From 25 to 29 November in Melbourne, Australia, the Knowledge Hub held an inaugural Executive Workshop focused on the effective use of law for noncommunicable disease (NCD) prevention, with a significant focus on tobacco control and WHO FCTC implementation.

14 participants attended the workshop. Director-level officials represented eleven parties: Cambodia, Kenya, Laos PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Rwanda, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

The aim of the Executive Workshop was to empower senior officials with an understanding of health, trade, investment, human rights and sustainable development; to share lessons learned in relation to NCD legislation development, implementation and enforcement; and to nurture leadership skills for positive global health outcomes.

The Knowledge Hub was joined by WHO Regional and Country Office representatives who provided participants with briefings regarding regional priorities for action and technical support available. A
A representative from the Australian Government Department of Health also shared insights on Australia’s approach to tobacco plain packaging and the Department’s updated guidance for public officials on interacting with the tobacco industry, drawing on article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Participants shared stories of successes and challenges on legal and policy changes to protect and improve public health outcomes in their countries, including on tobacco control laws and regulations, and on defending tobacco control laws against legal challenge.

Through its International Legal Training Program principally supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Knowledge Hub has trained over 180 government lawyers and policymakers from low- and middle-income countries in the effective use of law to prevent cancer and other NCDs.