

Empowering Youth to Advance the Tobacco Control Movement

Why

- The Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) has conducted leadership programs, aimed at mid-career professionals, to develop skills and networks to support tobacco control policy implementation in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)
- Ascend: Leadership Development for the Future of Tobacco Control was developed to support early-career professionals (ages 18–30) from LMICs

What

- Nine-month, structured program:
 - monthly online meetings
 - immersive in-person workshop
 - mentorship from tobacco control leaders (six sessions per participant)
 - internships with tobacco control organizations (2024: 22 internships across 18 orgs)
- Topics include systems thinking tools, leadership, and tobacco control history/issues

Who

- 2024 cohort: 65 participant completions from 15 LMICs
- 2025 cohort: 50 participants enrolled from 20 LMICs

Ascend establishes a **skill set** among **future leaders** to sustain and propel the tobacco control movement




 Learn more
 about Ascend

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The work being presented has received funding or other means of support from any of the following sources:

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	Tobacco industry	E-cigarette & nicotine product industry	Pharma industry
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Testimonials

- “The Ascend program enhanced my advocacy skills by strengthening my leadership, communication, and strategic planning skills. I gained tools like spidergram and fishbone analysis to address root causes.”
—Participant from Bangladesh
- “The contacts I have made through the 2024 Ascend Program will be invaluable in advancing my work in tobacco control.”
—Participant from Nigeria
- “I always remember the message about ‘seven times down, eight times up.’ When I feel extremely exhausted with the efforts in tobacco control advocacy, I remind myself to rise again.”
—Participant from Indonesia

Findings & Implications

- 92% of 2024 participants agreed that the program helped to improve collaboration amongst a global tobacco control network
- 93% of 2024 participants agreed that the program will benefit their work in tobacco control
- Future Ascend programs will contain smaller cohorts to foster higher engagement and a longer program to include more sessions and opportunities to network

Authors

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