

Tobacco Control Asia Pacific Monthly Bulletin

Issue 3 (July 2024)



Commemoration of World No Tobacco Day in Bharatpur, Nepal

Highlights

Commemoration of World No Tobacco Day

World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) 2024, held on May 31st, focuses on "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference." Vital Strategies and its grantees in Asia Pacific aim to increase awareness about the industry's harmful influence on youth. Despite decreases in cigarette smoking, tobacco use among young people remains a concern, with at least 37 million aged 13–15 using tobacco worldwide in 2022. The industry targets youth to replace customers who die or quit, using lax regulations, appealing products, and advertising on social media and streaming platforms. WNTD 2024 calls on governments and tobacco control community to adopt policies protecting young people and to hold the tobacco industry accountable for the harm it causes.

World No Tobacco Day 2024

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Bangladesh: Dhamrai municipality organized a day-long program to celebrate World No Tobacco Day. Thousands of students participated, with the highlight being the Healthy City Fair, which saw participation from 17 educational institutions.

Cambodia: The National Center for Health Promotion (NCHP) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) celebrated World No Tobacco Day 2024 on June 5, focusing on "Protecting Children from Tobacco Interference." Presided over by HE Prof. Chheang Ra, Minister of Health, and attended by 150 participants from MOH, universities, various national and international organizations, the event highlighted Cambodia's efforts to prevent non-communicable diseases under Prime Minister Hun Manet's leadership. The Ministry of Health emphasized protecting youth from tobacco and e-cigarettes by curbing advertising, prohibiting public smoking, preventing e-cigarette sales, and promoting smoking cessation services. The event featured children's performances, displayed banners and posters, and distributed educational posters to schools in 25 provinces. The event was live-streamed on NCHP's Facebook page.

Nepal: As a commemoration of World No Tobacco Day, the National Health Education, Information and Communication Center (NHEICC) of the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) conducted a webinar focused on the role of local government in tobacco control and regulation. The webinar was attended by the chief administrative officer, health division or branch heads, and representatives. Moreover, the MoHP distributed the Bloomberg Philanthropic Award to organizations, media, and six individuals for their work in the field of tobacco control.

Nepal NCD Alliance organized a school-level elocution competition at Satyasai Shiksha Sadan in Tokha, Kathmandu. Speakers highlighted the importance of protecting children from tobacco, the dangers of tobacco use, and the rising tobacco-related deaths in Nepal. Despite existing legal restrictions, enforcement remains weak. Winners were awarded certificates and cash prizes.



World No Tobacco Day celebration in Dhamrai municipality



Commemoration of World No Tobacco Day in Phnom Penh



Awareness-raising rally conducted by students from Vinayak Shiksha Niketan School

