

# Tobacco Control Asia Pacific Monthly Bulletin

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## Highlights

### Vietnam Approves Bold Tobacco Tax Reform to Curb Smoking and Boost Revenue

In a landmark move to improve public health and align with global best practices, the National Assembly of Vietnam approved a comprehensive tobacco tax reform on 14 June 2025. The reform introduces a new specific tax on cigarettes alongside the existing 75% ad valorem tax, aiming to gradually increase tobacco prices, reduce smoking prevalence, and more than double state revenue from tobacco taxes.



A banner on the side of a car urges people to quit smoking for their own health and that of their loved one (Photo credit: Vietnam Plus, VNA)

Under the newly adopted roadmap, a specific tax of 2,000 VND (approx. \$0.08 USD) per pack will take effect starting 1 January 2027, rising incrementally to 10,000 VND (\$0.39 USD) by 2031. The structure is designed to be inflation-resilient and aims to steadily increase the total tax share in the retail price from the current 36% to 59% by 2031.

An impact assessment using the WHO's TaxSim model projects that the reform will have sweeping benefits:

- Retail cigarette prices are expected to rise by over 10% annually between 2027 and 2031, making tobacco products significantly less affordable.
- Male smoking prevalence is projected to decline from 41.1% to 37.4% by 2031, potentially helping 2.2 million people quit smoking compared to a no-tax-increase scenario.
- Government revenue from tobacco taxes is forecast to soar from 18.4 trillion VND (\$725 million) to 39.7 trillion VND (\$1.56 billion) by 2031.

While public health experts applaud the reform, they caution that the 18-month delay before implementation could allow the tobacco industry to weaken its impact through preemptive pricing strategies.

Despite falling just short of Vietnam's 2030 smoking reduction target, the policy marks a significant step toward stronger tobacco control.

# Monitoring tobacco use

**Nepal:** A price monitoring survey was recently carried out by Action Nepal in 420 locations across major cities in Nepal to assess changes in tobacco product pricing following the national budget announcement. The survey also examined retailers' perceptions of new tax measures and proposed licensing requirements. The findings will inform evidence-based recommendations to support the government's efforts in strengthening tobacco control enforcement.



Tobacco products displayed alongside snacks and drinks

**Bangladesh:** On June 19, 2025, Monohardi Municipality, with AID Foundation's support, conducted a mobile court drive against tobacco sales and illegal ads within 100 meters of educational institutions. Led by Municipal Administrator and Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mr. M.A. Muhaimin Jahin, five cases were filed and fines totaling 3,500 taka were imposed. Illegal advertisements were removed, and strict action was announced against future violations near schools and health centers.

**Philippines:** Transcend conducted a three-day monitoring and evaluation (M&E) workshop with the Western Visayas Regional Tobacco Control Network (RTCN) to strengthen implementers' capacity on results-based monitoring and logical framework planning.

# Protecting people from tobacco smoke

- **Indonesia:** On July 25, 2025, the Ministry of Home Affairs, through the Director General of Regional Autonomy, issued a directive to accelerate smoke-free policy implementation nationwide. The letter instructs cities to establish or update smoke-free laws, adjust local programs and budgets, and utilize an attached policy template, with all regulations to be finalized by December 27, 2025. This initiative aims to strengthen sub-national efforts and ensure consistent protection from tobacco smoke across the country.
- As of July 2025, 382 out of 514 cities in Indonesia have adopted 100% smoke-free policies. In June and July, four jurisdictions—Rembang, Sampang, Yahukimo (Papua), and East Java Province—enacted comprehensive bans on smoking in all public places, workplaces, and public transport. Additionally, 28 cities were engaged to receive technical assistance for further smoke-free policy development.
- The Regent and Vice Regent of Muara Enim, supported by ADINKES, launched the MEMBARA health program, highlighting the Smoke-Free Village (Desa KTR) as a key initiative.



