

Tobacco Control Asia Pacific Monthly Bulletin

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Highlights

11th Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH)



Delegates of 11th Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH)

The 11th Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH) was held in Surabaya from 21-23 May 2026 under the theme “Unmasking Tobacco and Nicotine: Addiction for a Healthy Indonesia.” The hybrid conference convened more than 1,524 participants, including representatives from the Ministry of Health, subnational governments, civil society, academia, youth groups, farmers, and media. The programme included 4 plenary sessions, 7 symposiums, 130 abstract presentations, a dedicated youth forum engaging 373 young participants, and a Farmers’ Voice session highlighting lived experiences and advocacy from tobacco-growing communities. The youth called for stronger tobacco control measures, including smoke-free policies, a full ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, higher tobacco taxation, and standardized packaging.

A major highlight of ICTOH 2026 was the strong participation of farmers, with around 30 farmers attending the conference and showcasing alternative livelihood products, reinforcing evidence that more than 17,000 tobacco farmers in Indonesia have successfully switched or diversified crops. These efforts, supported by technical assistance such as farmer field schools and infrastructure support from partners including Muhammadiyah, demonstrated practical pathways for sustainable transition and helped counter industry narratives on farmer dependency.

The conference also featured high-level engagement with government leaders and concluded with the ICTOH 2026 Declaration, outlining 12 key points to accelerate tobacco control efforts at both national and subnational levels. Overall, the conference reaffirmed multisectoral commitment to advancing tobacco control and strengthening support for farmer-led transition initiatives in Indonesia.

World No Tobacco Day 2026

Indonesia: Tasikmalaya Regency commemorated World No Tobacco Day 2026 with an awareness campaign on the dangers of smoking and socialization of its Smoke-Free Area (KTR) Regulation during a Car Free Day event. The activity involved government, community groups, students, and the public, and included health education sessions, a public parade, free health screenings, and a cigarette butt cleanup campaign. Officials emphasized the importance of protecting youth from nicotine addiction and strengthening enforcement of smoke-free policies across key public spaces.



WNTD celebration during Car Free Day Event in Tasikmalaya



Public awareness campaign in Pontianak

Indonesia: To commemorate World No Tobacco Day, a public awareness campaign was organized in Pontianak on May 31, engaging more than 100 children and young people to advocate for a tobacco-free future. The event strengthened public awareness and highlighted the important role of youth in advancing tobacco control efforts.

To mark World No Tobacco Day 2026, the Palembang City Health Office, in collaboration with local health centers (Puskesmas) and the Civil Police, conducted a public awareness campaign during the city's Car Free Day event. The activity raised awareness of the health risks associated with tobacco use and reinforced the city's commitment to promoting smoke-free environments.



WNTD celebration in Palembang



WNTD awareness raising activities on smoke-free lifestyles in Banda Aceh

As part of World No Tobacco Day 2026, the Banda Aceh City Government and partners conducted a public awareness campaign during the city's car-free day event on 24 May. Led by the City Secretary, the activity engaged more than 100 participants and promoted smoke-free lifestyles.

As part of the World No Tobacco Day commemoration, the Denpasar City Government, in collaboration with Udayana University, held a public outreach event at a city public park on May 17 to encourage tobacco-free living among young people. More than 100 youth and students participated in the campaign, strengthening community engagement in tobacco control and health promotion.



Smoke-Free Fun Walk HTTS 2026 in Denpasar



Participants of dialogue on Smoke-free campuses implementation

To mark World No Tobacco Day 2026, student representatives from several universities in Semarang joined a dialogue with the Indonesian Public Health Promoters and Educators Association (PPPKMI) Central Java Chapter to discuss the implementation of Smoke-Free Area (KTR) policies on university campuses. Discussions focused on enforcement challenges, the growing use and promotion of alternative nicotine products such as vapes, and the role of students in advancing tobacco control. The event reinforced collaboration between student organizations, universities, and public health advocates to promote healthier, smoke-free campuses.

Cambodia: For World No Tobacco Day 2026, three key messages were developed and approved by the Minister of Health for education, publication, and distribution nationwide, including all provinces and the capital city. These messages aim to strengthen public awareness and support consistent tobacco control communication across the country.

