



McCabe Centre
FOR LAW & CANCER



STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

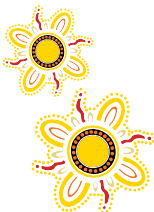
Change the law, and you change millions of lives



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As part of our commitment to advancing equity, we acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waterways across Australia, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Based on the lands of the Wurundjeri, Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation the McCabe Centre affirms that achieving equity in cancer and non-communicable disease prevention and care must be designed with and for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and First Nations communities worldwide.



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About us – changing the law changes millions of lives

The McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer is the only centre of its kind in the world dedicated to advancing law in cancer control.

Our heritage is deeply connected to Rolah McCabe, whose courage in standing up to the tobacco industry before her death continues to inspire our fight for justice, cancer prevention, and the rights of people affected by cancer. Her landmark case demonstrated the powerful role that law can play in cancer prevention and control.

We are fighting for a world free from preventable cancer, and a world in which everyone impacted by cancer has equitable access to treatment and care.

Our proven approach shows that empowering government lawyers and policymakers, and civil society is key to driving effective legal and policy reforms in cancer prevention and control. By leveraging the power of law, we strengthen policies, defend essential laws and create lasting change.

And together with key partners and collaborators, we commit to shaping a future where the burden of preventable cancers is reduced, demonstrating that with determination and strong legal frameworks we can build a healthier, more equitable world for all.

Established in 2012, the McCabe Centre is a joint initiative of Cancer Council Victoria, UICC, and Cancer Council Australia. Based in Melbourne, Australia, we have Regional Managers in the Pacific, Asia, and Africa, expanding our global reach.

We play a key role in strengthening public health laws worldwide, as a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Law & Noncommunicable Disease and the designated WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Knowledge Hub on legal challenges.



From our Director



Hayley Jones:
“Law is a powerful tool in cancer prevention and control globally”

It’s now well over a decade since our founding in 2012, and in this time, we’ve seen the profound impact that law can make on cancer prevention and control.

As we reflect on our progress – we celebrate the lives changed, the challenges overcome, and the future we continue to build together.

Our journey has always been centred around our heritage and our mission – to advance the law to prevent cancer, protect people, and save lives. By assisting governments and policymakers to successfully change laws and policies, and supporting them to stand against legal challenges, we protect the most vulnerable in communities worldwide.

And we’ve demonstrated that law is an extremely cost-effective way to create systemic change in cancer prevention and control – now listed in many of the WHO’s Best Buys to prevent cancer and other NCDs.

To date, we have trained over 570 lawyers and policy makers worldwide in law and policy change from over 100 countries and territories.

We’ve influenced law and policy change in 30 countries and helped defeat the tobacco industry in court in five more – through our International Legal Training Program (ILTP) Alumni benefiting nearly 3 billion people.

And locally, we’ve influenced numerous laws and policies in the area of treatment and care,

including worker and carer’s rights, voluntary assisted dying laws, cancer misinformation, DNA testing and discrimination in insurance.

This five-year Strategic Plan comes at a crucial time in history, with escalating global challenges like climate change, health inequities, and geopolitical and economic uncertainties, where bold and collective action is crucial to shaping a more just, sustainable, and equitable future.

The rapid increase in cancer and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is placing an overwhelming burden on countries least prepared to address these challenges.

We will keep on building on our legacy, our history, and continue to strengthen collaboration and networks, fostering knowledge exchange in low and middle-income countries, and empowering legal reform and policy change in cancer prevention and control. Because we know that what we do takes us closer to a world free from preventable cancers and where all people have equitable access to safe, effective, and affordable cancer care.

Hayley Jones, Director

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Our heritage

Rolah McCabe's ongoing legacy through the McCabe Centre

Rolah's courage in challenging the tobacco industry, before her death, inspires our ongoing fight for justice, cancer prevention and corporate accountability.

In 2001, terminally ill Rolah McCabe made a brave decision to take on one of the world's biggest tobacco companies, holding them responsible for her lung cancer and lifelong addiction to cigarettes. Her case against British American Tobacco Australia exposed the company's deliberate destruction of evidence to evade accountability. Though the Victorian Supreme Court initially ruled in her favor, the decision was overturned on

appeal. The case was later settled confidentially.