Smoke-free awareness raising session in Palembang

On June 3, 2025, an awareness session was held for 200 employees of Pertamina, with support from the Palembang City Health Office. The event focused on implementing smoke-free workplace policies and raising awareness about the harms of tobacco use. Participants also received information and support for smoking cessation.

- A public discussion was held to build support for Jakarta's smoke-free policy, following a series of key meetings and hearings aimed at securing political commitment to ban outdoor tobacco advertising and the display of tobacco products at points-of-sale. Vital Strategies and its partners are actively working to ensure strong provisions are maintained in the draft regulation.
- Between June and July, Smokefree Jakarta played a key role in pushing forward the Smokefree draft regulation through a series of strategic advocacy efforts. Highlights included a public discussion on June 20th, a detailed review with city officials on June 23rd–24th, a joint press release countering misinformation about the regulation's impact on small businesses on July 4th, and a July 11th meeting with the Governor's Expert Team to express continued support and request a formal audience with the Governor in early August.
- Two advocacy campaigns were launched in Yogyakarta and Kulon Progo through a hybrid format, in collaboration with SEMARKU, Forum Anak, KNPI, local health offices, and Seto Mulyadi. These campaigns promoted child-focused regulations, with youth coalitions actively monitoring and defending policies—particularly Kulon Progo's Smoke-Free Area Regulation No. 5/2014—to protect health rights and prevent tobacco industry interference.
- In Makassar, seventy-five participants from seven community health centers received training on effective smoke-free policy implementation.
- Smoke-free indicators are being integrated into business licensing and renewal processes in Makassar, where inspections were carried out at a restaurant, café, and hotel; hygiene recommendation letters were issued to the restaurant and hotel, while the café's recommendation is pending due to non-compliance.

**Bangladesh:** On July 12, 2025, public health experts at a special tree plantation event in front of the National Board of Revenue office in Agargaon, warned against cigarette companies turning public places into smoking zones to target youth. They stressed that public spaces should promote health, not smoking, and called for banning smoking zones. Held under the slogan “Public places are not zones for smoking, but a call to plant trees,” the event was organized by the Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance and nine other anti-tobacco groups to raise awareness and promote a healthier, greener environment.



Special tree plantation event to promote a healthier and greener environment



Consultation meeting with local leaders for compliance survey

**Nepal:** With technical support from Action Nepal, Purbakhola Rural Municipality in Palpa (Lumbini Province) has adopted a dedicated tobacco control provision, enforcing a complete ban on the sale and consumption of tobacco products within its jurisdiction. This strong policy move underscores the municipality’s commitment to public health and a smoke-free environment. Prior to implementation, Action Nepal consulted with local leaders and conducted a smoke-free compliance survey to assess baseline conditions and inform effective policy implementation.

- **Philippines:** In June, Koronadal City received technical assistance from Data and Implementation Sciences for Health (DISH) to enact a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance; discussion is ongoing for its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) development.
- On July 3, Atok Rural Health Unit (RHU) and Transcend–TICI (Transcending Institutions and Communities Inc.) co-facilitated a Smoke-Free Task Force Meeting with 39 local enforcers and community leaders, highlighting local tobacco control progress and training participants on enforcement and compliance.
- MMDA, through its enforcement and surveillance efforts, monitored and referred a total of 1,754 tobacco-related violations in school zones and public transport areas. These actions aim to strengthen the implementation of smoke-free policies and protect the public, especially youth and commuters, from exposure to secondhand smoke.

From July 16–18, a Training of Enforcers was held in Pasig City to prepare 34 participants from 13 Local Government Units (LGUs) and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) for the upcoming Training of Trainers. The session equipped participants with the necessary skills to implement local smoke-free policies, with successful trainees set to advance as future trainers.



