

Tobacco Control Asia Pacific Monthly Bulletin

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APCAT SPECIAL

The Evolution of APCAT: A Decade of Mayoral Leadership for Tobacco Control and Health in Asia Pacific

Since its establishment in 2016, the Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT), formerly the Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Tobacco Control, has evolved into a leading regional platform that engages mayors and subnational leaders to advance tobacco control, prevent noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), and promote broader health and development goals. Through its summits, APCAT has strengthened political commitment, expanded partnerships, and shown that cities are central to protecting population health across the Asia Pacific.

APCAT is a unique alliance of mayors and subnational leaders from 121 cities across 12 countries - Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam - working collectively to secure political commitments and deliver local solutions to local challenges. The alliance recognizes that subnational leadership is key to driving change through effective city-level governance. Vital Strategies Asia Pacific serves as both a founding partner and the secretariat of APCAT.



Evolution of the APCAT since its establishment

Establishment: The 1st APCAT Summit (2016)

The 1st APCAT Summit, held in Singapore from 29–30 November 2016, marked a turning point in regional tobacco control efforts. For the first time, mayors, subnational leaders, and senior government officials from nine countries and 15 cities came together to collectively address the tobacco epidemic from a city-level perspective.



Delegates from 1st APCAT Summit with Co-chairs: Mayor Dr. Bima Arya Sugiarto and Mayor Francis Anthony S. Garcia

Co-organized by The Union and Indonesia’s Ministry of Health, the summit emphasized political commitment, cross-city collaboration, and enforcement of smoke-free environments, advertising bans, and youth protection measures. The summit concluded with the formal establishment of the APCAT Alliance, co-chaired by the Mayor of Bogor City, Indonesia, and the Mayor of Balanga City, Philippines. Members committed to meeting annually to share progress, exchange experiences, and strengthen collective action. This foundational summit affirmed that cities are at the frontline of protecting people’s health.



Delegates from the 2nd APCAT Summit, held in Singapore

Expanding the Scope: The 2nd APCAT Summit (2017)

The 2nd APCAT Summit, held in Singapore on 4–5 September 2017, reflected the alliance's rapid growth. Participation expanded to 21 cities from 10 Asia Pacific countries, demonstrating increasing political will at the subnational level. This summit reinforced the importance of the WHO MPOWER measures, with mayors committing to smoke-free public places, comprehensive

advertising bans, stronger packaging regulations, and increased tobacco taxation. Notably, APCAT membership doubled within a year, signaling strong momentum for city-led tobacco control.

A major milestone of the 2nd Summit was the alliance's decision to broaden its focus beyond tobacco control to include noncommunicable disease (NCD) prevention. As a result, APCAT was renamed the Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Tobacco Control and NCD Prevention, acknowledging the interconnected nature of tobacco use, cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and broader development challenges.



Participants at the 3rd APCAT Summit in Singapore

Strengthening Political Leadership: The 3rd APCAT Summit (2018)

Held in Singapore from 4–6 December 2018, the 3rd APCAT Summit further consolidated APCAT's role as a regional leadership platform. Participation increased to 12 countries, continuing the steady expansion since the alliance's founding.

Discussions focused on political leadership, governance, and capacity-building at both national and subnational levels. The summit highlighted how strong mayoral leadership could translate national tobacco control commitments into effective local action, tailored to city-specific contexts.

Singapore's experience once again provided a powerful case study, demonstrating how well-enforced tobacco control laws can produce measurable public health gains. The summit reaffirmed that sustained political commitment and inter-city learning are essential to combating the tobacco epidemic.



Participants of 4th APCAT Summit, held in Bogor City, Indonesia in 2019

Scaling Up and Showcasing Success: The 4th APCAT Summit (2019)

The 4th APCAT Summit was held in Bogor City, Indonesia on 25–26 September 2019, convening over 300 delegates from 12 countries across the Asia Pacific region. Jointly organized by APCAT, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, Bogor City Government, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), Partnership for Healthy Cities and Vital Strategies, the summit brought together mayors, governors, parliamentarians, senior government officials, civil society, academia, and media.

The summit reaffirmed that tobacco control is a political choice, with strong subnational leadership essential to translating national commitments into effective local action. As host city, Bogor City was showcased as a leading example - recognized as the first city in Indonesia to implement a comprehensive smoking ban in public places, alongside a ban on tobacco product displays at points of sale and regulations covering e-cigarettes and other tobacco products.

A key outcome was the adoption of the APCAT 2019 Declaration, through which member cities committed to strengthen smoke-free policies, enforce comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, advocate for higher tobacco taxes, and counter tobacco industry interference. The summit also marked the expansion of the APCAT movement through the launch of a Regional Media Alliance and an APCAT Parliamentarians' platform, reinforcing political and public support for tobacco control and NCD prevention across the region.

Leadership During Crisis: The 5th APCAT Summit (2020)

Held virtually on 17 December 2020, the 5th Summit focused on sustaining tobacco control, NCD prevention, and essential health services amid COVID-19. Over 500 participants from 20 countries, including mayors and subnational leaders from Nepal, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, India, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Indonesia, shared



Webinar poster of the 5th APCAT Summit

experiences and strategies to mitigate pandemic-related risks. The summit concluded with the adoption of the 5th APCAT Declaration, reaffirming commitments to evidence-based tobacco control and equitable health recovery.