Rolah's battle highlighted the power imbalance between individuals and corporations, and allowed important tobacco industry documents to be made available, supporting a global movement for stronger accountability for tobacco's harms.

After her death at 52, her family and lawyers provided seed funding for the McCabe Centre for Law & Cancer, ensuring her legacy would continue in the fight for justice and corporate responsibility.

Her unwavering courage in the face of injustice continues to inspire us, driving our mission to hold powerful corporations accountable and driving legal and policy change in cancer prevention and control, toward a future where no one is left behind.



Our partners and governance



We are a joint initiative of: Cancer Council Victoria, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and Cancer Council Australia, and we've continued to work closely with our founding partners on local, regional and global priorities, since our founding in 2012.

Joint Oversight Committee: our team of lawyers and support staff are guided by a Joint Oversight Committee composed of leaders from Cancer Council Victoria, UICC, and Cancer Council Australia.



Dr Cary Adams
CEO, Union for International Cancer Control



Todd Harper, AM
CEO, Cancer Council Victoria



Michèle Williams
Board member, Cancer Council Australia

“

UICC is committed to leading convening, capacity building, and advocacy initiatives that unite the cancer community to reduce the global cancer burden, promote equity, and integrate cancer control into global health and development agendas.

The McCabe Centre stands out for its unique ability to address all three priority areas, with a proven track record of impactful work, working with Governments around the world and changing law and regulation to reduce the burden of cancer in their countries.”

“

The McCabe Centre's work has facilitated systemic change in cancer control through the use of law, both locally and internationally (particularly in low-to middle income countries). They've contributed to a wide range of law reform and policy change in tobacco control and made significant contributions through partnerships and collaborations and a multi-disciplinary approach to achieve meaningful and sustained change.”

“

The McCabe Centre is unique in its ability to strategically use its knowledge and expertise and networks to shape and influence cancer control with the effective use of the law.

They have made significant contributions through collaborations with governments, by taking Australian legal knowledge and expertise to the world, and by facilitating knowledge exchange, leading to tangible change, both locally and globally.”

Change the law, and you change millions of lives

03

Why law is a game-changer in the fight against cancer

Cancer isn't just a health issue – it's a legal issue too. And the law is one of the most powerful, yet underutilised, tools in reducing the burden of cancer.

The law intersects with cancer at every level, and we are proving its impact worldwide:

- Empowering governments to create laws and policies with cancer prevention and cancer care.
- Advocating for laws that prevent cancer before it starts – from tobacco control to environmental protections.
- Challenging powerful industries – from big tobacco to ultra-processed food and fossil fuels – that put profit before people's health.
- Driving legislative reforms to protect people affected by cancer, such as banning the use of genetic test results in life insurance applications or regulating those spreading cancer misinformation.

A compelling case for change

Cancer is the second leading cause of premature death globally, with over 10 million deaths annually, disproportionately affecting low – and middle-income countries.

And cancer is one of the top five NCDs – with 75% of all premature deaths caused by NCDs, with up to 80% of those deaths preventable. **Up to 50% of cancer deaths are preventable.**

Exposure to cancer risk factors such as tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy foods,

physical inactivity and air pollution, has been driven by the globalisation of unhealthy commodities industries and a failure to address the commercial determinants of health.

Health crises expose existing inequalities and failures to uphold human rights, sustainable development goals, and universal health coverage. We see inequities in healthcare – with poverty, gender, and race all creating higher risks for cancer patients and their families – in all facets, from early detection to access and affordability of treatment and care.

These problems are complex but not unsolvable.

UN and WHO frameworks provide evidence-based tools to address cancer and NCDs.

And many of these issues present opportunities to tackle interconnected problems and create a better world – one where we can all breathe clean air, eat healthy food, enjoy open spaces that promote health, access care and social support and uphold our fundamental human rights.

Strengthening laws and our use of law is key to achieving this vision.