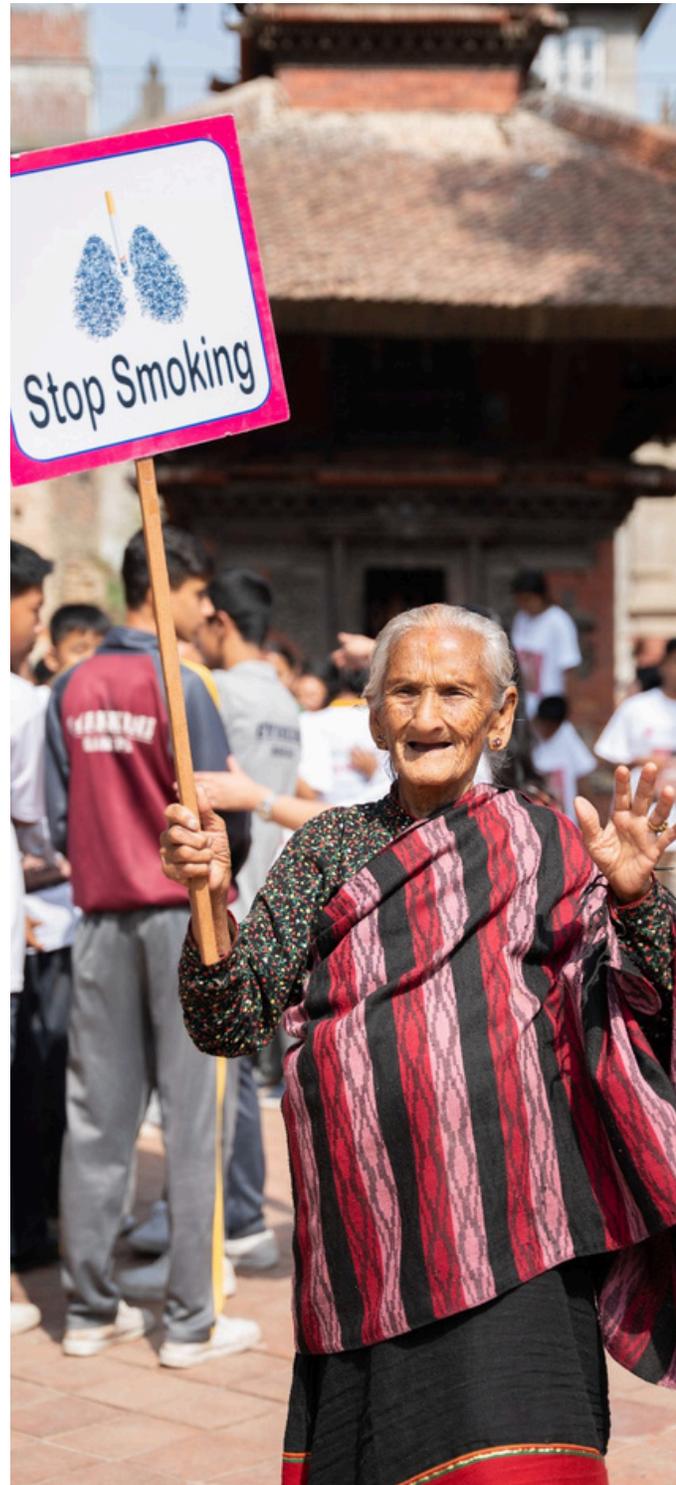
On May 31, 2024, Kathmandu Cancer Center (KCC) organized a walkathon and flash mob for World No Smoking Day to raise awareness about tobacco's harmful effects. Led by Banepa Municipality Mayor Shanti Ratna Shakya, hundreds of participants, including students and health workers, walked from Laiku Banepa with banners advocating a smoke-free world. The event featured a flash mob by KCC employees and a speech by KCC Director Dr. Simit Sapkota, who urged support for smoking control campaigns.

In collaboration with Bharatpur Metropolitan City and Boston International College, Action Nepal organized an open school quiz competition for World No Tobacco Day. The event raised awareness among students about the dangers of tobacco use, effectively promoting a healthy, tobacco-free lifestyle. Enthusiastic participation and positive feedback from students, teachers, and parents highlighted the event's educational value and engaging format.

Action Nepal organized a rally with Bharatpur Metropolitan City, APCAT, and Boston International College to commemorate World No Tobacco Day and to raise awareness about dangers of tobacco use. The rally featured speeches, banners, and pamphlets to educate the public about the harmful effects of tobacco and the importance of leading a tobacco-free life.

Students from Vinayak Shiksha Niketan School, Rastriya Adharbhut Vidhyalaya, and Thana Bhyanjyang School commemorated World No Tobacco Day 2024 by organizing rallies in their respective municipalities. These rallies aimed to spread awareness against smoking and help students understand their social responsibilities, avoid smoking, and contribute to building a clean society.

In collaboration with Bharatpur Metropolitan City, local schools, and the health department, Action Nepal launched an initiative to raise student awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and existing tobacco control laws. Feedback indicated a significant increase in awareness, with many students committing to staying tobacco-free and spreading awareness among peers and families. Teachers praised the program's positive impact and interactive approach. The program now involves conducting classes every Friday at different schools in the city with the aim to create a tobacco-free generation in Bharatpur.



Walkathon and flashmob organized by Kathmandu Cancer Center

Indonesia: On June 4, the Ministry of Health Indonesia conducted World No Tobacco Day Ceremony in Jakarta. During the event, Dr. Tara Singh Bam, Regional Director (Tobacco Control), Vital Strategies, was awarded a certificate of appreciation by the Minister of Health Indonesia, in recognition of his over 17 years of dedicated work in tobacco control in Indonesia.

Depok City organized various activities at both the city and subdistrict levels to commemorate World No Tobacco Day. At the city level, related agencies, the youth forum, and the healthy city forum participated in smoke-free monitoring and public education on the dangers of tobacco use. At the subdistrict level, children and youth from the children forum, youth forum, and child-friendly city forum gathered at Depok City Square to urge the government and the public to protect them from tobacco industry interference.

In Magelang, 53 tobacco farmers and their children participated in the inauguration of Kendungkeyang Waterfall as a smoke-free zone. Activities included a poster competition, cleaning up cigarette butts, and installing no-smoking signage.

20 students from five different schools in Makassar have been selected to serve as youth ambassadors.

