

Bloomberg Philanthropies Announces Additional \$220 Million to Fight Global Tobacco Use

Language Undefined



Progress to date includes 1.2 billion people protected by effective tobacco control policies in 30 countries

Michael R. Bloomberg announced today that he will commit an additional \$220 million to fight tobacco use around the world and stem this growing global public health crisis, bringing his total commitment to more than \$600 million. The announcement was made at the 15th World Conference on Tobacco or Health in Singapore.

Building on six years of substantial progress, Bloomberg Philanthropies' four-year commitment will fund efforts to reduce the toll of tobacco in low- and middle-income countries, home to almost 80 percent of the world's smokers.

"Tobacco kills every day, so we need to keep the fight moving forward and keep the momentum going," said Bloomberg. "In low- and middle-income countries alone, an additional 1.2 billion people are now covered by at least one of six proven tobacco control policies - more than doubling the number of people protected in just five years. When these measures are implemented, the results are clear: fewer people use tobacco and they live longer, healthier lives."

Through 2011, a total of 2.2 billion people worldwide are covered by at least one effective tobacco control policy - representing about one-third of the world's population. Completely smoke-free laws - for public spaces -- are in effect in 38 countries, protecting one billion people.

The Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use is the world's largest coordinated effort to reduce the harm caused by tobacco globally. A tested and successful model, the Initiative supports the efforts of governments and non-governmental organizations to increase tobacco taxes, educate media and citizens on the negative impacts of tobacco, protect nonsmokers from exposure to other people's smoke and help people quit. The Initiative supports the public sector's efforts to educate and advocate for change. It also incorporates rigorous monitoring of public policy and the use of tobacco.

"The Bloomberg Initiative, and support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, has transformed the effort to drastically reduce the number of people harmed by tobacco. It is making a difference and saving lives in ways not before possible," said Matthew L. Myers, President, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "Their long-standing commitment to fighting big tobacco in places where citizens are most vulnerable has made Bloomberg Philanthropies a powerful global force in

taking on this daunting challenge."

Among the low- and middle-income countries that the Bloomberg Initiative has supported since 2007:

- 1.2 billion people are protected by a newly-passed effective tobacco control policies in 30 countries, resulting in at least 3.7 million lives saved from tobacco-related causes;
- 18 countries with almost 750 million citizens have passed 100% smoke-free laws including Brazil, Turkey and Pakistan. Several of the world's largest cities have also gone smoke-free, including Mexico City, Jakarta, and China's Harbin City which passed that nation's strongest tobacco control law to date;
- 11 countries have passed graphic pack warning laws and seven countries have passed comprehensive advertising and sponsorship bans - newly protecting 400 million and 200 million people, respectively; and
- 17 countries completed comprehensive face-to-face surveys of adults, establishing a tobacco use baseline that represents four billion people, or over half the world's population.

"While progress is encouraging, we will not rest until we turn the tide on the rising number of deaths - more than six million per year - from tobacco-related disease," said Bloomberg. "We challenge governments and non-governmental organizations to take action against tobacco and to make tobacco control a central part of protecting the health of every citizen."

In the upcoming four years of the Initiative, activities will:

Continue to be led by five of the world's leading tobacco control advocacy and public health organizations: the

- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, National Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC Foundation), the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the World Health Organization and the World Lung Foundation/International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.
- Partner with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation - a collaboration in place since 2008 to have MPOWER policies enacted in low and middle income countries to reduce death and disability due to tobacco use.
- Concentrate efforts on evidence-based policy change at the country level. Countries experiencing the largest burden of tobacco use - China, India, Indonesia, Russia, and Bangladesh - will continue to receive intensive support, as well as other low and middle income countries.
- Focus on raising the price of tobacco through increased tobacco taxes, the single most effective way to reduce tobacco use.

There will also be opportunity to develop new strategies, based on emerging evidence of success in tobacco control and other fields, including:

- Tobacco industry monitoring;
- Litigation and advocacy support to challenge tobacco industry efforts to thwart implementation of MPOWER policies or other related efforts
- Grant support to governments for the implementation of anti-tobacco initiatives

"The unwavering dedication of the hard-working tobacco control experts in our supported countries has led to tremendous advancements in combating the global tobacco epidemic," said Kelly Henning, M.D., director of Public Health Programs at Bloomberg Philanthropies. "With this new commitment, we will continue to accelerate the tobacco control movement in the next four years. Almost three-quarters of the world's people living in low and middle income countries are not yet covered by even one MPOWER policy - there is still much more lifesaving work to be done."

For more details, and country specific case studies please view or download our five-year progress report at <http://www.mikebloomberg.com> [1].

About Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use:

Bloomberg Philanthropies works primarily to advance five areas globally: the Arts, Education, the Environment, Government Innovation and Public Health. \$330 million was distributed in 2011. The Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use is focused on reducing the public health impact of tobacco use globally by implementing proven tobacco

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control policies in low- and middle-income countries where 80% of tobacco-related deaths occur. For more information please visit <http://bloombergdotorg.tumblr.com/> [2].

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