Webinar poster of the 6th APCAT Summit

Renewing Commitment: The 6th APCAT Summit (2021)

The 6th Asia Pacific Summit of Mayors was held virtually on 7 December 2021 under the theme “Together we bring health solutions,” gathering over 800 delegates from 130 cities in 19 countries, including mayors, governors, public health experts, media and youth. Discussions emphasized multisectoral cooperation, integration of COVID-19 response with broader health actions, and safeguarding policies from industry interference.

The 6th APCAT Declaration reinforced subnational leaders’ commitment to advance evidence-based tobacco control, integrate COVID-19 response with broader health actions and safeguard progress toward health and development goals. Leaders shared how cities like Bogor ensured tobacco control activities continued as part of crisis response efforts, reflecting a belief that strong local governance can drive public health solutions even amid global pandemic.



Participants at the 7th Asia Pacific Summit of Mayors, 1- 3 December 2022 in Bali, Indonesia

Youth Engagement and Accountability: The 7th APCAT Summit (2022)

During 1–3 December 2022, the 7th Asia Pacific Summit of Mayors (APCAT) was held in Bali, Indonesia, brought together 46 mayors and subnational leaders and more than 300 participants from 64 cities across the Asia Pacific. This summit reinforced the role of mayors as key drivers of tobacco control and health development. Leaders from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, and Timor-Leste shared experiences on translating national policies into effective local action while strengthening accountability and sustainability of tobacco control programmes.

A highlight of the summit was its focus on youth and media engagement, including the 1st Tobacco Control Youth Leader Festival, attended by 175 young participants, and a regional media workshop. The event concluded with the adoption of the APCAT Declaration, reaffirming commitments to accelerate tobacco control, protect health policies from industry interference, and strengthen inter-city collaboration. A post-summit visit to Klungkung District showcased effective local implementation of smoke-free policies and cessation services.

Strengthening City Leadership and Sustainability: The 8th APCAT Summit (2026)

The 8th Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT) Summit will be held on 25–26 January 2026 at the JW Marriott in Jakarta, Indonesia. Building on a decade of regional collaboration, the summit brings together 121 cities across 12 countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. APCAT continues to empower mayors and subnational leaders to drive effective tobacco control, promote public awareness, and create smoke-free environments, while advancing broader health and development agendas at both local and national levels.

As APCAT enters its next decade, the summit aims to renew commitments and set measurable goals for member cities, aligning local tobacco control strategies with regional health priorities. By sharing progress and experiences, participants will strengthen accountability and enhance collective action to implement evidence-based policies across cities. A central focus will be on fostering long-term sustainability, ensuring that tobacco control initiatives are integrated into broader health and development strategies, supported by durable partnerships and effective resource mobilization.

Organized by APCAT and Vital Strategies in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Republic of Indonesia; the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta; ADINKES; The Union; Bloomberg Philanthropies; and APCAT Media, the summit will convene a diverse group of stakeholders. Ministers, mayors, parliamentarians, policymakers, academics, civil society representatives, youth, journalists, and public health professionals will participate to exchange insights, innovations, and strategies for effective tobacco control and health system strengthening.

The summit will feature plenary discussions and interactive sessions in a hybrid format, allowing participants to join both in-person and virtually via live streaming. By fostering collaboration across cities, countries, and sectors, the 8th APCAT Summit will reinforce the alliance's vision of empowered local leadership, sustainable health solutions, and resilient public health systems across the Asia Pacific region.



January 25-26, 2026 | Jakarta, Indonesia

The 8th APCAT Summit to be conducted in Jakarta

Indonesia

Indonesia Mayors' Alliance

In Indonesia, Mayors' Alliance was established in 2011 with 12 mayors and has since expanded to include more than 150 mayors nationwide. The Alliance has been a key driver of subnational progress on tobacco control, particularly in advancing smoke-free policies, banning tobacco advertising, and preventing tobacco industry interference. As of January 2026, a total of 388 cities and districts have adopted local smoke-free regulations, 34 cities have implemented bans on the display of tobacco products at points of sale, and 40 cities have prohibited outdoor tobacco advertising. The Alliance has now become a key ally and strategic partner of the Ministry of Health in advancing tobacco control efforts, as well as supporting broader public health programs.



Tobacco control advocates with Governor of DKI Jakarta

secured broad support from the Governor, provincial government, and the civil society. This achievement demonstrates Jakarta's leadership by showing how strategic timing, continuous technical support, and public advocacy can enable the successful adoption of comprehensive tobacco control policies.

- Kulon Progo:** Kulon Progo has demonstrated strong subnational leadership in implementing a tobacco product display ban at POS through a youth-led and culturally grounded approach. Cigarette display closures were introduced to strengthen Smoke-Free Areas (KTR) by reducing tobacco visibility at retail outlets. A key innovation was the use of display covers featuring traditional Kulon Progo batik designs in Pantone 448 C, combined with messages prohibiting sales to individuals under 21 years old and pregnant women. Some designs also promoted local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) food and craft products, aligning public health goals with local economic interests. Supported by media coverage and monitoring, implementation has progressed, with 32% of modern retail stores adopting display closures and an overall compliance rate of 59.43%. This experience highlights how youth leadership, cultural adaptation, and a phased, well-supervised approach can effectively advance tobacco product display bans at the subnational level.