In Klungkung, 20 youth were selected for the third round of Anti-Smoking Youth Ambassadors.



Awarding Dr. Tara Singh Bam a certificate of appreciation by the Minister of Health



Posting no-smoking signs near Kedungkeyang Waterfall



Youth movement to protect them from tobacco industry interference



Smokefree monitoring and public education campaign in Depok

World No Tobacco Day 2024

Philippines: On World No Tobacco Day, May 31, 2024, the Municipality of Nabas, Aklan, celebrated the passage of Executive Order No. 2024-33, declaring all public places smoke-free and vape-free. Health units from Banga, Malinao, Nabas, Numancia, Tangalan, the Provincial Health Office, and Malay Municipal Hospital hosted supportive activities to mark the occasion through WNTD activities.

Vital Strategies supported the World No Tobacco Day activities in Manila and Pasig Cities on May 31, 2024, emphasizing the importance of city- and region-wide tobacco control efforts. These activities underscored the commitment to combating tobacco use and promoting public health across Metropolitan Manila.

In a powerful declaration against tobacco, Baguio City organized a citywide plogging event on May 31, 2024, in celebration of World No Tobacco Day. Stakeholders from barangays, the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), academia, government agencies, and the private sector gathered at the smoke-free park, City Hall Drive, championing the theme of protecting children from tobacco industry interference. This event highlighted Baguio City's steadfast commitment to fostering a healthier, tobacco-free environment.



Event collaborated by Smoke-Free Aklan to celebrate WNTD activity



Press conference on celebration of the passage of Executive Order No. 2024-33



Citywide plogging event organized by Baguio City



Protecting people from tobacco smoke

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Inspection of venues in Yogyakarta airport

Indonesia: VS and Kulon Progo smoke free task force held a meeting with the general manager of Angkasapura YIA regarding the implementation of smoke free at airports and carried out air quality measurements at the airport. The results of this measurement were then presented in World No Tobacco Day 2024 and also invited representatives of Angkasa Pura YIA. 1 week after the meeting, YIA followed up with a circular from the General Manager regarding the ban on all promotional advertising and sponsorship of tobacco at all vendors at Yogyakarta International Airport. Kulon Progo district enforcement team inspected 25 venues in Yogyakarta airport to ensure implementation.

- In Makassar, 32 smokefree task force members were trained on Ministry of Health smokefree dashboard.
- In Pontianak, 46 smokefree coordinators were trained on enforcement of smokefree.
- In Bali, two random inspections were conducted at Ngoerah Hospital, catching and sanctioning 12 violators actively smoking.
- In Surabaya, random inspections were conducted in 12 different public places. Violators were required to fill out corrective action reports (BAP).
- In, Depok, 458 venues were inspected for TAPS ban and smokefree. It was found that 330 venues did not comply with the existing policies.

Philippines: The Department of Education Cordillera Administrative Region (DepEd-CAR) and Vital TCD grantee, Transcending Institutions and Communities Inc. (TICI), conducted a three-day writeshop from June 19-21, 2024, in Baguio City. The event focused on developing smoke- and vape-free learning modules for Grade 7 to 10 learners.

The MPOWER for Youth Workshop, held from June 12-14, 2024, in Boracay Island, Aklan, empowered the Sangguniang Kabataan and Provincial Youth Development Office with essential Tobacco Control and MPOWER strategies. Participants are set to endorse the Smoke-Free Generation Ordinance, ensuring a 100% smoke-free future for the youth.



Writeshop to develop smoke- and vape-free learning modules

Enforcing tobacco advertising, promotion & sponsorship bans

Indonesia

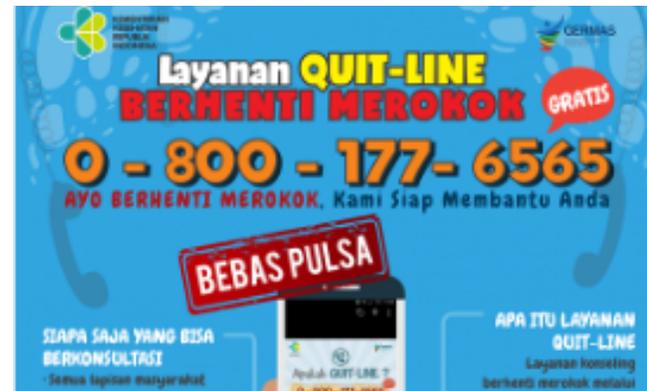
- Ministry of Health conducted a high-level mayors' meeting in Bali in partnership with Ministry of Home Affairs, Bali Provincial Government and APCAT to promote a comprehensive ban of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship in the province of Bali.
- Jakarta city police demonstrated a quick response to JAKI complaints. Advertising in Figure 3 was removed the same morning it was reported.