And we are well placed to equip countries to use the law to meet their global commitments.

Our Outcomes and Impact



Law and policy changes in over **30 countries**



Worked with over **120 countries** via all our activities



Trained over **570 professionals**, from nearly **110 countries**



Locally – over **20 policy and law changes** in cancer care



Global Award winners – **9 Awards** from United Nations, WHO and LearnX



Global and regional recognition as a **leader in law and cancer prevention**



Over **500 million** people now benefiting from **tobacco plain packaging**



Nearly **3 billion** people now benefiting from these law and policy changes

OUR VALUES

Equity

We uphold equity by ensuring that our legal frameworks and actions promote fairness, remove barriers, and empower everyone to access their rights and opportunities without discrimination.

Excellence

We strive for the highest standards in all aspects of work, with a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and accountability to achieve meaningful and lasting impact.

Integrity

We act with integrity, upholding the highest ethical and legal standards, ensuring that our decisions and actions align with the law, promote justice, and build trust in all we do.

04

Change the law, and you change millions of lives



05

What we do

Law and policy change:

we advocate for and support the development of laws that prevent cancer and protect public health.

Capacity building:

empower policymakers, lawyers, and advocates to make legal and policy changes, to control cancer and protect those affected by it.

Collaboration & influence:

work with local and global partners with aligned goals to further drive meaningful change.

Equity:

promote legal protections to benefit everyone, especially the most vulnerable.

Our Strategic Plan



OUR MISSION
Prevent cancer, empower people and save lives through law & policy change



OUR VISION
A cancer free world



OUR VALUES
Equity Excellence Integrity

Mission Statement:

Changing the law changes millions of lives – by preventing cancer, empowering people, and saving lives. As the only centre of its kind in the world, we exist to unlock the potential of using the law to drive real and lasting change – empowering governments to create change for people with cancer, their families, and communities worldwide.

GOALS:

GOAL 1:

Prevent cancer by empowering governments to drive effective legal and policy change.

GOAL 2:

Improve the experience and outcome of people affected by cancer through law.

GOAL 3:

Promote greater equity and support the cancer community.

GOAL 4:

Ensure cancer continues to be a priority on the world health and development agenda.

STRATEGIC GOALS

KEY FOCUS AREAS:

PREVENTION:

Tobacco & alcohol control, healthy diet, physical activity, air pollution.

CARE:

Social protections, human rights, universal health coverage.

EQUITY:

Promote understanding of the use of law as an effective tool for justice and equity in the global cancer response.

ADVOCACY:

Promote the use of the law in policy development, legislation and regulation for effective cancer control.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Government law and policymakers.
- Low and middle-income countries.
- WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub – parties.

- Government law and policymakers.
- Low- and high-income countries.
- WHO Law & NCDs Collaborating Centre – WPRO.
- Key local and global collaborators.

- Low- and middle-income countries.
- UICC members (global cancer community).
- Key local and global collaborators.

- Governments and policymakers.
- WHO, UN collaborating organisations.
- UICC members & NCD Alliance members.
- McCabe Centre Alumni.

STRATEGIC ENABLERS

OUR PARTNERS

COLLABORATIONS & NETWORKS

SUSTAINABILITY

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KEY INPUTS



CURRENT ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH

- Financial & Legal barriers to care
- Lancet Commission on Women, Power & **Cancer**
- ABC Global Alliance on workplace rights
- Academic research in NCDs and global health law

ADVOCACY

- Government submissions with Cancer Council Victoria & Australia
- Legal input – UICC
- Collaborations with partners & networks

CONVENINGS

- World Cancer Leaders' Summit
- World Cancer Congress
- Key international negotiations (COP, UN High Level Meetings, WHO governing bodies, government inquiries etc.)