POS display ban in Kulon Progo



Enforcing smoke-free areas in Klungkung's public places

- Klungkung:** Klungkung Regency strengthened Smoke-Free Areas through strong regulation, cultural integration, and youth leadership. Building on Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2014 and a ban on cigarette billboards, KTR enforcement is reinforced through Customary Village Perarem, the Anti-Smoking Youth Joint Movement (GEBRAK), and the KTR Compliance Monitoring Information System (SIPEKAT). By 2025, GEBRAK cadres had been established in all 59 villages, increasing youth participation and community awareness of smoking risks, while Perarem adoption strengthened compliance in public spaces through social

norms and local wisdom. SIPEKAT further enhanced community-based monitoring and follow-up. This integrated model, combining regulation, cultural enforcement, youth leadership, and digital monitoring, demonstrates strong city leadership and provides a replicable good practice model for sustainable KTR implementation in other cities.

- Denpasar:** Denpasar city strengthened the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas in 2025 through the DESTAR program (Denpasar Sehat Tanpa Asap Rokok). The initiative, led by the city government in collaboration with IAKMI Bali Branch and Udayana Central, enhanced enforcement through systematic inspections, targeted socialization, and a large-scale no-smoking signage campaign. Key outcomes included inspections of 70 venues, distribution of 10,000 no-smoking signs, and strengthened engagement of customary village organizations to reinforce public awareness and compliance. This achievement demonstrates effective city leadership through cross-sector collaboration, consistent enforcement, and strong community involvement in advancing smoke-free norms.



No-smoking signage campaign in Denpasar



Enforcement drive conducted in Banda Aceh

- Banda Aceh:** Banda Aceh strengthened the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas through cross-sector collaboration, community engagement, and culturally grounded advocacy involving religious leaders. The initiative focused on both enforcement and raising public awareness to increase acceptance of smoke-free norms in public spaces. Between 2022–2024, compliance in key public areas, including government offices, health facilities, schools, and places of worship, increased from 21.1% to 45.3%. With all districts in Aceh Province now adopting Smoke-Free Area regulations, Banda Aceh serves as a model city for effective advocacy and KTR implementation.

- Makassar:** Makassar City strengthened the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas through strong local regulations, sustained public awareness efforts, and systematic enforcement across a wide range of public settings. These include health facilities, schools, workplaces, places of worship, playgrounds, cafés, restaurants, hotels, transport terminals, and tourist areas. Enforcement is supported by inspections, written warnings for violations, and widespread installation of smoke-free signage. Between 2024 and 2025, 1,281 public locations were inspected, with 971 found to be compliant, while smoke-free signage was installed in 1,899 locations. As a result,



Installation of No-Smoking signages in Makassar

compliance increased to 75.8% in 2025, reflecting strong municipal leadership and effective collaboration between the local government and communities. Makassar’s experience demonstrates how clear regulations, consistent enforcement, and community engagement can deliver tangible public health gains.



Mayor of Magelang City installing smoke-free signages on public transport vehicle

- Magelang:** Magelang City strengthened its tobacco control framework by elevating its Smoke-Free Areas policy from Mayor Regulation No. 43 of 2021 to Smoke-Free Law No. 2 of 2024, providing stronger legal authority for implementation and enforcement. Supported by Muhammadiyah Tobacco Control Center UNIMMA (MTCC UNIMMA), the city has begun active enforcement while drafting implementing mayoral regulations. Significant actions include mandatory compliance by all Regional Apparatus Organizations and the distribution of no-smoking signs and stickers for government offices and free public transportation. These efforts were symbolically reinforced during the 2024 National Health Day commemoration, demonstrating clear political commitment and leadership in protecting the public’s right to clean air.

- Bogor:** Bogor city is a pioneer in tobacco control in Indonesia, inspiring other cities and districts through the successful implementation of comprehensive smoke-free regulations. In 2009, it became the first city to adopt a local regulation banning smoking in public and workplace settings, supported by strong mayoral leadership and multi-level, multi-sectoral collaboration across government agencies. Bogor has implemented seven key restrictions, including smoking bans in public places, criteria for designated smoking corners, restrictions on cigarette-related sponsorships, electronic cigarette controls, bans on cigarette advertising and billboards, restrictions on cigarette sales to individuals under



Smoke-free enforcers removing cigarette advertising at POS in Bogor

18, and point-of-sale display bans. Under Law 12/2009 and Law 10/2018, the city prohibits visible product displays, requiring cigarettes to be stored covered, making Bogor the first city in Indonesia to adopt a point-of-sale display ban policy. These measures have established Bogor as a leading example of effective and sustained tobacco control in the country.



A commitment signing ceremony for the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas (KTR) at the village level

- **Muara Enim:** Muara Enim Regency demonstrated strong subnational leadership by empowering village governments to implement tobacco control through locally adopted village regulations. The initiative promotes smoke-free homes, establishes designated smoking posts, applies graduated sanctions for violations, prohibits the sale of cigarettes to pregnant women and children, and bans cigarette advertising at shops and stalls. Implementation began in July 2025, with Alai Selatan Village serving as the pioneer. To date, more than 20 villages in Muara Enim Regency have implemented Smoke-Free Area (KTR) activities at the village level, supported by village regulations and the allocation of village

funds for tobacco control. This approach provides a practical and replicable framework for using village-level authority to advance tobacco control under local autonomy, offering a strong example for other APCAT cities and districts.