Philippines: The Department of Health, Lung Center of the Philippines, and youth advocates commemorated World No Tobacco Day and the opening of No Smoking Month through exhibits, cessation awareness activities including 1558 Quitline, and the TobaccOFF NOW! Film Festival. The event highlighted the harms of tobacco and vaping and amplified calls for stronger tobacco control measures.



Opening of No Smoking Month by DOH, Lung Center of the Philippines



Largest youth-led World No Tobacco Day in Quezon

More than 250 young people gathered in Quezon City for the country's largest youth-led World No Tobacco Day event under the TobaccOFF NOW!/F Nicotine movement. Participants issued a youth statement calling for an immediate vape ban and stronger measures against flavored products, tobacco marketing, and youth-targeted packaging, highlighting the growing role of Filipino youth in tobacco control advocacy.

As part of the Pilipinas TobaccOFF NOW! campaign, youth leaders from Baguio City and Benguet participated in a Youth Leadership Orientation focused on tobacco and nicotine prevention. Supported by local partners and health officials, the activity strengthened youth advocacy skills and community engagement for a smoke-free and vape-free future.



Youth Leadership Orientation in Baguio City



WNTD fun run activity in Iloilo City

To mark World No Tobacco Day 2026, the Association of Respiratory and Cardio Pulmonary Practitioners-Western Visayas Chapter and partners organized fun run activity titled "Takbo Lungs 2.0" in Iloilo City. The event engaged hundreds of participants in promoting healthy lifestyles and raising awareness of the harms of smoking and vaping.

Youth in San Isidro, Jaro participated in a TobaccOFF NOW! dialogue organized by INAYA PH and local partners to raise awareness of the growing appeal of vaping among young people. The activity encouraged participants to become advocates for healthier, smoke-free lifestyles and nicotine-free communities.



Awareness raising on growing appeal of vaping among young people in San Isidro



WNTD community fun run in Itogon Municipality

The Municipality of Itogon, in partnership with Transcend and TobaccOFF NOW!, marked World No Tobacco Day 2026 with a community fun run. The event engaged local leaders, youth, families, and health advocates in promoting active lifestyles and raising awareness of the harms of tobacco and nicotine use.

As part of the TobaccOFF NOW! World No Tobacco Day celebration, Kabataang Quezonian participated in the youth-led activity “Every Breath You Take: Rebuilding the Future Without Cigarettes and Vape,” joined by participants from various youth organizations. The activity featured discussions on tobacco industry tactics targeting youth and strengthened collaboration among young advocates working toward tobacco- and vape-free communities.



Youths calling for tobacco- and vape-free communities



Delegates from WNTD celebration hosted by NHEICC

Nepal: The National Health Education Information Communication Center (NHEICC), organized the World No Tobacco Day 2026 celebration with 107 participants from government agencies, health institutions, civil society, media, and youth groups. The event brought together key stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Health and Food Safety and national health institutions, to reaffirm commitments and strengthen collaboration on tobacco control in Nepal.

To mark World No Tobacco Day 2026, Action Nepal, in coordination with NHEICC, organized a programme highlighting the harms of tobacco use and the importance of cessation, alongside similar initiatives by the Cancer Relief Society and other organizations through events, discussions, and public campaigns. Educational institutions and public health offices in Rautahat and Rasuwa also joined through rallies and outreach activities, collectively strengthening public awareness and national commitment to tobacco control.



WNTD celebrations in DHO Rasuwa (left), DHO Rautahat (middle) and by Nepal cancer relief society (right)



WNTD celebrations at Kanjirowa College (left) and MVA School (middle and right)

Vietnam: Vital Strategies grantee LIFE Social Enterprise, in partnership with the Ho Chi Minh City Center for Disease Control, organized the workshop “Joining Hands for Smoke-Free Healthcare Facilities” with nearly 100 representatives from hospitals across Ho Chi Minh City. As a commemoration of World No Tobacco Day and National No Tobacco Week 2026, the event promoted compliance with smoke-free regulations and recognized best practices in tobacco control within the health sector.



“Joining Hands for Smoke-Free Healthcare Facilities” workshop in Ho Chi Minh City

To support World No Tobacco Day 2026 and advocacy for amendments to the Tobacco Control Law, Vital Strategies partnered with the Vietnam Tobacco Control Fund to develop an information package highlighting the need for a comprehensive and updated law to address emerging tobacco and nicotine products while protecting gains achieved over the past 15 years. Vital Strategies also supported a media briefing in Hanoi, attended by representatives from more than 40 media outlets. The event generated approximately 60 news articles and included a presentation on tobacco industry tactics targeting young people.