Dr. Madeleine Valera of Vital Strategies at Training of Enforcers



Cigarette packs displayed together with sweets/candies at POS in Mankayan

On July 10, Mankayan RHU and Transcend–TICI conducted an orientation and hands-on training on the municipality’s Smoke-Free Ordinance, providing participants with practical enforcement skills through store inspections and field practicum.

# Offering help to quit tobacco use

- **Indonesia:** Vital Strategies supported the Ministry of Health in establishing a National Advisory Group on Smoking Cessation to guide policy and program development. The group is currently drafting national guidelines on brief advice for smoking cessation to enhance integration within primary health care services.
- Ministry of Health has conducted a series of brief advice trials to gather feedback from healthcare workers at Public Health Centers (Puskesmas). Trials and field practices occurred in four locations: DKI Jakarta (trials on July 1, field practice in August), Surabaya (July 9-11), Bekasi (July 14-15), and Depok (July 30-31). Healthcare workers from 20 Puskesmas per location participated, along with a consultant who presented a revised brief advice draft for feedback. In Jakarta, the Interministerial NCD Team was also involved. The meeting introduced a pocketbook and leaflets as tools for delivering brief advice.
- **Cambodia:** The National Center for Health Promotion (NCHP) and the National Center for Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control (CENAT) are finalizing educational materials on tobacco cessation for TB patients, including a booklet, diagram, and poster.
- NCHP held a second consultative meeting with technical departments to finalize the draft tobacco cessation guideline and will seek further input from WHO, Vital Strategies, and other departments.
- Tobacco and IEC Units conducted meetings to develop IEC materials such as a flipchart, a tobacco cessation poster, and a video spot.

**Nepal:** A free national Quitline service (1132) was launched by the Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal to support tobacco cessation efforts. This toll-free number offers counseling and is expected to provide vital support to thousands of tobacco users across the country.



Launching of national Quitline service (1132) in Nepal



Delegates from tobacco cessation training in Ifugao

On May 27, 2025, Transcend conducted a tobacco cessation training for health workers in Ifugao, building their capacity to provide interventions using the Five A's framework to support individuals in quitting tobacco, vape, and momma use.

- Ateneo School of Government (ASOG) provided technical inputs to strengthen tobacco control and cessation content during a Department of Health - Disease Prevention and Control Bureau (DOH-DPCB)-led workshop focused on revising the Philippine Package of Essential Noncommunicable Disease Interventions (PhilPEN) training module.
- ASOG, in partnership with DOH–DPCB, convened the first meeting of expert groups for the Tobacco Cessation Infrastructure Plan’s Key Result Areas (KRAs) and onboarded a technical writer to support the plan’s development.



Delegates and registered quitters at 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Quitters Assembly

On June 20, 2025, MMDA supported Pasig City in hosting its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Quitters Assembly, attended by approximately 200 registered quitters and city government employees. The event celebrated the quitters' journeys and promoted cessation services, with Assistant City Health Officer Dr. Stewart Reyes serving as a distinguished guest.

## Warning about the dangers of tobacco

- **Timor-Leste:** In early June, the Ministry of Health, in partnership with ANCT-TL and with the support from Vital Strategies, hosted a one-day workshop to present findings from a recent survey on improving effectiveness of pictorial health warnings on tobacco packs. The event aimed to address the ineffectiveness of current pictorial health warnings and to propose stronger alternatives for the next rotation.

Four new warning images—depicting mouth cancer, throat cancer, lung cancer, and stroke—were recommended to better communicate the health risks of tobacco use and help reduce smoking rates.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including senior officials from the Ministry of Health, WHO representatives, and members of the National Alliance for Tobacco Control. The proposal to update the warnings is now in its final draft stage.

Image A	Image F	Image G	Image H
			
Smoking causes Mouth Cancer.	Smoking causes Stroke.	Smoking causes Throat Cancer.	Smoking causes Lung Cancer.