- **Sampang:** Sampang Regency became the first regency on Madura Island to establish a complete and operational Smoke-Free Area policy framework, including the adoption of a Regional Regulation (Perda), a Regent Regulation (Perbup), and the formation of an official SFA Task Force through a Regent Decree. The policy was rapidly operationalized through targeted training and capacity building for the task force, ensuring readiness for effective enforcement. This achievement reflects strong political commitment and coordinated action across local government agencies, supported by multi-stakeholder collaboration with academia and civil society. Notably, Sampang advanced this comprehensive approach despite deep-rooted smoking norms, the presence of Islamic boarding schools, and home-based cigarette industries. The experience demonstrates how strong local leadership and inclusive collaboration can overcome cultural and economic barriers to advance public health, offering a relevant model for other regions with similar contexts.

- **Batu:** Batu city established a comprehensive Smoke-Free Area policy framework through the adoption of Perda KTR and Perwali KTR in 2021, with strong support from the Mayor and legislative council. The city operationalized implementation by forming a dedicated KTR Task Force and sustaining enforcement through regular inspections and continuous public awareness activities. This commitment was further strengthened in December 2025, during the 61st National Health Day, when the Mayor presented Smoke-Free Area Compliance Awards to high-performing institutions across seven types of designated facilities. By combining clear regulations, consistent enforcement, and positive reinforcement through public recognition, Batu city demonstrates sustainable local leadership in tobacco control.

- **Temanggung:** Temanggung Regency strengthened its commitment to Smoke-Free Areas (KTR) through the enactment of Smoke-Free Law No. 5 of 2024, supported by MTCC UNIMMA. Despite the regency's strong tobacco-farming background, local leadership has consistently upheld public health priorities by advancing KTR implementation. A key outcome is the establishment of three Smart Smoking Zone Villages - Kramat, Purwosari, and Pagergunung - demonstrating practical, community-based implementation of the policy. This achievement reflects strong integrity and leadership, showing that effective tobacco control is possible even in tobacco-growing regions.



Coordination meeting for Smart Smoking Zone Villages in Kramat Village



Surabaya city government’s initiative to intensify socialization and monitoring of Smoke-Free Areas

- Surabaya:** Surabaya city strengthened the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas through systematic inspections conducted every two months by a multi-sectoral task force involving Satpol PP and relevant city departments, supported by academia, civil society, and community stakeholders. Surabaya also expanded community engagement through the KOBAR (Kampung Bebas Asap Rokok) initiative, targeting the establishment of smoke-free neighborhoods in at least 50% of its 1,360 Rukun Warga (RW) units, with support from health centers (Puskesmas) and ongoing socialization efforts. Together, regular enforcement, community empowerment, and sustained public communication demonstrate strong city leadership in maintaining long-term smoke-free environments.

- Madiun:** Madiun city demonstrated strong leadership in tobacco control by strengthening the implementation of Smoke-Free Areas in key public and tourism-oriented spaces as part of its vision to become a tourism-friendly city. Smoke-free protections were prioritized in major landmarks such as Pahlawan Street Center (PSC) and Pahlawan Religi Center (PRC), ensuring healthier environments for visitors and residents. The city also introduced an innovative youth-focused policy by requiring non-smoking status for scholarship candidates, reinforcing healthy lifestyles among young people. Kota Madiun’s approach demonstrates innovative city leadership by combining public health, tourism, and youth programs.



Madiun City Government has designated the PSC and PRC areas as smoke-free area



Member of Commission A of the Jawa Timur, discussing KTR regulations at RRI Surabaya’s YouTube channel

- Jawa Timur :** The East Java Provincial Government pioneered province-level Smoke-Free Area regulations to harmonize and strengthen implementation across districts and cities. During 2024–2025, the government, with support from the Provincial Parliament (DPRD), developed a comprehensive regulatory framework including a Provincial Regulation (Perda), a Governor Regulation (Pergub), and the establishment of an KTR Task Force through a Governor’s Decree. In parallel, extensive socialization and public communication campaigns, including mass events, radio, and broadcast programs, were conducted to raise awareness and build public support across the province. This coordinated legislative, executive, and communication approach demonstrates strong subnational leadership, provides clear guidance to local governments, and fosters public acceptance of smoke-free policies, ensuring consistent enforcement throughout East Java.

Bangladesh

Mayor's Alliance for Healthy Cities in Bangladesh (MACH)

Established in 2019 with facilitation from APCAT, the Mayor's Alliance for Healthy Cities in Bangladesh (MACH) serves as a collaborative platform for city leaders to advance public health and environmental protection. As of January 2026, 19 cities are members of MACH. The alliance promotes peer learning among mayors to strengthen implementation of tobacco control laws, regulate tobacco sales through licensing, expand smoke-free public spaces, conserve water bodies, develop parks, and support environmental and mental health initiatives.

- The Bangladesh Mayors' Summit 2022 under MACH marked a major milestone in subnational leadership for tobacco control, bringing together mayors from 18 cities across Bangladesh. The summit aligned city-level commitments with the Prime Minister's vision of a tobacco-free Bangladesh by 2040, highlighting the critical role of local governments in policy implementation and enforcement. Participating mayors committed to strengthening the implementation of tobacco control laws, improving licensing and regulation of tobacco sales, protecting smoke-free public spaces, and promoting healthier urban environments. The summit also served as an important forum for peer learning, allowing city leaders to share challenges, innovations, and successful approaches to protecting public health and the environment.



Delegates of Bangladesh Mayors' Summit 2022



No Smoking Performance initiated by youths

shared accountability and coordinated action, the 2023 Mayor's Summit further strengthened MACH as a driving force for sustained subnational leadership in tobacco control and healthy city development across Bangladesh.