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub website and publications
- Law & NCD Factsheets and Newsletters
- Webinars
- UICC Virtual Dialogues

TRAINING

- International Legal Training Program
- UICC Mastercourses including Women, Power & Cancer course with Lancet
- Regular workshops for specific topics/regions

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Provide technical legal support to our alumni, FCTC parties, WHO Western Pacific Region countries, and Cancer Councils



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The transformative power of law for cancer and gender, was done by the inimitable Hayley Jones and her colleagues at the McCabe Centre for Law & Cancer. I have learnt a great deal personally and many of us on the Commission have learned so much by interacting with the McCabe Centre and understanding the way in which legislative actions and other aspects of law and policy can be used strategically to ensure better health outcomes for women experiencing cancer around the world.”

- Dr Ophira Ginsburg, Oncologist and Global Women's Health Researcher, Commissioner, Lancet Commission on Women, Power and Cancer.

Regarding the McCabe Centre's contribution to the Lancet Commission and UICC mastercourse.

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Our commitments

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE COMMIT TO:

Research

Continuing to develop, publish and disseminate world-leading research on using the law to promote cancer prevention and care with collaborating partners, utilising our extensive networks for distribution.

Knowledge sharing

Strengthening global tobacco control through legal expertise, as the designated WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub, providing legal technical support to Parties, empowering them to develop, implement, and defend strong tobacco control laws that protect public health for future generations.

Providing and sharing expertise on legal protections for people affected by cancer.

Addressing emerging issues locally and globally, developing and contributing to submissions, legal recommendations, factsheets, policies, publications, articles and resources. Utilising a variety of online platforms through our extensive networks, including the WHO, Convention Secretariat, UICC, NCD Alliance, and Cancer Councils.

Advocacy

Advancing human rights law and Universal Health Coverage, and monitoring, in the Western Pacific region by developing webinars, factsheets, and resources, in collaboration with the WHO as the Collaborating Centre for Law and NCDs.

Training

Continuing to run our world-leading training program (ILTP) to build capacity among government lawyers and policymakers globally, shaping the future of cancer law and policy – and continuing to build on our success. And provide legal knowledge and expertise through webinars, including UICC courses to members.

Convenings

Championing the effective use of law for cancer control with key networks through different forums including organising and presenting at events, webinars, workshops and high-level meetings (through various avenues including UICC World Cancer Congress, and World Cancer Leaders' Summit).

Technical support

Providing specialist knowledge and technical expertise on law and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Sharing latest research and legal changes, and sharing best practices, and supporting submissions and legal documents at local, regional, and global levels.

Continuing to support our alumni and guiding them through impactful reforms and legal challenges and continuing to provide quality and timely legal input to UICC and Cancer Councils for submissions, in areas such as cost of cancer initiatives, tobacco and nicotine regulation, and other cancer control priorities.

Networks & collaboration

In collaboration with our founding partners, UICC and Cancer Councils, we are working with a range of key partners, including the WHO, NCD Alliance, The Lancet (Commission on Women, Power and Cancer) and the Australian Government. We also foster opportunities for knowledge exchange through our networks, enabling key learnings to be shared across countries and contexts.

Our alumni

We've established a strong network of over 570 alumni, who are actively working to use law to control cancer and NCDs in their respective countries. We continue to offer

ongoing technical advice and support to our alumni who have successfully defended tobacco control laws, adopted comprehensive alcohol control laws, and implemented taxes on sugary drinks, among other achievements.

Sustainability

We are diversifying and expanding our sources of funding to ensure ongoing financial sustainability of the McCabe Centre and building and engaging new strategic partners. We're also improving our systems to monitor outcomes, for evaluation of impact, and continuing to focus on staff training and development, to ensure delivery on our mission.



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07

Our focus on the future

ON THE HORIZON – OUR ASPIRATIONAL PROJECTS

As we look to the future, we do so with confidence, grounded in the strength of our past successes and achievements, while inspired by the future we can build with and for others.

Each milestone we've reached has laid the foundation for what comes next, and it is with this momentum that we step boldly into the next chapter.

Together, we will continue to shape a future defined by meaningful impact – benefiting the most vulnerable with stronger public health laws and protections, by continuing to use the law as a powerful tool in cancer control. Here are a number of key areas we want to explore further and would be interested to discuss these and other opportunities with interested partners and stakeholders.

