Successful Tobacco Crop Substitution in China

The tobacco industry and its allies falsely claim farmers have no substitutes to growing tobacco. A new study entitled "Tobacco Crop Substitution: Pilot Effort in China" by Virginia C. Li et al. illustrates alternate crops in the world largest producer of tobacco. The study focuses on engaging farmers in cooperatives to substitute tobacco with food crops, thereby increasing farmers' annual income between 21% and 110% per acre (Am J Public Health. Published online ahead of print July 19, 2012:e1-e4. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2012.300733).

The key findings are 1) China's Yuxi pilot project on tobacco crop substitution and diversification successfully established that farmers, many of whom are not formally educated, were able to learn the knowledge and skills necessary to operate an enterprise that gave them an income superior to that earned from tobacco farming, 2) Farmers at 3 pilot sites engaged in tobacco crop substitution, thereby increasing their annual income by 21% to 110% per acre and 3) This pilot project represents a groundbreaking effort supported by local governments and farmers to move tobacco control efforts upstream.

SEATCA also has done two reports on tobacco farming which address tobacco crop substitution in the region. They are 1) Impact of Tobacco Growing on the Livelihood and Health of Tobacco Farmers and the Environment: A Preliminary Study in Vietnam (Available online at: http://bit.ly/196K4Oq) and 2) Child Labor in Tobacco Cultivation in the ASEAN Region (Available online at: http://bit.ly/11VjraC). For more information on full article and SEATCA publications; please email Ms. Worrawan: worrawan@seatca.org

Philippines: Adult Smoking Consumption Keep Going

20 November 2013, The Philippines is a main target of PMI although the excise tax has been increased as reported by PMI at the Morgan Stanley Global Consumer Conference, New York.

PMI presented statistics showing that adult daily consumption in the country is increased from 12.4m (in Quarter 1) to 12.9 (in Quarter 3) and it is a sign that the company will continue to increase its sales.

For more information on the full report, please email Ms. Worrawan; worrawan@seatca.org

Indonesia to Accede to the FCTC – Fingers Crossed

Indonesia’s Health Minister, Nafsiah Mboi, has reported that that her country would accede to the FCTC before the end of this year. Indonesia is currently the only country in Asia that is not a party to the FCTC.

"The treaty accession will be completed through a presidential decree," the Minister said. "The President has agreed. God willing we will accede to the treaty before the end of the year."

The tobacco industry and its allies are trying to block the accession using fear tactics of lies about economic doom for the farmers – a falsehood used over and over. However the public health community is firmly backing the Health Minister.

Lao PDR: Anti-Smoking FB Page

November 2013, Ms. Vathsana Kongsephengphet, SIS focal point in Lao PDR shared the online TI and smoking counteraction in the country through Facebook Fanpage "Lao Teenagers: Anti-Smoking".

The objective of this page is to promote non-smoking as the norm among youth to protect their own health and people around them. The information is in Lao local language to effectively share with young people.

Besides the anti-smoking campaign in Lao PDR, visitors to the page will be informed about the anti-smoking and TC campaigns in Thailand and other ASEAN countries. Visit the page at: http://on.fb.me/1fKy6lc or email Ms. Vathsana: baynoy@seatca.org