- The 2023 Mayor's Summit built on earlier achievements and concluded with a renewed collective pledge by participating mayors to accelerate actions toward a tobacco-free Bangladesh. The summit emphasized the need for sustained political commitment, stronger enforcement at the city level, and the integration of tobacco control into broader urban health, environmental, and social policies. Discussions highlighted concrete measures such as expanding smoke-free areas, safeguarding open spaces, conserving water bodies, and promoting mental well-being through healthier city planning. By reinforcing

- Local government institutions, including municipalities and Upazila Parishads, are increasingly approving their own guidelines in line with WHO FCTC Article 5.3 to protect public health policies from tobacco industry interference. Building on mayoral approvals and institutional endorsement, the Mayors' Alliance for Healthy Cities is supporting implementation of LGI guidelines to control tobacco use across 3 city corporations and 100 municipalities nationwide. In parallel, local governments have proactively adopted their own Article 5.3-compliant guidelines to prevent illegal interference by tobacco companies, including activities carried out under the guise of corporate social responsibility (CSR). These measures effectively halt all forms of communication between tobacco companies and local government bodies. To date, 23 municipalities and 13 Upazila Parishads have adopted such guidelines—widely recognized as a groundbreaking step in strengthening tobacco control governance.

- In October 2025, Cox's Bazar, Rajshahi, and Singra showcased strong municipal leadership in advancing tobacco control guideline implementation, with technical support from the AID Foundation. In Cox's Bazar, municipal authorities identified concrete steps to ensure full district-wide implementation, including plans for an experience-sharing meeting among municipal administrators and program officers to strengthen coordination. In Rajshahi, inspections of tobacco retail outlets were carried out with local stakeholders, and findings were formally shared with city officials, who committed to taking appropriate enforcement actions. In Singra, municipal leaders directed authorities to achieve 100% licensing of tobacco product shops, and follow-up inspections confirmed compliance, with no advertising violations detected, reflecting effective local governance and enforcement.



Observation of POS in Singra Municipality



Administrator operated mobile court and fined the POS for selling cigarettes within 100 meters of a school

- Monohardi:** Monohardi Municipality, a member of the Mayors Alliance for Healthy Cities, has emerged as a model municipality by fully implementing LGI guidelines with youth engagement and using its own budget. The municipality began with a digital survey to list all tobacco vendors and document illegal point-of-sale advertising. Based on these findings, the municipal administrator convened all vendors and issued clear directives: tobacco products must not be sold, used, or advertised within 100 meters of educational institutions and healthcare centers, and individual licenses are mandatory, with legal action for non-compliance. Citywide awareness campaigns and a public notice reinforced these requirements, followed by regular monitoring

and mobile courts to address violations. As a result, 100% of tobacco vendors are now licensed, all advertising has been eliminated, and sales are fully prohibited within 100 meters of schools and health facilities. Through the same approach, Habiganj and Singra Municipalities are also being developed as model municipalities.

Cambodia

Cambodian Alliance for Tobacco Control and NCD Prevention

The Cambodian Alliance for Tobacco Control and NCD Prevention (CAT), established in 2017, supports the effective implementation of smoke-free policies, bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and the development of locally driven solutions to address local tobacco control challenges. Through its platform, CAT promotes the sharing of lessons learned and best practices among provinces, helps identify local issues, and advances appropriate solutions to strengthen tobacco control implementation in CAT cities. The Alliance actively engages provincial leaders and has expanded its network to 16 provinces across Cambodia.

Comprehensive Ban on E-Cigarettes and HTPs

The Royal Government of Cambodia has issued a comprehensive directive banning the import, sale, advertising, use, possession, and production of all electronic smoking devices, including e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products (HTPs), and shisha, to safeguard public health and curb rising youth use. Signed by Prime Minister Hun Manet, the directive consolidates and expands earlier measures: banning shisha and e-cigarette since 2014, the inclusion of HTPs in 2021, and the prohibition of investment in these products in June 2025, while mandating stricter, coordinated enforcement across ministries and subnational authorities. Key ministries are tasked with preventing entry, trade, and promotion; the Ministry of Health will lead nationwide awareness efforts; and the Ministry of Education will enforce bans in and around all educational and youth facilities. Civil servants, police, and military personnel are prohibited from using these products, with penalties ranging from warnings and confiscation for individuals to license suspension or revocation for businesses. The policy reflects strong inter-ministerial collaboration led by the National Committee for School Health, with technical leadership from the Ministry of Health and coordination by the National Center for Health Promotion.

- Phnom Penh:** Phnom Penh's city authorities, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) and the Military Police, strengthened enforcement efforts against illegal and counterfeit tobacco and vaping products. Through coordinated inspections of retail and wholesale outlets across Phnom Penh and several provinces, 27 cigarette brands (36,631 packs) were checked, with around 10% identified as illegal for lacking excise tax stamps, most notably Hero, Esse, and Gold Seal, all without required health warnings. On 9 January 2026, the Phnom Penh Municipal Military Police inspected a vape sales location in Village 10, Boeung Kak 2 Commune, Tuol Kork District, confiscating over 2,000 illegal electronic smoking devices. These inspections were further reinforced on 15 January 2026, when an illegal vape warehouse in Daun Penh District was seized, with more than 300,000 prohibited items confiscated (worth millions of dollars) and the owner arrested. The findings were reported to the MoEF for further action, demonstrating effective inter-agency collaboration and Phnom Penh's strong commitment to enforcing tobacco control laws and protecting public health, especially among youth.



