

Tobacco Control Asia Pacific Monthly Bulletin

Issue 7 (January 2025)



Delegates from Indonesia Tobacco Control Strategic Meeting 2025

Highlights

Indonesia Tobacco Control Strategic Meeting: Advancing 2025 Goals

The Indonesia Tobacco Control Strategic Meeting, held on January 14–15, 2025, in Jakarta, brought together national and international stakeholders to strengthen efforts against tobacco use. Representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Planning and Development, Ministry of Finance, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, World Health Organization, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Vital Strategies, University of Illinois at Chicago, CDC Foundation, Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, civil society, universities, and professional organizations, participated in discussions to finalize the 2025 Tobacco Control Objectives and Work Plan. The meeting focused on identifying opportunities, addressing challenges, and enhancing collaboration among key partners to advance tobacco control measures across Indonesia.

A joint strategic plan was developed with key goals to: advance the implementation of Government Regulation No. 28/2024 on tobacco control, including the adoption of the Ministry of Health's notification on standardized packaging; strengthening excise taxes on tobacco products; enhancing enforcement of smoke-free policies at the subnational level; build high-level political commitment for a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship; and secure sustainable resources for tobacco control efforts.

Protecting people from tobacco smoke

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Health, with technical support from Vital Strategies, BI partners, and local civil society, convened two technical drafting meetings on November 25 and 29, 2024, to develop guidelines for implementing smokefree provisions and a ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS), including on social media..



Dr. Bima Arya Sugiarto, Vice Minister of Home Affairs and Chair of APCAT at ADINKES Annual Meeting

During the Association of Indonesian Local Health Authorities (ADINKES) Annual Meeting, 544 government officials from 61 cities and districts participated in a discussion to share progress and lessons learned on smokefree policy implementation. Dr. Bima Arya Sugiarto, Vice Minister of Home Affairs called for immediate action to implement smoke-free policies, stressing the responsibility of local governments in enforcing tobacco control measures. Dr. Tara Singh Bam of Vital Strategies emphasized the importance of WHO-recommended policies, including higher tobacco taxes, advertising bans, and smoking cessation programs. The meeting highlighted successful initiatives from cities like Palembang and Jakarta, showcasing best practices in enforcement and collaboration. ADINKES also recognized cities and districts for their efforts, reinforcing the commitment to nationwide smoke-free environments.

On January 13, 2025, a discussion with the Deputy Minister of Primary and Secondary Education (WAMENDIKDASMEN RI) focused on strengthening tobacco control in all educational facilities by integrating tobacco control into school accreditation, reviewing Ministerial Regulation No. 64 of 2015, and adopting a Code of Conduct to ban Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (TAPS) and tobacco industry donations in the education sector. Additionally, efforts will incorporate tobacco control into the Healthy School Movement and address the availability of single-stick cigarettes.



Vital Strategies meeting with the Deputy Minister of Primary and Secondary Education



Meeting with Mayor of Depok and his team

On January 17, 2025, delegations from Bloomberg Initiative (BI) and Vital Strategies visited Depok City to review its smoke-free policy. The visit included monitoring public spaces and educating business owners on removing illegal tobacco ads. In a meeting with the Mayor, Dr. Tara Singh Bam praised Depok as a role model for tobacco control, while Kelly Larson (BI) reaffirmed support for its policies. The Mayor emphasized the program's role in promoting a healthier environment, and the city's health department committed to strengthening supervision and public education with Vital Strategies' support.

A series of enforcement visits were conducted in the cities of Pontianak, Palembang, and Banda Aceh. In Pontianak and Palembang, meetings were held with the city teams and the smoke-free coordinators at the Puskesmas to assess the current situation and the efforts to mobilize community health workers for enforcement activities. Discussions also focused on opportunities for 2025, particularly in light of the upcoming leadership changes in these cities. In Banda Aceh, a meeting with the newly elected Mayor was conducted to raise awareness about the tobacco control program and the implementation of smoke-free initiatives.



Meeting with Pontianak SF taskforce team and Puskesmas SF coordinators

- The Tobacco Control Support Centre (TCSC) held a seminar for 48 participants from various disability organizations to raise awareness and support stronger protections against smoking for children with disabilities.



Signing smokefree law during Majalengka Parliament plenary meeting

Majalengka Regency in West Java has enacted Smoke-Free Law No. 6 of 2024, by revising Regent Regulation No. 4 of 2021 to protect 1,188,004 residents from tobacco exposure in public facilities, workplaces, and public transportation. The law also bans the display of cigarette sales at points of sale, marking a significant step to protect the community—and especially the youth—from tobacco exposure, advertising, promotions, and sponsorships. Technical support for drafting the law was provided by No Tobacco Community Bogor and LPAI (Indonesian Children Protection).

