



# Meet the Targets

## Final Report – 2014

Encouraging Country-level Action to Make Cancer and Other Chronic Diseases a Global Priority



# Brazil



## Successful Campaign for Implementation of Anti-tobacco Law

### GRANTEE

Aliança de Controle do Tabagismo  
(ACT)

[actbr.org.br](http://actbr.org.br)

### DESCRIPTION

ACT (Tobacco Control Alliance, in English) is a nongovernmental organization (NGO) focused on reducing the health, social, environmental, and economic impact generated by the production and consumption of tobacco products and the exposure to tobacco smoke. It is composed of NGOs, medical associations, scientific communities, and activists. The Alliance has emerged as the strongest NGO working in tobacco control in Brazil.

**Cancer in Brazil:** Almost 22 percent of the male population smoked in 2009, and 15 percent of male deaths and 6 percent of female deaths can be attributed to tobacco, according to *The Tobacco Atlas Fourth Edition*, a publication of the American Cancer Society and the World Lung Foundation. Lung cancer is the second most frequent cancer among men, and Brazil has 437,600 new cancer cases each year (GLOBOCAN 2012).

After strong advocacy work by tobacco control proponents, including ACT, President Dilma Rousseff signed tough anti-tobacco measures into law in 2011. The law called for higher taxes, smoke-free places, advertising restrictions, and stronger warning labels. However, government did not initially issue the decree for the implementation of the law, so it did not go into effect right away.

In 2012, ACT received a two-year American Cancer Society Meet the Targets grant to advocate for regulation, implementation, and enforcement of the new federal legislation in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

It took another year and a half of intense efforts by a civil society coalition pressuring government, generating media coverage, and running online petitions before the government finally issued the decree on May 31, 2014. This was a major victory for anti-tobacco forces in Brazil, and it would not have happened without the strong role played by civil society, including ACT.



Anti-tobacco demonstrators in 2013, in front of Civil House in Brasilia, ask for implementation of the national Tobacco Control Law.

ACT was able to work with its partners to achieve an increase in tobacco taxes, establish a minimum price for cigarettes, and have the price posted at the point of sale. The annual tax increases scheduled through 2015 have been successful both in terms of a decrease in consumption and an increase in tax revenue. Also, contrary to industry claims, there was no increase in the size of the illicit market. For the first time in many years in Brazil, consumption among low-income populations has decreased more than among high-income groups.

Critical to the Brazil success was ACT's increased use of media advocacy to increase public awareness, placing articles in the mass media, developing and disseminating campaign materials, running social media campaigns, and conducting a petition. For example, ACT launched an online petition campaign on change.org that produced almost 25,000 signatures. The petition was delivered to the government in December 2013 to mark the "unbirthday" of the unregulated law. This helped put pressure on the government to act.

ACT supports the WHO Global Monitoring Framework on NCDs, which includes a voluntary target of a 30 percent reduction in prevalence of current tobacco use in people aged 15 and older by 2025.

"Although the successes of the tobacco control measures are responsible for a reduction of the NCD burden, we need to implement further the remaining effective measures and apply the lessons learned with tobacco control to other areas," said Paula Johns, executive director of ACT.