Recommended pictograms for next rotation of pictorial health warnings on tobacco packs

# Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Health held an interministerial meeting to discuss the drafting of technical guidelines on tobacco and electronic product advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) on social media. Key actions included requesting the Ministry of Trade's membership in the task force, confirming organizational changes within the Ministry of Communication and Information, and securing regulatory support from relevant ministries. Feedback from participating agencies is currently being incorporated into the draft. The guidelines are now being finalized for submission to the Legal Bureau. Vital Strategies and its partners continue to provide technical support throughout the process.
- Vital Strategies met with the Ministry of Industry and the Head of the Standardization and Policy Agency to advocate for the implementation and enforcement of the ban on single stick cigarette sales.
- Vital Strategies met with the Mayor of Yogyakarta to strategize the removal of all tobacco advertising in the city, drawing on his successful experience as Regent of Kulon Progo.

A webinar with Commission I of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) was held to discuss the regulation of cigarette advertising and promotion as part of the Draft Amendment to Broadcasting Law No. 32/2002. The discussion highlighted the influence of evolving legal norms on national legislation and emphasized the urgency of banning tobacco advertising through broadcasting. The event was attended by 72 participants



A webinar on regulation of cigarette advertising and promotion

- The Muhammadiyah Student Association held a TC IPM Talk in honor of National Children's Day, empowering youth to advocate for the full implementation of PP 28/2024, which calls for a total TAPS ban.



An interaction program to address the growing presence of tobacco use in music videos and films

**Nepal:** Action Nepal, in partnership with Swasthya Khabar, conducted an interaction program to address the growing presence of tobacco use in music videos and films. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the harmful influence of such portrayals on youth and promote responsible content aligned with public health goals. Participants urged stronger regulations, industry guidelines, and collaborative action to promote tobacco-free entertainment and protect public health.

**Cambodia:** The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth and Sport participated in an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by HE Dr. Sea Mao to discuss the draft order on the import, sale, advertisement, and use of electronic smoking devices and SHISHA. The meeting supported the draft and agreed to include the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to strengthen advertising control. The Office of the Council of Ministers will work with the Council for the Development of Cambodia to align the order with Sub-Decree No. 86 (June 6, 2025), and the Cabinet Office will revise the content before submitting it to the Prime Minister.



Meeting on Draft Order Banning E-Cigarettes and Shisha at the office of the council of ministers

- NCHP will issue a letter to the National Authority for Combating Drugs and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, urging continued action to regularly monitor and prevent the promotion and advertising of e-cigarettes on social media.

## Raising taxes on tobacco

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Finance officials were engaged in a round table discussion on strategies to explore strategies for increasing tobacco taxation in Indonesia. The discussion focused on strengthening fiscal policies to reduce tobacco consumption and improve public health outcomes.
- On June 19, Vital Strategies grantee University of Indonesia held a roundtable discussion with Ministry of Finance officials to explore strategies for increasing tobacco taxes in Indonesia, aiming to strengthen public health protections through fiscal policy.



FGD hosted by FEB UI for multi-year tobacco tax policy

On July 14, 2025, the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Indonesia (FEB UI), through its Political Economy of Health and Tobacco Control (PEHTC) research group, conducted a focus group discussion with seven ministries to support the development of a multi-year tobacco tax policy aimed at reducing cigarette consumption.