Timor-Leste: As part of World No Tobacco Day 2026, the National Alliance for Tobacco Control Timor-Leste (ANCT-TL) organized a press conference calling for urgent government action to address the trafficking and sale of illicit cigarettes and strengthen enforcement of Decree-Law No. 14/2016 on Tobacco Control. Following the advocacy effort, authorities conducted inspections in commercial areas across the country, resulting in the seizure of illicit tobacco products and the imposition of sanctions on offenders, demonstrating the government's commitment to combating illicit tobacco trade and protecting public health.



Press conference on the trafficking and sale of illicit cigarettes



Seized illicit tobacco products

Protecting people from tobacco smoke



High-level meeting with the Mayor of Banda Aceh

Indonesia: On May 15, Vital Strategies and its grantees had a high-level meeting with the Mayor of Banda Aceh to advance smoke-free policy implementation and coordinate preparations for the World No Tobacco Day commemoration. The meeting engaged 15 participants from relevant government agencies and key stakeholders to strengthen coordination and support effective tobacco control measures.

Vital Strategies had a coordination meeting with the Mayor's Assistant of Palembang, bringing together representatives from the Health Office, Education Office, Civil Police, and Communication and Information Department to strengthen smoke-free policy implementation and advance local tobacco control regulations through enhanced cross-sector collaboration.



Coordination meeting with Mayor's Assistant of Palembang



Appointment of student Smoke-Free Ambassadors

Bogor City strengthened youth tobacco control efforts through the 2026 Smoke-Free Youth Generation initiative, where student Smoke-Free Area (KTR) Ambassadors were officially appointed to promote awareness of the harms of smoking and vaping among their peers. The event also reaffirmed schools' commitment to implementing Bogor's Smoke-Free Area Regulation and recognized four schools for their strong compliance with smoke-free policies.

In Depok, the Vice Mayor and City Secretary led a Smoke-Free Task Force coordination meeting, bringing together 60 participants from government agencies, health centers, and subdistrict offices, to strengthen coordination and enforcement of smoke-free policies. In parallel, inspections were conducted across six cities, covering 1,075 venues to assess compliance with smoke-free regulations.



Meeting with Depok Vice Mayor and City Secretary



High-level meeting with the Denpasar City Government

Vital Strategies grantee Udayana University convened a high-level multisectoral meeting with the Denpasar City Government, bringing together 17 representatives from key government agencies to strengthen implementation of smoke-free policies. The meeting focused on reinforcing interagency collaboration and aligning strategies to advance tobacco control efforts in the city.

- In May 2026, the Hasanuddin Centre for Tobacco Control and NCD Prevention, a Vital Strategies grantee, conducted random inspections in Makassar City to assess compliance with Smoke-Free Area (KTR) regulations. A total of 202 venues were visited across nine Community Health Centers, including schools, health facilities, restaurants, and public places. Of these, 148 were compliant and 51 were non-compliant, with enforcement actions including written warnings and recognition for compliant venues. The initiative aims to strengthen smoke-free policy implementation through continued inspections and expanded coordination at the sub-district level.
- Vital Strategies conducted field visits to Puskesmas Bukit Sangkal in Palembang and Puskesmas Gang Sehat and Parit Mayor in Pontianak to observe smoke-free policy enforcement and smoking cessation services. The visits highlighted innovative approaches to integrating tobacco control into routine health programs and demonstrated how strong coordination among local health teams can sustain tobacco control efforts despite limited resources.

- **Philippines:** With technical support from Transcend, the Province of Ifugao passed Provincial Smoke-Free Ordinance No. 2026-05, covering approximately 208,000 residents. The ordinance strengthens tobacco and vape control measures and provides a unified framework for smoke-free implementation across the province.
- The Municipality of Kapangan, Benguet convened its Smoke-Free Task Force to strengthen implementation of the Comprehensive Smoke-Free Ordinance. Discussions focused on enforcement of restrictions on tobacco and vape sales, use, distribution, and advertising, while reinforcing measures to protect youth and reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.
- The Atok Municipal Health Office, in collaboration with Transcend, convened the Atok Smoke-Free Task Force to strengthen local tobacco control efforts. The meeting focused on finalizing implementing rules for smoke-free ordinances, coordinating upcoming advocacy activities, and advancing plans to designate four tourism sites as smoke-free and vape-free zones.
- Vital Strategies sub-grantee Data and Implementation Sciences for Health (DISH) facilitated a Smoke-Free Task Force meeting in General Santos City to support proposed amendments to the city's Comprehensive Smoke-Free Ordinance No. 56. The meeting strengthened stakeholder coordination and advanced efforts to improve local tobacco control measures.

