

SEARO High-Level Consultation on Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use

A Regional High-Level Consultation on the Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use was held in SEARO from 22 to 23 February 2007 with the objectives of enhancing understanding of the Bloomberg Initiative to the high-level policy-makers in four Bloomberg countries in the Region, ensuring better coordination among Bloomberg partners, WHO and the selected Bloomberg countries for development and implementation of the activities under the Initiative and generating ownership and commitment of the Bloomberg countries to the Project.

High level participants from four Bloomberg Focus countries – Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Thailand, Bloomberg Foundation and its partners - World Lung Federation, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, CDC and CDC Foundation, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Union and India Resource Centre attended the meeting. ADG/NMH from WHO Headquarters also attended the meeting.

Regional Director opened the meeting. In his opening remarks, while expressing WHO's satisfaction to be part of the Bloomberg Initiative, he emphasized, among other things, on the need for close collaboration and coordination among all the Bloomberg Partners at all levels for the success of the Initiative. He also underlined the complementary role of the Regional Tobacco Control Programme to the Initiative. He added that sustainability of any programme is important to make a real impact and the same can be ensured through strengthening the capacity of countries. At the same time, he emphasized that commitment and investment of concerned countries are important indeed in ensuring such a sustainability. He expressed the hope that the Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use would certainly help expand the scope of our regional work in backstopping the public sector in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Thailand.



The consultation came up with the agreement that all Bloomberg Partners should work in unison to have greater impact on the Initiative. In collaboration with WHO Country Offices, Ministries of Health in the four Bloomberg Focus countries in the Region and Regional Resource Centre, SEARO would organize National Capacity Building Workshops to develop projects, get them funded from Bloomberg Grant Mechanism and implement them in an effective manner with the objectives of reducing tobacco use in these countries.