# Tobacco industry interferences

- **Cambodia:** In response to Tobacco Industry (TI) arguments, the Ministry of Health (MOH) sent a letter to the Prime Minister presenting evidence to counter the relationship between increasing size of PHW and illicit trade. The Minister and senior management remain committed to advocating for the draft sub-decree on 90% Pictorial Health Warnings (PHW). Additionally, MOH has received letters of support for the 90% PHW from both the World Health Organization (WHO) and SEATCA.
- In the previous letter to Prime Minister Hun Manet, the tobacco industry claimed that counterfeit and illegal cigarettes account for about 30% of the market, which is significantly higher than WHO estimates. On June 11, 2025, the Ministry of Health requested references to support this figure. The industry responded that it could not provide documentation and requested a postponement until August 2025. Thus, the data remains unverified.
- **Indonesia:** Following sustained pressure from the tobacco control community, the Mayor of Surabaya has officially recommended the cancellation of World Tobacco Asia (WTA) 2025. A formal letter was sent to key national authorities—including the Ministers of Health, Tourism, and Trade, the National Police Chief, and the Chairperson of ASPERAPI—echoing the demands of TC networks. This action follows a series of letters, petitions, press conferences, and social media campaigns calling for the event's cancellation.
- The Indonesian White Cigarette Producers Association (Gaprindo) has requested a three-year pause on tobacco excise tax increases, citing industry recovery concerns. They warned that ongoing tax hikes and new restrictions under Regulation No. 28/2023—such as plain packaging—could negatively impact legal producers and boost illicit trade. Vital Strategies continues regular engagement with the Ministry of Finance to provide technical support and counter these industry arguments.
- Sampoerna, one of Indonesia's largest tobacco companies, is strategically promoting “smoke-free” products to circumvent smoke-free regulations, normalize the use of new tobacco products, and expand marketing under the guise of harm reduction. In response, grantees are actively publishing counter-narratives on social media to expose these tactics and protect public health.
- **Nepal:** Surya Nepal Private Limited, a leading tobacco company, has filed a legal case against the implementation of 100% pictorial health warnings (PHWs) on tobacco packaging, set to take effect August 1. The scheduled court hearing on July 27 was cancelled for the second time, further delaying enforcement of this key public health measure. In response, the Ministry of Health and Population—with technical support from Action Nepal and Vital Strategies—is compiling global evidence on the effectiveness of large PHWs. These efforts are backed by past Supreme Court rulings that upheld 75% and 90% warning labels.
- **Philippines:** Transcend supported the Cordillera Administrative Region in passing a resolution requiring regional agencies to comply with Joint Memorandum Circular 2010-01, which protects civil servants from tobacco industry interference.

# World No Tobacco Day 2025

- Bangladesh:** On World No Tobacco Day 2025, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reaffirmed its commitment to building a tobacco- and nicotine-free Bangladesh under the slogan, “Let’s expose the tricks of tobacco companies.” At the event, chaired by Health Secretary Mr. Saidur Rahman, Health Advisor Ms. Nurjahan Begum emphasized the urgent need to amend the Tobacco Control Act to make it effective, highlighting the contradiction of the government supporting tobacco control while also being involved in the tobacco industry. She called on all to speak out against the exploitation by tobacco companies, which harms both people and the environment.
- On World No Tobacco Day 2025, 82 municipalities across the country celebrated the event on their own initiative, with technical support from AID Foundation through the Mayors Alliance for Healthy Cities (MAHC). Additionally, district and upazila administrations marked the day with assistance from the National Tobacco Control Cell. Habiganj Municipality received national recognition in the local government institution category, following a year of technical support from AID Foundation in implementing Local Government Institution (LGI) guidelines to develop it as a model tobacco-free municipality.
- Nepal:** The Ministry of Health and Population awarded seven individuals, including Dr. Tara Singh Bam from Vital Strategies, with the Bloomberg Health Minister Public Health Award. They were recognized for their outstanding contributions to tobacco control in Nepal through policy advocacy, research, public education, enforcement, and media engagement.
- Awareness rallies were also held by Bhaktapur Cancer Hospital in Bhaktapur and Nepal Health Corps in Bharatpur, where participants advocated for a tobacco-free nation and urged collective community action. These efforts reflect Nepal’s growing commitment to a healthier, tobacco-free future.
- A nationwide creative video contest invited youth and artists to submit short films promoting tobacco-free living and raising awareness of tobacco’s harms. The campaign successfully engaged the public through visual storytelling.