Philippines: With support from sub-grantee Transcend, the Provincial Tobacco Control Network (PTCN) of Benguet convened to enhance efforts toward a Smoke-Free Benguet. The meeting included updates on initiatives, presentations of technical assistance outputs, the introduction of a new evaluation and monitoring tool for municipalities, and discussions to address gaps and challenges in tobacco control.



Meeting with PTCN Benguet

- Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) provided technical assistance by reviewing Muntinlupa City's draft ordinance amendment, offering an FCTC-compliant ordinance template to Makati, and drafting a resolution to ban smoking and vaping in La Mesa Watershed Park.
- Vital Strategies sub-grantee, Partnerships for Nation Building, Inc. (PNBI), partnered with the Provincial Health Office, La Union Youth Development Council, and Sangguniang Kabataan to organize a Youth Camp for Smoke-Free La Union, empowering participants to become advocates and raise awareness on tobacco control.



Meeting with Administrator of Savar Municipality

Bangladesh: On National Tobacco Free Day 2024, an awareness meeting was held by the Social Upliftment Society (SUS) in Savar, attended by around 100 students. Savar Municipality Health Officer Dr. Ayesha Siddika, AID Foundation Senior Program Officer Abu Naser Anik and SUS Deputy Director Mr. Manjurul Morshed also participated in the meeting. Students from EBAC Public School announced that the sale and use of cigarettes within 100 meters of the school would be prohibited, making the institution 100% tobacco-free.

Offering help to quit tobacco use

- **Indonesia:** An evaluation of the existing Quit Line has been conducted, identifying key areas for improvement. The report emphasizes the need to ensure permanent health staff for the Quit Line, secure sustainable funding, enhance recording and reporting systems, and improve the application for better user experience and effectiveness.

Warning about the dangers of tobacco

Indonesia: Vital Strategies met with the Honorable Budi Gunadi Sadikin, Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, to discuss the critical role of tobacco control measures in reducing morbidity and saving lives from non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The discussion highlighted the importance of standardized packaging, with Singapore's successful implementation presented as a key example. The Minister of Health affirmed Indonesia's commitment to endorsing standardized packaging policy.



Dr. Tara Singh Bam presented global best practices on standardised packaging to the Minister of Health, Indonesia

Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship



Ban display of tobacco products at point of sales

Indonesia: Kulon Progo's Smokefree Team hosted a meeting with 70 local government and retail representatives, including the Angkasa Pura Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) Manager, to discuss a smoke-free policy, ban tobacco advertising and ban display of tobacco products at the point of sale. The key outcome was an agreement to ban tobacco product displays at 60 points of sale, while Angkasa Pura also committed to eliminating tobacco advertisements and displays at YIA Airport. As a model initiative, the team installed 10 point-of-sale covers and the full implementation is expected by early April 2025.

Vital Strategies' grantee Raya Indonesia, in collaboration with the Faculty of Law at Krisnadwipayana University (Jakarta), held a seminar and policy discussion for 197 students to strengthen legal knowledge on the implications of the internet ban on tobacco advertising. The event emphasized the state's responsibility to protect children from the marketing influences of addictive substances. As an outcome, a policy strategy will be drafted and presented at the Legal Strategy and Policy Agency (BSKH) meeting in January 2025.



Meeting with Head of the Legal Strategy and Policy Agency (BSKH) of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights

- **Philippines:** Metropolitan Manila Development Authority personnel monitored the 100-meter perimeters of 279 schools across 14 Local Government Units (LGUs) and identified 289 stores displaying prohibited tobacco advertisements. The findings were reported to the respective LGUs for verification and necessary action.

Raising taxes on tobacco

- **Cambodia:** Twenty-eight representatives from the National Center for Health Promotion, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Economy and Finance attended a workshop in Manila to discuss the transition from the Ad Valorem tax system to a Mixed System for tobacco products. The workshop focused on pricing, the impact of special taxes on health and the economy, and input for the 2024-2028 Special Tax Reform Guidelines. Next steps include preparing relevant documents and studying the effect of tobacco products on tax revenue and public health.



Roundtable Discussion on the Special Tax

NCHP participated in a Roundtable Discussion on the Special Tax on Tobacco at the Royal Academy of Cambodia, organized by the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The event gathered 320 participants, including representatives from WHO, government ministries, researchers, and students. Cambodia's current tobacco tax structure includes a 20% special tax, 5% public excise tax, and 10% VAT, generating only 30-35% of the cigarette price in revenue.

