

## CASE STUDY: INTERNATIONAL LEGAL TRAINING PROGRAM

### TACKLING NCDs THROUGH LAW

**The Challenge:** Many countries need support to strengthen their ability to implement laws to prevent noncommunicable diseases and ensure the rights of people living with NCDs. Laws are some of the most effective NCD interventions, but are underused because they require engagement with many sectors beyond health, and because unhealthy industries often have their own lawyers that are adept at using tactics like launching legal challenges to prevent action.

#### Initiative:

A legal training program for government lawyers and policymakers in low-and-middle-income countries, focusing on NCDs across different sectors, including health, sustainable development, human rights, trade, and investment law – initiated in 2014.

The program shares Australia's experience implementing its world-first tobacco plain packaging laws and other laws addressing NCD risk factors.

#### Impact:



More than **3 billion people** now benefit from laws and policies developed by alumni of the program.



The program's **450 alumni** from nearly **100 countries** have contributed to laws in **30 countries** and the successful defence of laws against legal challenge by the tobacco industry in five countries.

#### A multisectoral and collaborative approach:

The program has a strong focus on policy coherence and multisectoral collaboration in trade, investment and health. Participants attended an intensive three week face-to-face training and received a year of follow-up support from Regional Managers based in the Pacific, Asia and Africa, with an online version of the course developed from 2020 onwards. The next edition will run in August 2025. The program is run by the McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer, a joint initiative of Cancer Council and the Union for International Cancer Control. The program is supported by Australian government funding.

#### Success factors



- **Regional Managers:** locally-qualified expert lawyers who are based in the Pacific, Asia, and Africa and able to provide support on legislative development and litigation that is appropriate to the context of the region.
- **Partnerships:** the McCabe Centre can draw on a wide range of technical expertise from the Australian government, Cancer Councils, and the UICC membership, as well as WHO, the WHO FCTC and regional bodies such as the Secretariat for the Pacific Community.
- **Linkages:** Focusing on the link between NCDs and cross-cutting issues such as trade, human rights and development, and engaging participants from a range of ministries gives participants confidence to work multisectorally on NCD policy.
- **Follow up:** Long-term support is crucial for implementation of laws.
- **Networks:** Participants develop links and share experiences with colleagues facing similar issues globally.



Leading and learning for progress on NCDs

**TIME TO LEAD**

4th UN HLM on NCDs & Mental Health - 25 September 2025

JULY 2025