WNTD event graced by the Health Advisor



WNTD Celebration in Jhenaidah Municipality



Dr. Tara Singh Bam receives the Bloomberg Health Minister Public Health Award from the Minister of Health



WNTD program at Bhaktapur Cancer Hospital

- Indonesia:** On June 7, 2025, as a commemoration of World No Tobacco Day, medical students from Udayana University, in collaboration with Udayana Central and the Denpasar city government, held an event themed “Unmasking the Appeal.” The program featured a beach clean-up, video testimonies, and youth performances to raise awareness about the dangers of smoking. The event drew 96 participants, including health officials, the children’s forum, and youth representatives from across Denpasar.
- Philippines:** On May 31, Pasig City organized a motorcade, tree planting, and poster-making contest awarding ceremony, to commemorate World No Tobacco Day and No Smoking Month, engaging around 200 city personnel to boost support for the smoke-free policy and public awareness.



Cleaning up Denpasar’s coastline and raising awareness on WNTD



WNTD celebration in Pasig City, Philippines

## General Tobacco Control

**Indonesia:** Vital Strategies grantee IPM team engaged in a strategic dialogue with Dr. Bima Arya, the Vice Minister of Home Affairs, to strengthen youth and student protection at both local and national levels. The discussion resulted in key commitments, including enforcing a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) to prevent smoking initiation among children, increasing tobacco taxes to reduce affordability for youth, and implementing standardized packaging to raise public awareness about the dangers of tobacco use.



Strategic dialogue with Vice Minister of Home Affairs

- Throughout June, Vital Strategies and its grantees provided technical assistance and strategic guidance to 19 cities and districts across Indonesia to support the development and strengthening of local tobacco control policies.
- The Muhammadiyah Student Association developed and distributed a policy brief calling for stronger tobacco control measures. Key recommendations include banning tobacco industry associations in educational institutions, integrating tobacco control into school curricula, tightening financial restrictions and sanctions, banning online tobacco advertising, and enforcing subnational smoke-free regulations. The policy brief was submitted to the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Education and Culture, and 27 cities and districts across Indonesia.
- As part of the 2025 National Children's Day celebration, Forum Anak Denpasar, the Denpasar City Government, and Udayana Central promoted youth-centered tobacco control through a talk show and health booth. Over 200 students learned about the dangers of tobacco and e-cigarettes, industry manipulation, and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The initiative will continue with peer educator programs and teacher involvement to support a tobacco-free generation.
- A provincial coordination meeting was held in Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB), organized by Udayana Central in collaboration with the University of Mataram, to assess current tobacco control efforts and strengthen measures across the province.
- Youth journalists gathered to promote tobacco-free advocacy journalism, discussing the media's strategic role in exposing industry tactics, particularly the misuse of harm reduction narratives to market electronic cigarettes as 'smoke-free' alternatives.



FGD with farmers on tobacco industry's tactics & counter strategies

A hybrid FGD with 59 farmers was held to explore their understanding of misleading industry narratives, and gather input on counter-strategies. Farmers shared their willingness and success stories in diversifying crops and expressed support for higher tobacco taxation and stronger tobacco control measures. The session aimed to develop effective approaches to resist industry influence and empower farmers toward more sustainable livelihoods.

**Timor-Leste:** Vital Strategies held a high-level meeting in Timor-Leste with H.E. Vice-Minister of Health, along with the Directors of National Policy and Planning, Disease Control and Prevention, and the Head of NCD Prevention and Tobacco Control. The discussions focused on strengthening tobacco control efforts nationwide, aligning national priorities with evidence-based strategies to reduce tobacco use and its associated health burden.



High-level meeting with Vice-Minister of Health



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

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 decision marks a major step forward in protecting communities from the harms of tobacco and sets a powerful precedent for other municipalities. 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.

