: The Pontianak city team is persistently carrying out a campaign to promote the display of "no smoking" signages. As of the end of August, over 1,900 such signs have been posted.

Promoting crop diversification: Water reservoir aid for Kledung Farmers



Launching of micro reservoir for crop diversification

Tobacco farmers in Kledung, Temanggung Regency, received the support from Muhammadiyah Tobacco Control Center, University of Muhammadiyah Magelang and Muhammadiyah Central Java to build water reservoir. This project benefits five farmer groups, consisting of around 150 households, and 500 residents. Located on Mount Sindoro's slopes, it tackles dry-season irrigation challenges of the farmers, who have been shifted from tobacco plantation to more profitable crops like chilies, vegetables, corn and coffee. This initiative is a solution for farmers to diversify their crops and gain more profits, without depending on tobacco.



Workshop hosted by NILG for capacity building of mayors and officials

Empowering Municipalities: Workshop on LGI guidelines for TC implementation

In August 2023, a two-day workshop was held at the National Institute of Local Government training room, engaging Mayors and Municipal Executive Officers from 40 municipalities to discuss adopting LGI guidelines for Tobacco Control (TC). The sessions covered topics such as the local and global impact of tobacco, the background and goals of Tobacco Control Guidelines for Local Government Institutions, and local initiatives. Participants attending workshop developed action plans to implement TC laws and the LGI Guideline within their municipalities.

Round table meeting on e-cigarettes: Addressing health risks and regulation

The Tobacco Control and Research Cell (TCRC) of Dhaka International University organized a round table meeting titled "E-Cigarette: Myth and Reality" on August 20. The event brought together parliamentarians, former health minister, delegates from the police force and the National Tobacco Control Cell, along with tobacco control and public health experts. Chief Guest MP Md. Shamsul Haque Tuku highlighted the right to health and emphasized the health risks associated with all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. He stressed that e-cigarettes cannot be a substitute for smoking cessation and urged the Ministry of Commerce to prohibit e-cigarette imports, aiming for a tobacco and e-cigarette-free Bangladesh.



Participants of round table meeting titled "E-Cigarette: Myth and Reality"



Meeting with DDLG, Dhaka

Initiatives to implement LGI guidelines for TC in three municipalities of Dhaka

On August 16, 2023, The Union grantee, AID Foundation, together with National Anti-Tuberculosis Association of Bangladesh-NATAB, has conducted a bilateral meeting with Md. Rafiqul Islam, Deputy Director of Local Government (DDLG), Dhaka. They discussed implementing LGI guidelines for Tobacco Control in Dhaka district. DDLG plans to apply guidelines in three municipalities and 62 unions and acknowledged the weak TC Act implementation in Dhaka. He promised to take measures by collaborating with the Dhaka Deputy Commissioner to address this issue.

Making Rajshahi a tobacco-free city

On August 20, 2023, the AID Foundation conducted a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of Rajshahi City Corporation and his team to discuss the LGI guideline implementation progress for Tobacco Control. The Focal Point provided updates, noting that the licensing process will start with the new mayor and a dedicated budget has been allocated for tobacco control activities. The Chief Executive Officer expressed confidence in making Rajshahi a tobacco-free city under the Clean City initiative.



Meeting with Rajshahi City Corporation team

National Tobacco Control

National Capacity Building and National Policy Development

- The Union, in collaboration with the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG), conducted a series of consultation meetings with the Disease Prevention and Control Bureau of the Philippine Department of Health. The purpose was to support the dissemination of the Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Diagnosis and Management of Tobacco Use and Nicotine Dependence, as well as to create an inventory of tobacco cessation services in the country. In August, a nationwide survey to assess the status of tobacco cessation services in the Philippines will be conducted with the support of The Union and ASOG.
- The Union, in partnership with the ASOG, continues to provide assistance for the legal review of the draft National Tobacco Prevention and Control Strategy (NTPCS) 2023-2030. The finalization of the NTPCS is scheduled for Quarter 3 of this year.

Sub-National Tobacco Control

Engaging Metro Manila Youth in TC Advocacy

Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) organized two orientation and communication planning workshops for Metro Manila LGUs' Sangguniang Kabataan Federation on July 11 and 18. These workshops aimed to raise awareness among youth about the risks of electronic cigarettes and involve them in tobacco control advocacy. The initiative was a collaborative effort with various organizations, including the Department of Interior and Local Government, National Youth Commission, The Union, Vital Strategies, Action on Smoking and Health Philippines, and Metro Manila LGUs.