End the Tobacco / Nicotine Epidemic – for Everyone, Everywhere

- Advance forward-looking measures like Tobacco-Free Generation, warnings on sticks, reduction in retailer density etc. for countries that are ready for these.
- Support implementation of the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control in low- and middle-income countries earlier in the journey.
- Make sure the tobacco epidemic doesn't just become the vaping epidemic.

Reproduce our Tobacco control legal change success in other WHO “Best Buy” key focus areas

• Air Pollution

An Air Pollution package – leveraging the strength of our UICC and alumni networks – to get our proven public health legal community to bring their experience on other NCD risk factors to air pollution as part of the NCD response.

• Cancer Warnings Labels:

A collaboration with regional organisations on supporting adoption of cancer warnings on Alcohol & Food labels globally, modelled on our plain packaging workshops, and with experts from those countries etc. speaking to our networks.

Equity (Women, Power & Cancer project)

Women are disproportionately disadvantaged in all areas of cancer control globally, due to inadequate laws, policies and funding. On the back of our contribution to the Lancet's Commission on Women, Power and Cancer, and our workshop (run with UICC, and The Lancet – which attracted over 140 participants from 37 countries), a future project would include further webinars and training programs to continue to support the 10 recommendations from the report.

Equity (Low and Middle Income Countries) – Cancer Registries project

Cancer Registries inform governments of the size and nature of the cancer burden in the country – and the major cancer risk factors – yet only 21% of the world's population have Cancer Registries. In collaboration with IARC and the African Registries Network, we have developed a Cancer Registries Law Toolkit. To ensure the toolkit has greatest effect, targeted technical support and follow up activities would be desirable. This would include providing direct, in-country, technical support to policymakers and legal drafters using the toolkit, and offer training workshops and resources to support adoption, adaption and implementation of cancer registry legislation.

Equity – Using Law to improve the impact of Cancer Plans

National Cancer Control Plans (NCCP) set out the goals, strategies and activities that a country can implement to reduce its cancer burden in line with its health infrastructure and epidemiological situation. A comprehensive cancer plan is a prerequisite for effective and efficient action on cancer nationally. This project could involve UICC and the McCabe Centre working jointly on a project to identify how policy and legislation can work effectively together to improve the implementation and impact

of NCCPs. The study would show the extent to which legislation can support the operationalisation of NCCPs and would be an important contribution to knowledge and action for international cancer control planning.

Equity – Indigenous

With the increasing disproportionate cancer mortality rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, we need to bring a legal lens to current work with Indigenous Human Rights Protections, including supporting processes for Indigenous data governance in cancer research in Australia and beyond, and contributing to global initiatives seeking to address cancer disparities for First Nations people.



08

Voices of our Alumni:

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I will always be an ambassador for McCabe because I know the impact and that is like a gift that keeps on giving”

– Sheryl Dennis-Wright, Attorney-at-Law, Technical Officer (Legal), WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, PAHO (McCabe Centre Alumna).

“

The McCabe Centre training gave me the confidence I needed. And the McCabe Centre gives me a team that is there for me when I need help either to develop laws and regulations, or when we are faced with a lawsuit from industry”

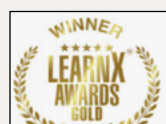
– Vicky Wari, Program Manager – NCDs, National Department of Health, Papua New Guinea (McCabe Centre Alumna).