Delegates of High-level mayors' meeting in Bali

Indonesia

- Vital Strategies conducted a meeting with the Vice-Minister of Health and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Health. The discussion emphasized the importance of early adoption of implementation regulations for the Omnibus Law and the inclusion of a strategy for higher taxes on tobacco and other health-harmful products as part of health financing transformation.
- Vital Strategies also signed a grant program with Ministry of Health to establish a national smoking cessation program. The program includes Quit Line, integration of smoking cessation in primary health care and in TB control Program
- At the 9th Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH), held from May 28-31 in Bandung City, over 300 participants came together to engage in 4 plenary sessions, 4 symposiums, and numerous poster and oral presentations. The conference received 107 abstracts and featured more than 100 presentations by speakers from various national and subnational government sectors across Indonesia. The ICTOH declaration called for complete ban on Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (TAPS), ban on e-cigarettes, national ban on WTA Asia, immediate implementation and enforcement of smoke-free (SF) policies and higher tobacco taxation.
- 172 youth from 10 cities and districts gathered in Bandung on May 28th for 8th Youth Forum of ICTOH 2024. The sessions included an Expert Session, Youth Sharing Lessons Learned, and a mini workshop. The Forum declaration called for total ban on all forms of advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, larger pictorial health warnings (PHW), 100% smoke-free (SF) environments, imposing age restrictions on e-cigarettes and regular cigarettes, banning single-stick cigarette sales and increased collaboration and greater involvement of youth and their families
- Vital Strategies' grantees Udayana Central and ADINKES organised a high-level meeting to strengthen tobacco control. The participants committed to acceleration of the adoption of TAPS ban, enhanced efforts to improve education campaigns and monitor smoking behaviours and strengthened smoking cessation services through better integration with existing programs. Fifty-eight local participants consisting high level leaders including city secretary, provincial government, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Home Affairs officials attended.



Establishment of Smoking Cessation Program



Delegates from 9th Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH)



Participants of 8th Youth Forum of ICTOH 2024

Philippines

Vital Strategies participated in the Philippine FCTC Health Partners Meeting and the 2nd Tobacco Prevention and Control National Technical Working Group on May 7-8, 2024. During these meetings, Vital contributed technical expertise to the DOH's draft investment plan for tobacco control for 2024 to 2030.

Smoke Free Aklan represented the Province of Aklan during the DOH Tobacco Control Leadership Pre-Validation Meeting on May 3, 2024 in Iloilo City. The meeting focused on enhancing the tobacco leadership tool and identifying provincial validators in preparation for site visits.

The Training of Trainers aimed to strengthen LGUs' capacity-building activities by enhancing the skills of potential facilitators for Modules 3 and 4. Enforcers from 13 LGUs in Metropolitan Manila participated. Speakers included representatives from MMDA, Metro Manila Center for Health Development, Action on Smoking and Health Philippines, Health Justice Philippines, and Vital Strategies TC Division. The training produced 25 trained facilitators for Modules 3 and 4 from 12 LGUs.

Vital Strategies and grantee, the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG), presented at the Department of Health Media Conference: Engaging Media for Health Literacy (June 13-15). The media conference provided a platform for interactive discussions where media representatives gathered important health insights for their communication efforts. Vital Strategies and ASOG representatives engaged the media on how to work with government and tobacco control groups to foster multisectoral collaboration and also presented results of ASOG studies on flavors of cigarettes and e-cigarette products appeals to the youth.



Participants of media conference on engaging media for health literacy

Nepal

Vital Strategies signed a grant program with Ministry of Health and Population to advance tobacco control policies at national and subnational level. These policies include; i) promote plain packaging, ii) building evidences to support tax increase on tobacco products.

On May 26, 2024, a meeting with Mayor Chiri Babu Maharjan was conducted to discuss the implementation of comprehensive tobacco control measures. Discussions included the current state of tobacco use in the city, focusing the high smoking prevalence, second-hand smoke exposure and health impacts. The city already has six smoke-free areas. The meeting concluded with a commitment to ongoing tobacco control advocacy and celebrating milestones to build further support.

Cambodia

Vital Strategies established a smoking cessation project with the Ministry of Health. Key objectives are: 1) adopt national policies on smoking cessation and establish a plan of action for implementation; 2) Adopt a national policy to include smoking status in medical records; 3) Integrate smoking cessation into TB control program.



Walkathon and flashmob organized by Kathmandu Cancer Center

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