Awareness raising workshop on E-cigarettes, focusing on youth

MMDA inspections uncover 1,183 tobacco violations

MMDA (Metropolitan Manila Development Authority) personnel inspected the vicinity of 113 schools and 26 public transportation terminals in the region to assess the sale of tobacco/vapor products, compliance with TAPS regulations, and proper display of No Smoking signage. A total of 1,183 violations were reported to the respective Local Government Units for verification and appropriate action.



Capacity Building workshop on WHO FCTC Smoke-Free Policies

Smoke-Free Aklan capacity building workshop strengthens local TC efforts

In collaboration with HealthJustice Philippines, Smoke-Free Aklan conducted a Capacity Building workshop from July 12 to 14, 2023. The workshop aimed to enhance the proficiency of local implementers in WHO FCTC Smoke-Free Policies. Representatives from six LGUs—Kalibo, Libacao, Batan, Balete, Makato, and Numancia—participated in the event. The workshop focused on various aspects, including the legal framework for policy development and enforcement, LGU powers, health promotion, and countering Tobacco Industry Interference. It served as a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge, strengthening Aklan's commitment to becoming smoke-free.

Baguio City appoints 80 volunteers as enforcers of smoke-free ordinance

A force of 80 dedicated volunteers, representing different barangays, private organizations, and public institutions, were officially appointed as enforcers of the Baguio City Smoke-Free Ordinance during an intensive two-day training on June 29-30, 2023. These enforcers were educated on the WHO MPOWER strategy, embracing its six impactful measures to effectively combat tobacco demand.



Newly appointed smoke-free enforcers from Baguio City



Snapshot from Project Implementation Review Workshop

Transcend's project review shapes tobacco-free strategies for Cordillera Region

The Union's grantee Transcend conducted a Project Implementation Review in Balanga City, Bataan, from July 18 to 21, 2023. The review included a benchmarking session that looked into the successful Smoke-Free implementation in Balanga City. The main goal was to assist Local Government Units (LGUs) in evaluating and developing strategies to enhance their performance on Tobacco-Free Program implementation, particularly in preparation for the prestigious Red Orchid Award from the Regional Department of Health Office. The event brought together 42 participants from various Provincial Health Offices and government offices in the Cordillera Region.

VIETNAM

Dialogue on smoke-free educational institutions

On August 5, 2023, Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP) in collaboration with Department of Teachers and Education Managers organized a dialogue between Ministry of Education Training (MOET) representatives and schools, parents and children on smoke-free school. The objectives included sharing information on current tobacco use in educational institutions, addressing implementation challenges, and defining collaborative roles among stakeholders. Around 50 participants attended, including officials from various ministries, teachers, students, and child-focused NGOs, providing input on better implementation of tobacco control laws and smoke-free school efforts by MOET.



Dialogue on Smoke-Free Educational Institutions in Vietnam

Empowering youth and media for tobacco tax reform

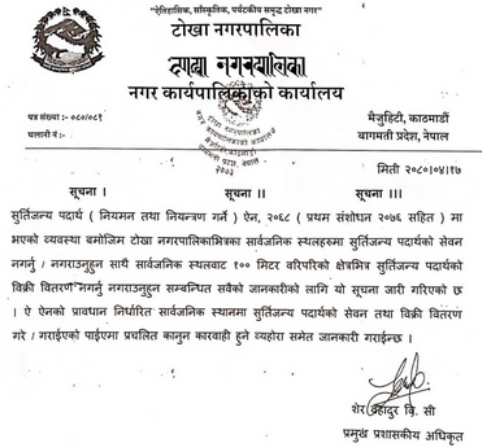
Center for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW) and the Tax Justice Alliance organized a two-day training workshop on tobacco tax and justice in Vietnam. The workshop, attended by 25 participants, aimed to provide evidence for tobacco tax reform in the country. It also served as a platform for connecting people and organizations interested in this reform and facilitated discussions between young participants and experts in the field. The overall objective was to raise awareness and deepen understanding of tobacco-related issues in Vietnam.



