

THE UNION LATIN AMERICA REGION IN 2015: BRINGING THE UNION CLOSER TO YOU

FROM EVIDENCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

Since our founding as a global scientific organisation in 1920, The Union has drawn from the best evidence and expertise to advance solutions to public health challenges affecting people living in poverty.

KNOW. SHARE. ACT.

KNOW

- Union MDR-TB expert Ignacio Monedero published the editorial *Programmatic management of children with drug-resistant tuberculosis: common sense and social justice* in the scientific journal *Public Health Action* (2015 Jun 21; 5(2): 92).

SHARE

- Representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay received technical assistance from The Union on tobacco control issues ranging from smokefree environments to tobacco industry interference.
- Over 290 specialists in Latin America attended 15 Union courses on TB, MDR-TB and TB-HIV, held in Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico and Peru.
- The Union conducted technical assistance in the expansion of the programmatic management of MDR-TB in Ecuador, El Salvador and Peru.
- In Brazil, The Union continues to support government efforts to further implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) through the adoption of packaging and labelling measures, the development of an industry observatory and increasing monitoring and inspection capacity.

ACT

- The Union provided technical support to the government of Chile in its sponsorship of a landmark bill that would introduce plain packaging on cigarette packs, ban menthol and other additives, and ban cigarette displays at the point of sale, as well as significantly expanding smokefree legislation to outdoor venues. These measures were approved by the Chilean Senate in July 2015 and are currently up for debate before the Chamber of Deputies.
- The Union's Director of the Department of Tobacco Control held a series of high-level meetings with members of the legislature, executive and judiciary in both Argentina and Brazil in the lead-up to World No Tobacco Day in order to collaborate on developing sustainable funding models for tobacco control and progressing towards signing the WHO FCTC Illicit Trade Protocol.
- The Union, in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organisation and the National Commission Against Addictions, built legal capacity in 10 states in southern Mexico to pass standardized 100% smokefree legislation.



Iliana was cured of MDR-TB following 17 months of treatment. This photo is part of *Cured: A celebration of life after MDR and XDR-TB*, a photo exhibit developed by The Union and 7 national TB programmes in Latin America and Spain.

Javier Galeano

THE PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY MEETS WITH THE UNION TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

The president of Uruguay, Tabaré Vázquez, met with The Union's regional coordinator for tobacco control in Latin America, and other partner organisations in the fight against tobacco, to discuss Uruguay's leading role in tobacco control and the country's next steps in this global fight.

Over the past 10 years, Uruguay has implemented one of the strongest and most comprehensive sets of tobacco control measures in the world. This has led to a dramatic drop in tobacco consumption among teenagers and young adults from 30% in 2003 to 13% in 2011, and the country's indoor smoking ban has been linked to a 22% reduction in hospital admissions for acute myocardial infarction. Meanwhile, Philip Morris has sued Uruguay, arguing that the country's anti-smoking legislation harms its trademarks and investments – the outcome of this litigation is expected to have a profound impact on tobacco control worldwide.

Despite the ongoing legal challenges from the tobacco industry, President Tabaré Vázquez has committed to furthering his country's landmark tobacco control policies, including tax increases and plain packaging initiatives. He also intends to promote regional cooperation to tackle illicit trade and non-communicable diseases in the context of Mercosur.

The Union has worked closely with the Uruguayan Ministry of Health to implement these extensive reforms and has pledged its continuing support to pursue, protect and document the impact of tobacco control legislation; to strengthen monitoring and inspection mechanisms; and to develop and implement a five-year sustainability plan. The Union's current tobacco control work in Uruguay comes from a grant from the Bloomberg Initiative to develop policy infrastructure.