Random inspections on illegal and counterfeit tobacco and vaping products conducted in Phnom Penh

- Nine cities - namely Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, Battambang, Kampot, Sihanoukville, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom, Kep, and Pailin - were declared as Smoke-Free Tourism Cities (SFTC) after achieving over 80% compliance in the SFTC assessment, which covers no-smoking signage, smoking prohibitions, advertising bans, and restrictions on tobacco sales. The designation, formally recognized by the Ministry of Tourism and endorsed by regional and global partners, highlights the impact of multisectoral advocacy and targeted capacity-building, particularly in improving compliance within the hospitality sector.



Minister of Tourism hands over Smoke-Free Tourist City award to Kampong Cham Provincial Governor

India



Joint enforcement drive by the Police and Health Department in Bengaluru

Bengaluru: Karnataka, especially its capital Bengaluru city, has emerged as a national champion in tobacco control, demonstrating how strong political commitment combined with effective public-private collaboration can deliver meaningful public health gains. Implemented under the Partnership for Healthy Cities (PHC), the Smoke-Free Bengaluru Initiative has highlighted a successful model of close collaboration between civil society and city and state decision-makers. Through sustained advocacy, youth-led actions, social media outreach, engagement with influential figures, and

technical support, the initiative contributed to a comprehensive ban on hookah in all its forms in public places across the city and state, alongside amendments to strengthen tobacco control laws.

Key reforms include increasing penalties for smoking in public places from INR 200 (USD 2.2) to INR 1,000 (USD 11.5) and raising the legal age for purchasing tobacco products from 18 to 21 years to better protect young people from early nicotine addiction. These measures aim to safeguard non-smokers in public spaces while systematically reducing youth access to tobacco. The PHC team continues to support the city municipality through capacity building, public awareness, policy development, and strengthened enforcement, helping to ensure that tobacco control efforts in Bengaluru remain sustainable and effective.

Malaysia

Unified Action for a Smoke-Free City: Policy, Enforcement, and Education

Kuala Lumpur : Kuala Lumpur City Hall has implemented a strong, multi-pronged approach to curb the growing use of vaping products and to enforce the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024. With data showing that nearly one in six adolescents in the capital uses e-cigarettes, the city has moved beyond routine enforcement toward a more comprehensive model of urban health governance.

A central element of this approach is the city's firm decision not to issue business licenses for vape sales, effectively limiting access at the municipal level. This policy is grounded in the KL Well-being – Local Agenda 21 framework, which adopts a collaborative “4P” approach (Public, Private, People, Partnership). Through this collective effort, enforcement has been strengthened; from October 2024 to May 2025, joint operations with the Ministry of Health resulted in 3,589 notices issued under the new national act.

Progress was further accelerated on March 13, 2025, when the Minister of Health formally authorized 113 Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) health enforcement officers to exercise powers under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 (Act 852). This authorization has enabled more rigorous enforcement across the city's 28 gazetted smoke-free zones, including covered walkways protected since 2017. In parallel, City Hall continues to strictly enforce local bylaws, particularly those prohibiting smoking by food handlers and in key public spaces such as Pasar Borong (Wholesale Markets) and Dataran Merdeka (Independence Square).

To support effective enforcement, the city places strong emphasis on internal capacity building, ensuring officers are well trained on the provisions of the new law before deployment. Beyond enforcement, Kuala Lumpur has invested heavily in prevention and education. Initiatives include anti-vaping exhibitions in schools, training teachers in non-pharmacological cessation support, and community outreach in public housing projects. Public engagement activities such as “Cigarette Butt Hunting” events and Ramadan outreach at MRT stations further extend awareness. The city also works closely with the Federal Territories Islamic Religious Department (JAWI) to deliver regular Hembusan Maut (“The Smoke of Death”) Friday sermons, embedding health messages within religious settings. Collectively, these integrated efforts advance Kuala Lumpur's vision of a healthy, “Liveable & Loveable” city, protected from the harms of both conventional and emerging tobacco products.



Kuala Lumpur teachers attending the Smoking Cessation Intervention training for school students on January 20, 2026



Director of DBKL sharing the vision for a Smoke-Free Kuala Lumpur during the Act 852 briefing with stakeholders

Myanmar

Myanmar has steadily strengthened tobacco control since 2012, introducing smokefree regulations in 2014 and pictorial health warnings (PHWs) covering 75% of tobacco packs in 2016. Building on these measures, the Ministry of Health issued the Standardized Packaging Notification in 2021, mandating all packs to be in drab brown color (Pantone 448C) with all logos, branding, and promotional designs prohibited. Only brand and variant names appear, in a standard font and size, alongside PHWs covering 75% of principal display areas (50% pictorial and 25% text), plus additional text warnings on side and top panels.

Although implementation was repeatedly delayed due to tobacco industry interference, the regulation has now fully taken effect, with the final compliance deadline reached in October 2025. Notably, starting from early September 2025, some manufacturers began complying ahead of schedule, with standardized packs had already been appearing on the market since then.



Evolution of health warning labelling in Myanmar

Nepal

Nepal becomes the first country in the world to adopt 100% PHWs

Nepal has achieved a significant public health milestone by becoming the first country in the world to mandate 100% pictorial health warnings (PHWs) on the front and back of on all tobacco packaging. This regulation expands existing warnings from 90% to full coverage, further strengthening efforts to reduce tobacco use.