Participants of training workshop on tobacco tax and justice

Action Nepal advocates successfully for ban of sales & use of Tobacco in Tokha Municipality's Public Places

The Union's grantee Action Nepal team launched an advocacy campaign aiming to prohibit tobacco sales and consumption in public areas across various local levels. To gather support for the mission, the team consistently engaged with the key stakeholders. Their persistent efforts and consultations with the Mayor and chief administrative officer of Tokha Municipality resulted in the issuance of a notice to ban the sales and use of tobacco products within a 100-meter radius of all public places of Tokha municipality, effective from August 2, 2023. Offenders will face penalties according to tobacco control regulations.



Notice issued by Tokha municipality to ban smoking



Meeting with Under Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Population

Advocating for comprehensive TC Initiatives

A meeting with the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) was held to address the appropriate usage of health tax funds, the effective implementation of a 90% pictorial health warning (PHW) on imported tobacco products, and enforcing tobacco control laws. The Under Secretary committed to ensuring proper use of health tax revenue, partnering with stakeholders for the 90% PHW implementation, and strengthening tobacco control law enforcement. The meeting showcased his willingness to collaborate with diverse stakeholders to ensure the success of these initiatives. It involved six participants, including members of the Action Nepal team and Health Journalist.



House-to-House Meetings with Villagers and Target Groups in Pursat

Enhancing tobacco cessation and community engagement in Kep and Pursat Provinces

The National Centre for Health Promotion (NCHP) has successfully concluded its second round of monitoring for the tobacco cessation program in Kep and Pursat provinces. The initiative involved collecting data from health centers and providing essential technical guidance to improve their functioning. Health professionals showcased remarkable dedication by organizing meetings with village chiefs, effectively communicating the harms of tobacco and introducing the local tobacco cessation program. Their commitment extended to conducting home visits, allowing direct engagement with village chiefs, villagers and target groups.

Curbing online sales of e-cigarettes and HTPs

After submitting a formal appeal to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications to ban all forms of E-Cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs) from being promoted or sold through online platforms and across social media networks, the Ministry of Health (MoH) took proactive steps by monitoring prominent Facebook pages and websites that were involved in the online retail of E-Cigarettes and HTPs, leading to the blocking of certain pages involved in such activities.

Baucau Declaration sets agenda for Tobacco Control in Timor-Leste



High-level meeting at Baucau Municipality

On August 28-29, the Mayor Alliance for Health and Development in Timor-Leste (APAS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO), organized a two-day high-level meeting in Baucau Municipality. The objective was to raise awareness among local leaders about tobacco laws. The meeting concluded with the "Baucau Declaration," outlining three main agendas for 2023-2024: promoting smoke-free public places, prohibiting tobacco promotion, sponsorship, and advertising, and banning illicit cigarettes. The Mayor of Baucau, representing the Chair of the Mayor Alliance, emphasized their commitment to tobacco control programs for a smoke-free future. The meeting had 144 participants, including law enforcement authorities, education directors, presidents of municipalities, WHO representatives, health and public affairs officials, National Alliance of Tobacco Control Timor-Leste (ANCT-TL) and the media.

Campaign to raise awareness on tobacco hazards and laws

On August 21, the Mayors of Baucau and Ermera, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youths and Sports and the ANCT-TL, organized a campaign targeting hundreds of youths, teachers, and directors at the municipal level. The purpose of the campaign was to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco and educate them about tobacco control laws. The mayors emphasized their commitment as members of the Mayor Alliance to promote a smoke-free future, with the goal of reducing non-communicable diseases in their respective municipalities. In total, 180 participants took part in the "Campaign on the Tobacco Hazard."



Mayor of Baucau Municipality giving speech at the campaign

ANCT Press Conference urges government action against illicit cigarette trade



Press conference on investigating illicit cigarettes

On August 15, The Union's grantee, ANCT-TL held a press conference with the aim of urging the government to take action regarding illicit cigarettes. Specifically, they called upon the Port authority and the Police to conduct investigations into corrupt practices at the border, including those involving retailers engaged in smuggling activities. The press conference was attended by 10 local media outlets. ANCT's initiative sought to shed light on the pressing issue of illicit cigarettes and the need for stringent measures to combat their distribution and associated corrupt practices at the border.

.....
For more information, Please contact

THE UNION ASIA PACIFIC OFFICE (UAP)



**6A Shenton Way,
#04-01, OUE Downtown Gallery,
Singapore 068815
E-mail: ap-cat@theunion.org**