In March, over 600 participants from 42 countries attended the 6th Asia Pacific Union Region Conference in Tokyo, Japan. Organised by the Japan Anti-Tuberculosis Association (JATA) and The Union’s Asia Pacific Region, the conference theme centred on ‘TB-Free Asia Pacific – Accelerate Steps Toward Healthy Lungs.’

The conference programme featured a wide range of plenary lectures and symposia, covering subjects including multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB); tobacco control; new vaccines for TB prevention and treatment; and active TB case finding. The Union together with JATA hosted a symposium on Union programme on smoking cessation intervention chaired by Dr. Tara S Bam, The Union’s Deputy Regional Director for Asia Pacific, and Dr. Akihiro Ohkado, from Research Institute of Tuberculosis and JATA.

A particularly topical session was devoted to TB care and control in migrant populations. Experts outlined the challenges and potential solutions, agreeing that migration affects diverse populations and therefore creates diverse issues. There is no single blueprint and therefore no one solution. All the speakers asserted that addressing TB in migrants was not optional and had many other, little-known benefits.

Despite Japan’s relatively contained TB incidence, cases of drug-resistant TB represent a countrywide issue. Union consultant, Chen-Yuan Chiang, participated in a symposium on ‘MDR-TB, epidemiology and management’, about the clinical and programmatic management of drug-resistant TB in light of new WHO guidelines, particularly related to the implementation of shortened MDR-TB regimens. Chen-Yuan Chiang presented the practical steps necessary to implement shorter treatment regimens.

As Conference President, Toru Mori, from the Research Institute of TB, JATA, stressed in the opening ceremony, “The road to the end-TB target is still a long one. International collaboration is vital to the elimination of TB and the promotion of lung health. I am proud that the 6th Asia Pacific Conference provides a platform for informed debate and discussion, so that this international collaboration can take root.”
FROM EVIDENCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

For nearly 100 years The Union has drawn together the best scientific evidence and expertise to address the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. Know. Share. Act.

KNOW

- Twelve articles were published in peer-reviewed journals by Union experts and operational research specialists. These covered topics on childhood pneumonia, MDR-TB, and HIV-TB from countries across the region and were published in Public Health Action, International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, among others.

- The Union China Office conducted operational research supported by the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR). The paper, *The change in blood glucose levels in tuberculosis patients before and during anti-tuberculosis treatment in China*, was published in the Global Health Action.

SHARE

- The Union and China Centre for Disease Control organised a meeting of researchers, healthcare workers and other experts in TB to discuss methods for tackling latent TB infection as part of the end TB strategy in China.

- Over 120 health professionals received training through International Management and Development Programme courses in Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, China and Viet Nam.

- The Union and partners organised the Indonesian Conference on Tobacco or Health (ICTOH), which lead to a declaration outlining urgent actions needed to counter the country’s tobacco epidemic. Indonesia’s Tobacco or Health Youth Forum met before ICTOH to reclaim music and sport from the tobacco industry, which frequently sponsors such events.

- More than 70 tobacco control managers from across the region attended a leadership programme in Nepal. The training was jointly organised by The Union Asia Pacific Office, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Government of Nepal, and Action Nepal.

ACT

- With grants from the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use, The Union supported the following achievements in the region:

  - China’s fourth most populous city, Shenzhen, became 100 percent smoke-free after a law banning smoking in all indoor public places came into full force on 1 January 2017, protecting more than 20 million people.

  - Eighty-five cities in Indonesia (covering about 90 million people) are implementing a comprehensive smoke-free policy.

  - Cambodia and Myanmar successfully implemented pictorial health warning on tobacco packs, with aim to build public awareness, encourage smokers to quit smoking, and prevent youth to start smoking.