City Polices conducting No smoking campaign

- Kathmandu:** Kathmandu city has strengthened tobacco control through coordinated enforcement and public awareness initiatives. The District Administration Office reinforced the ban on smoking in public places, while Kathmandu Metropolitan City launched a campaign issuing on-the-spot fines of NPR 500 for violations and raising awareness of the health risks and legal consequences of smoking in shared spaces.

- Lalitpur:** Lalitpur city has advanced tobacco control through strong leadership and coordinated enforcement. The Mayor and Metropolitan Police Chief have actively promoted smoke-free zones, with four areas already designated and plans to establish additional zones. Compliance surveys and awareness campaigns were conducted, supported by dedicated city resources and public engagement, demonstrating Lalitpur's commitment to a healthy, smoke-free, and resilient urban environment.



Meeting with Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan



Deploying tobacco control banners across Bharatpur

- Bharatpur:** Bharatpur Metropolitan city has strengthened its tobacco control efforts through the “Smoke-Free Bharatpur” campaign. Tobacco-control banners and community engagement initiatives raise awareness of the harms of tobacco, promote healthier lifestyles, and encourage compliance with smoke-free regulations. These coordinated efforts aim to reduce tobacco use, enforce laws effectively, and sustain a smoke-free environment across the city.

- Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur have strengthened compliance with tobacco advertising regulations. Recent inspections of 150 points of sale across the three cities, conducted by Action Nepal, found no new tobacco advertisements, reflecting improved adherence to the law. Retailers were educated on proper compliance, while some violations were noted, including smoking near hospitals and the sale of loose cigarettes or imported packs without pictorial health warnings. All domestic cigarette packs were found to comply with labeling requirements.

Philippines

APCAT Philippines Forum 2022

The first APCAT Philippines Forum was held in Manila on 17–18 November 2022 as a hybrid event. Over 100 participants attended, representing 20 cities, 12 civil society organizations, 3 international organizations, and 6 national and regional government agencies.

- Buruanga:** Buruanga, the first smoke-free municipality in Aklan, adopted its Smoke-Free Ordinance in 2013 and later strengthened it in 2024 to include electronic cigarettes and vaping devices. The Amended Smoke-Free and Vape-Free Ordinance was officially launched in March 2025, marked by community-centered activities such as a ceremonial program, student poster-making contest, community parade, and decorated boat parade promoting anti-smoking and anti-vaping messages, reflecting strong public engagement. The municipality, recognized as a Red Orchid Award Hall of Famer (2017), reinforced implementation through integrated health and LGU activities, school campaigns, smoke-free reminders for businesses and transport operators, and cessation support via local health services. Compliance improved across government offices, health facilities, public transport, tourist areas, and smoke-free beaches, while raising public awareness. Despite temporary enforcement challenges following personnel changes in 2025, Buruanga continues to demonstrate strong municipal leadership and sustained commitment to smoke-free and vape-free environments.



Student parade for launching of Smoke-Free and Vape-Free Ordinance in 2025



Smoking Cessation Training in La Trinidad, Benguet

- La Trinidad:** La Trinidad, Benguet strengthened its tobacco control framework following its participation in APCAT 2022 by translating regional learning into concrete local action. After identifying gaps in its 2014 smoke-free ordinance, particularly the absence of vape regulation, the municipality enacted Municipal Ordinance No. 2-2024, the Comprehensive Smoke-Free/Tobacco and Vape-Free Ordinance, expanding prohibitions, strengthening enforcement, increasing funding, and raising the minimum age for tobacco and vape sales to 21. The municipality,

recognized as a Red Orchid Award Hall of Famer (2018), reinforced policy reform through innovative, community-driven initiatives, including the Salun-at Awards for high-performing smoke-free barangays, recognition of tobacco and vape quitters, and the introduction of Smoke-Free Homes in 2025 to protect families from secondhand smoke and aerosol exposure. Backed by an annual ₱1 million (≈ USD 17000) allocation and public commitments from local leaders and communities, La Trinidad demonstrates strong local leadership by combining policy reform, sustained financing, and active community engagement.

- Pasig:** Pasig city has introduced an innovative, health-centered enforcement approach through its Quitters' Club, a smoking and vaping cessation initiative embedded in the city's tobacco control settlement system. Implemented by the City Tobacco Control Unit, apprehended violators are encouraged to attend cessation counselling and seminars as a voluntary alternative to paying fines, which is an approach formalized under City Ordinance No. 13 (s.2018), as amended by CO No. 19 (s.2025) for tobacco products, and City Ordinance No. 7 (s.2019) for vape products. Pasig imposes the highest penalties in Metro Manila - PHP 3,000–5,000 (≈ USD 50–85) - with non-compliance leading to court proceedings. The First and Second Quitters' Assemblies were held in June 2024 and June 2025 respectively. These programs have achieved a settlement rate of over 80 percent, reflecting strong uptake of cessation over punitive measures. Widely covered by media, the initiative has increased public awareness of the health and environmental harms of tobacco and vape use while fostering peer support among participants. Strongly backed by Mayor Vico Sotto, including a strict no-smoking and no-vaping policy within City Hall, Pasig City demonstrates leadership by prioritizing cessation, community support, and consistent enforcement.