Local government representatives from Iloilo participated in a Smoke-Free and MPOWER training focused on enforcement, documentation, reporting procedures, and implementation strategies. The training concluded with action planning sessions to support stronger local tobacco control efforts.



Smoke-Free and MPOWER training in Iloilo



Learning exchange visit to Pasig City

Vital Strategies sub-grantee DISH facilitated knowledge-sharing and learning exchange activities for local government representatives from South Cotabato, General Santos City, Koronadal City, and T'Boli to strengthen tobacco control implementation. Through a benchmarking visit to Benguet Province and a learning exchange in Pasig City with support from Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and local government partners, participants explored best practices in smoke-free and anti-vaping policy enforcement, school-zone protection, public awareness initiatives, and interagency coordination. The activities strengthened collaboration among local governments and supported the adoption of effective tobacco control measures in participating localities.

DISH, in collaboration with Transcend, conducted a Smoke-Free Enforcement Training for health personnel and local enforcers in T'Boli. Through simulations, practical exercises, and action planning, participants strengthened their capacity to support effective implementation of local smoke-free policies.



Smoke-Free Enforcement Training in T'Boli



Installation of smoke-free awareness signages in Pasig

Pasig City and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority jointly installed smoke-free awareness signages at key entry points across the city. The initiative reinforced public awareness of local smoke-free and vape-free regulations and supported broader efforts to promote healthier public spaces.

A joint enforcement team in Baguio City conducted night-time inspections of 33 establishments to monitor compliance with the Smoke-Free Baguio Ordinance. Violations were issued citation tickets as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen enforcement and maintain smoke-free public environments.



Night-time inspections by joint enforcement team in Baguio



Launching of the Provincial Tobacco Control Network

South Cotabato officially launched the Provincial Tobacco Control Network (PTCN), bringing together local governments, health experts, and civil society partners to strengthen coordination on tobacco control. The initiative supports a shared commitment to advancing a smoke-free and vape-free province through collaborative and evidence-based action.

Offering help to quit tobacco use

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Health, together with technical partners, advanced efforts to integrate tobacco use and cessation indicators into national health information systems. This initiative aims to strengthen monitoring, reporting, and delivery of tobacco cessation services.
- **Philippines:** Vital Strategies sub-grantee ASOG advanced national tobacco cessation efforts by presenting the National Tobacco Cessation Infrastructure Plan (NTCIP) 2030 and its Monitoring and Operations Plan to the Department of Health–Disease Prevention and Control Bureau. ASOG also convened a multi-stakeholder consultation on the PhilHealth tobacco cessation benefit package to finalize recommendations for integration into the national health insurance program. Together, these initiatives support stronger cessation systems and improved access to quitting services nationwide.

Warning about the dangers of tobacco

- **Indonesia:** The Ministry of Health has advanced a draft regulation on standardized tobacco packaging, including a requirement for pictorial health warnings to cover 50% of the principal display area and to be placed on the upper portion of the pack without obstruction. The regulation also introduces standardized pack color (Pantone 448C), while allowing tobacco company logos and other branding elements to remain. Standardization of font type and size for brand and variant names is not yet included in the current draft. The public hearing aimed to gather stakeholder feedback to further refine the packaging provisions.

Cambodia: The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, conducted educational outreach for tobacco product sellers at markets, depots, and retail outlets to strengthen implementation of the Tobacco Control Law. The sessions focused on compliance with Pictorial Health Warnings (PHW) and tax stamp requirements, aiming to improve awareness and enforcement among retailers.



Educational outreach for tobacco product sellers at markets, depots, and retail outlets

Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship



Mayor of Magelang at city's 1,120th anniversary celebration

Indonesia: As part of Magelang City's 1,120th anniversary celebration, the Mayor and Vice Mayor declared the city's commitment to becoming a Tobacco Advertising-Free City, reaching more than 11,000 residents through public events. The initiative supports implementation of the city's Smoke-Free Areas Regulation and received strong endorsement from the Vice Minister of Home Affairs, who encouraged Magelang to become a model for comprehensive tobacco control in Central Java, including a full ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.