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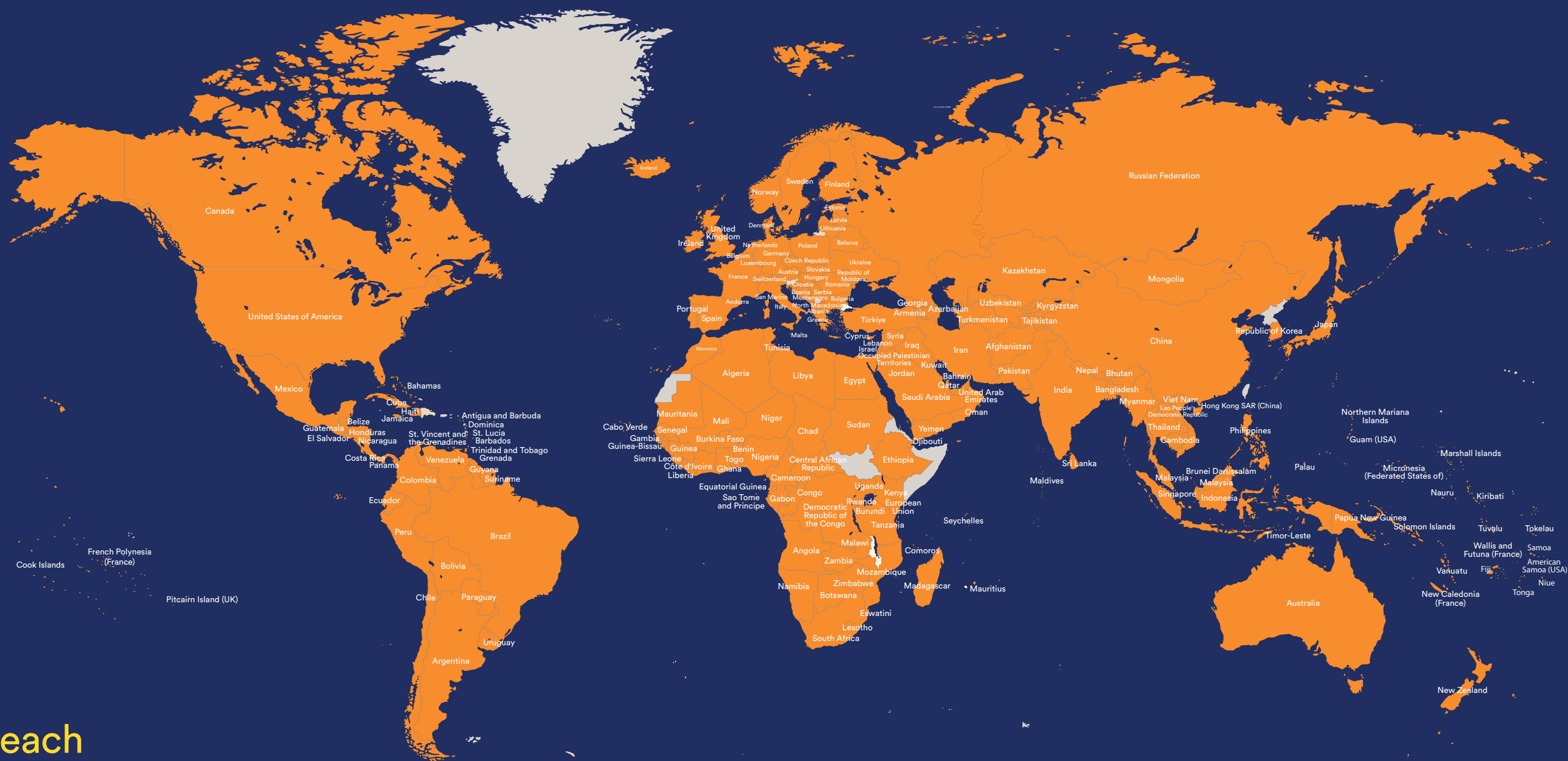
To know that at some point there is community all over the world and that you have someone else, that you have colleagues that you can approach if you need support, I feel that’s another big outcome of the course”

– Daniel Dorado, Interinstitutional Committee for Tobacco Control, Ecuador (McCabe Centre Alumnus).

- Global and regional recognition as a leader in law and cancer prevention.
- Global Award winners – 9 Awards from United Nations, WHO and LearnX



09



Our global reach

Our Key Audiences:

Government law, policymakers and civil society:

570 McCabe Centre Alumni
from **109** countries

182 countries – WHO
Knowledge Hub (FCTC)
(183 Parties)

1,100 members from
170 countries
UICC members (leaders of the
cancer community)

37 countries and areas
Law & NCD Collaborating Centre
(*WHO Western Pacific Region*)

This map is for illustration only and does not reflect any opinion on the legal status of countries or territories or on the delimitation of borders.

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