On June 16, 2025, a multi-sectoral meeting was held in Timor-Leste to strengthen the implementation of the Tobacco Control Policy under Decree Law No. 14/2016. Key outcomes included the formation of a Task Force Team, development of an Integrated Action Plan, preparation of a Joint Ministerial Decree, and agreement to establish SOPs, TORs, and a joint bank account between the Ministries of Health and Justice. Relevant ministries will also appoint focal points and ensure clear action plans. The meeting gathered representatives from key ministries and civil society organizations, highlighting strong multi-sectoral commitment to advancing tobacco control.



Multi-sectoral meeting to to strengthen the implementation of Tobacco control policies

- **Cambodia:** Cambodia has made a major move toward a tobacco- and nicotine-free future. On 6 June 2025, Prime Minister Hun Manet signed a sub-decree adding e-cigarette manufacturing to the country's Negative List of Investments. Tobacco use causes around 15,000 deaths each year and costs Cambodia an estimated US\$ 663 million annually. WHO and Vital Strategies praised this bold, health-focused decision and continue to support the Ministry of Health and other ministries in strengthening tobacco control policies.
- **Bangladesh:** In a groundbreaking move to protect youth and public health, the Bangladesh government has decided not to permit the establishment of factories producing e-cigarettes and electronic nicotine delivery system devices. A directive from the Office of the Chief Advisor has urged key investment and economic authorities to take necessary steps to enforce this. The decision reflects long-standing advocacy by anti-tobacco organizations across the country.
- On July 27, 2025, an experience-sharing meeting was held with officials from 14 municipalities of Rajshahi, supported by AID Foundation. The meeting emphasized implementing LGI guidelines, increasing awareness, removing illegal tobacco ads, budgeting for tobacco control, and introducing separate licenses for tobacco product outlets. Officials expressed hope that such initiatives will strengthen local efforts toward a tobacco-free Rajshahi.



Bilateral meeting with Secretary of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs

On July 20, 2025, a bilateral meeting was held at the Secretariat between the Secretary of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs and AID Foundation representatives to discuss promoting cultivate alternative crops in place of tobacco cultivation in the hilly areas. The Secretary emphasized the need for a concrete plan to support this initiative.

- On June 16–17, the DISH, with support from Transcend and the South Cotabato Provincial Department of Health Office, conducted an MPOWER training in General Santos City. The training was attended by healthcare personnel from Rural Health Units (RHUs), the City Health Office, the City Administrator’s Office, the Philippine National Police (PNP), Jorge P. Royeca City Hospital, and local civil society organizations.
- On May 20, 2025, Transcend conducted an MPOWER training in Pasil and Tabuk City to strengthen local advocates’ capacity on WHO’s six tobacco control strategies, highlighting the harms of smoking, vaping, and momma use on individuals and communities.
- From June 2–4, 2025, the DISH team, with support from MMDA, conducted ITCS validation in General Santos City, Koronadal City, the Municipality of T’boli, and South Cotabato Province. A capacity-building session was also held with the Integrated Provincial Health Office and Regional Tobacco Control Network XII.
- On June 16, Pateros launched its Amended Municipal Ordinance on Tobacco Control and Vaping during the municipal flag-raising ceremony. The event included a Pledge of Commitment signed by employees, with participation from Mayor Miguel Ponce and council members.
- On July 21, MMDA presented its updated GIS platform—featuring 2024 facility data and tools for mapping the retail environment—to 34 participants from 13 Metro Manila LGUs to support tobacco control planning and enforcement. The session included discussions on system enhancements and rollout timelines, with full implementation targeted for January 2026.

On July 10, 2025, the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG), in partnership with the Department of Health, officially launched the second cohort of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy Development Fellowship— a nationally recognized program aimed at building tobacco control policy champions within DOH. The fellowship supports public health experts aligned with the country’s National Tobacco Prevention and Control Strategy (NTPCS) 2030.



Launching of 2nd Tobacco Control Policy Fellowship



Commemoration of World No Tobacco Day 2025 in Pasig City , Philippines

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