Smoke- and Vape-Free Transport Network Vehicle Service campaign in Pasig City



One of the members of Quitters Club showing his certification issued during the 1st Quitters' Assembly

- Mandaluyong:** Mandaluyong city achieved a major tobacco control milestone with the passage of City Ordinance No. 944 (Series of 2023) on 11 September 2023, adopting a comprehensive Smoke- and Vape-Free Ordinance fully aligned with the WHO FCTC. Based on a 2023 model ordinance, the law strengthened protections by covering both tobacco and vapor products, addressing gaps in the previous ordinance which lacked vape provisions and allowed indoor designated smoking areas (DSAs). Under the new ordinance, DSAs are permitted only outdoors under strict size, distance, signage, and fee requirements (PHP 10,000 ≈ USD 170 application and PHP 10,000 ≈ USD 170 annual inspection), resulting in only two registered DSAs in 2025, one of which was later ordered closed for non-compliance. Following implementation, visible smoking and vaping in public places declined, No-smoking signage was widely installed, and point-of-sale outlets became more vigilant against tobacco and vape advertising and promotions. Enforcement improved significantly, with citation tickets enabling swift penalties (PHP 2,000–5,000 ≈ USD 35–85) for violations related to use, sale, and advertising of ENDS. Mandaluyong's rapid legislative action, which was completed within three months, demonstrates strong city leadership backed by the Mayor and the City Council, particularly the health committee. The ordinance has since influenced neighboring cities, with San Juan City adopting similar provisions in 2024 and Muntinlupa City considering comparable measures.



Public Hearing of Mandaluyong City Ordinance 944, S. 2023, held in August 23, 2023

Vietnam



Participatory school-based education activities actively engage students in tobacco awareness

actions such as school-gate signage and student-led education initiatives. Some schools went a step further, working closely with local authorities and police to strictly enforce bans on cigarette sales near schools. Supported by regular joint monitoring between education and health sectors, these practical efforts have helped reduce tobacco and e-cigarette use among students and significantly limited exposure to secondhand smoke in schools. In 2023, all secondary schools in the province organized education activities on tobacco harms and in 2024, all primary and lower secondary organized education activities on tobacco harms.

- **Tây Ninh:** Tây Ninh Province has demonstrated a strong and sustained commitment to protecting children from tobacco through decisive political leadership and practical action. The Chair of the Provincial People's Committee issued a directive to strengthen enforcement of the Tobacco Control Law and approved the provincial plan to implement the National Tobacco Control Strategy to 2030, explicitly engaging the education sector in safeguarding students' health. Guided by this leadership, schools have adopted innovative approaches to educate children about tobacco, including e-cigarettes harms, using simple but visualized

- **Nghe An:** Nghe An Province has shown strong leadership in tobacco control by translating Viet Nam's Tobacco Control Law (in force since 2013) into coordinated provincial action. In November 2023, the Provincial People's Committee issued a plan to implement the National Tobacco Control Strategy to 2030, supported by a dedicated Provincial Tobacco Control Steering Committee and technical leadership from the health sector, engaging police and military, media, and the culture, tourism, and education sectors. In 2025, the province issued multiple guiding directives and established a network of focal points across sectors to strengthen compliance. Community engagement has been extensive, including rallies, more than 15,000 loudspeaker broadcasts, and around 100 direct communication sessions, alongside trainings on smoke-free environments, inspection, and cessation counselling. A landmark achievement was the establishment of the first Smoke-Free Government Buildings model in Vinh City, reflecting strong political commitment by city leaders. Monitoring and enforcement have been strengthened through surveys and inspections, contributing to improved smoke-free implementation, while highlighting the need for stronger compliance among private businesses.



Smoke-free government buildings in Vinh City, Nghe An Province

Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste Mayors Alliance for Health and Development (APAS)

The Timor-Leste Mayors Alliance for Health and Development (APAS) is a national platform that brings together municipal leaders to advance public health and development through coordinated local action, with a strong focus on tobacco control, NCD prevention, and health system strengthening.

- APAS was established at the 1st Mayors Summit, conducted on 19 June 2023, which convened more than 90 participants, including mayors, municipal officials, the Ministry of Health, and civil society, and concluded with the adoption of a Mayors' Declaration committing municipalities to address high tobacco use, poor nutrition, NCDs, and tuberculosis. Building on this momentum, the 2nd Summit, held in Dili on 23 March 2025, expanded APAS from five to nine mayors and reinforced concrete actions such as smoke- and vape-free public spaces, restrictions on tobacco advertising and sales to minors, integration of cessation into TB programmes, and advocacy for higher tobacco taxes, demonstrating strengthened municipal leadership and collaboration for improved health outcomes.



Delegates from 1st Timor-Leste Mayors Summit



Delegates from the 2nd Timor-Leste Mayors Summit



Mayor of Ermera signing Timor-Leste's first-ever subnational tobacco control regulation

Ermera: In a historic move for public health, the Mayor of Ermera City has officially signed and endorsed Timor-Leste's first-ever subnational tobacco control regulation on 30 July 2025, declaring Ermera a tobacco-free city. This landmark regulation strengthens the implementation of Decree Law No. 14/2016 on tobacco control within the municipality and reflects Ermera's strong commitment to advancing public health policies. The life-saving initiative is now poised for nationwide scale-up, signaling a new era in Timor-Leste's commitment to tobacco control and healthier cities.

- **Dili:** The Mayor of Dili Municipality launched a 5-year plan in 2023 to make the city smoke-free, assigning roles to government stakeholders and installing no smoking signages in schools and offices.



Youth rally in Jakarta supporting stricter tobacco control measures to protect public health

For more information, please contact

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