- Vital Strategies grantee Smoke Free Jakarta, together with partners, engaged Jakarta government officials to review proposed amendments to advertising regulations and advocate for the retention of existing tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) ban provisions.

Philippines: The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) strengthened tobacco control enforcement through inspections of 195 schools and 44 transport terminals. More than 2,600 violations related to tobacco and vape sales, advertising, and signage compliance were identified and referred to local government units for enforcement action. The MMDA also supported public awareness and compliance efforts around schools and public spaces.



Public awareness efforts around schools & public spaces

Elimination of illicit trade in tobacco products

- **Philippines:** With support from MMDA, Caloocan City passed an anti-smuggling ordinance aimed at strengthening local action against the illicit tobacco trade. The ordinance supports enforcement efforts and reinforces local regulatory measures to address illegal tobacco products.

General Tobacco Control



Meeting with Mayor of Magelang City

Indonesia: Vital Strategies met with the Mayor of Magelang City to support efforts to strengthen tobacco control and advance the city's smoke-free agenda. During the meeting, the Mayor reaffirmed his commitment to implementing a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS), including a ban on tobacco product displays at points of sale, as part of Magelang's vision to become a healthier, smoke-free city.

Vital Strategies conducted a high-level meeting with the Mayor of Pontianak convened the Mayor's Expert Staff and heads of relevant government agencies to advance the city's tobacco control agenda. The Mayor reaffirmed his commitment to maintaining smoke-free public places and workplaces and strengthening local regulations through a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. The meeting underscored Pontianak's continued leadership in advancing tobacco control and protecting public health.



Vital Strategies' Dr. Tara Singh Bam with Mayor of Pontianak



Joint random inspection across Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur

Nepal: A one-week joint monitoring and inspection exercise was conducted across Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur districts to strengthen enforcement of the Tobacco Products (Control and Regulatory) Act, 2011. The operation covered shops, restaurants, and public places, with participation from District Administration Offices, police units, and the NHEICC. The initiative aimed to improve compliance with tobacco control laws, prevent illegal tobacco sales, and raise public awareness on the harms of tobacco use, contributing to a healthier and safer environment.

Philippines: Vital Strategies convened a meeting of Bloomberg Initiative (BI) Philippines partners and grantees to strengthen coordination on subnational tobacco control implementation. Discussions focused on addressing enforcement gaps, improving adoption of tobacco control measures across local government units, and advancing a shared Theory of Change linking local efforts to national tobacco control goals. The meeting reinforced alignment of LGU-level initiatives with national priorities and strengthened collaboration among partners.



Delegates from BI Philippines partners and grantees meeting



MPOWER TOT training in La Union Province

La Union Province conducted a three-day MPOWER Training of Trainers for 48 local implementers from pilot LGUs and government agencies. The training strengthened participants' knowledge of tobacco control policy development, enforcement, and public health impacts, supporting future smoke-free initiatives across the province.

More than 40 health workers, police officers, and community leaders participated in a capacity-building training in Ifugao to support implementation of Provincial Ordinance No. 2026-05. The training strengthened preparedness for enforcement of smoke-free policies, advertising bans, and other tobacco control measures across the province.



Enforcers training in Ifugao



Participants of MPOWER training in Tuba, Benguet

The Municipality of Tuba, Benguet conducted MPOWER training for 37 community enforcers, including health workers, barangay officials, police, and fire personnel. The training strengthened participants' knowledge of WHO FCTC MPOWER strategies and reinforced the importance of effective smoke-free policy enforcement at the community level.

Vital Strategies sub-grantee Ateneo School of Government (ASOG) convened the Culminating Conference of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy Development Fellowship. The event brought together multisectoral stakeholders to review and refine policy research on tobacco cessation and the effective use of sin tax revenues, supporting evidence-based tobacco control policy development.



Culminating Conference of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy Development Fellowship



2026 Smoke-Free Youth Generation initiative in Bogor City

For more information, please contact

Vital Strategies Singapore Office

6A SHENTON WAY, #04-01, OUE DOWNTOWN GALLERY,
SINGAPORE 068815