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Finance release a new Tobacco Excise Revenue Sharing Fund policy (DBH CHT 72/2024), which requires 40% of DBH CHT allocations to local governments be used for healthcare, including smokefree implementation, smoking cessation programs, tobacco prevalence surveys, regulation of advertising and sponsorships, prevention and management of smoking-related diseases, and training for health workers. Vital Strategies and its partners met with the Directorate General of Fiscal Balance to provide technical input for the implementation guidelines of this new regulation.
- Vital Strategies continues to push for overall higher taxation, in February grantee Ahmad Dahlan University held a press conference calling for higher excise taxes, stricter enforcement against illegal trade, cigarette sales bans, and built awareness on the new DBH CHT policy and how to effective use it. The event, supported by Muhammadiyah leadership, also emphasized protections for farmers and workers. It drew 42 participants and received coverage from 16 media outlets.

Tobacco industry interferences

- Indonesia:** The tobacco industry has aggressively opposed the adoption of standardized packaging. Numerous news articles have reported on the industry's claims that this policy would harm businesses and tobacco workers. Additionally, the industry has sent formal letters to the Minister of Health, arguing against the regulation. In response, Vital Strategies has provided ongoing support and technical guidance to the Ministry of Health, ensuring alignment with international best practices. The team has conducted multiple technical meetings with ministry officials, presented evidence-based counterarguments to industry claims, and developed best-practice mock-ups to demonstrate effective standardized packaging. To bolster public and policymaker support, Vital Strategies has also coordinated letters of endorsement from key stakeholders, reinforcing the necessity of this measure for public health.



Meeting with National Consumer Rights Protection Directorate

Bangladesh: A delegation of the Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance, led by the AID Foundation, met with Director General of the National Consumer Rights Protection Directorate. Representatives from organizations such as the Tobacco Control Research Cell, Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust, Bangladesh Environment Research, and Vital Strategies attended, along with key officials from the Directorate. The Directorate issued directives for action, resulting in a mobile court fining Swapna Super Shop 50,000 taka (~ \$550) for overpricing cigarettes. Public hearings also collected 25,000 taka (~ \$275) each from Swapna Super Shop and British American Tobacco Bangladesh.

General Tobacco Control

Bangladesh: On November 5, 2024, AID Foundation held a bilateral meeting with Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Mr. Sharaf Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury at his office. The Commissioner committed to issuing a circular to all Local Government Institutions (LGI) in Dhaka Division for the immediate implementation and monitoring of the "Guidelines for the Implementation of Tobacco Control Activities of Local Government Institutions." He also assured continued support for tobacco control efforts.



Meeting with Dhaka Divisional Commissioner

- On October 14, 2024, AID Foundation held a bilateral meeting with the Savar Municipality Administrator and Upazila Executive Officer, Mr. Md. Abubakar Sarkar, along focal person of Savar Municipality's Tobacco Control Program, Dr. Ayesha Siddika. The discussion was focused on the implementation of the Local Government Institutions guidelines. Key decisions included initiating the licensing process for tobacco product sales, and holding regular taskforce meetings and mobile courts to enforce tobacco control laws with support from the AID Foundation. Moreover, during the meeting with Dr. Ayesha Siddiq, the progress on implementing LGI guidelines. Additionally, a helpline booth was launched in Savar Municipality to address violations of the Tobacco Control Act and LGI guidelines.

Indonesia: Vital Strategies held a discussion with delegates from the Ministry of National Planning and Development (BAPPENAS RI) on incorporating tobacco control provisions into the 2025 -2029 Mid-Term Development Plan. The provisions include enforcing smokefree policies, assessing tobacco-related economic losses, and raising public awareness. Vital Strategies will continue supporting BAPPENAS in the drafting process by providing local and international evidence.



High level meeting with BAPPENAS



Delegates of Smoke-Free Aklan accepting the award

Philippines: Vital Strategies was recognized for its ongoing support to the Province of Aklan during the annual Pasaeamat: Recognition of Best Performing LGUs, Partners, and Stakeholders. The award was accepted on behalf of Vital Strategies by Smoke-Free Aklan.

- On January 8, 2025, a validation visit to Caloocan City Hall took place as part of the Index on Tobacco Control Sustainability (ITCS-Ph). Representatives from MMDA and Vital Strategies reviewed the city's self-assessment, completed the ITCS-Ph tool, and outlined strategies to ensure sustainability.
- The Metro Manila Council, comprising four mayors and representatives from 17 LGUs, approved a resolution encouraging local governments to adopt GIS (Geographic Information System) technology for business permit processing. This initiative aims to regulate the location of tobacco and vape point-of-sale establishments, with the ultimate goal of facilitating the passage of local ordinances.



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