What did the GCRF funded project involve?

We used the Scottish Funding Council, GCRF small grants fund to enable us to explore whether there was potential to widen the application of 'A Stop Smoking In Schools Trial' (ASSIST), which was developed in the UK, in low and middle income country settings (LMIC).

What is ASSIST?

- ASSIST is a peer-led smoking prevention programme aimed at 12-13 year olds.
- 'Influential' peers are nominated to become peer supporters by their own peers (not authority figures such as teachers).
- Peer supporters are trained (away from school) to deliver informal smoking prevention & cessation messages to peers.
- UK research found ASSIST reduced smoking uptake (up to two years later). The intervention is now a licensed programme available widely via a not-for-profit company.

Country specific scoping work

Each country partner undertook scoping work to explore the feasibility of implementing ASSIST. This included desk-based research and interviews/focus groups with a range of key stakeholders including school students focusing on:

- Political will & public health priorities
- Degree of hierarchy in educational system
- Delivery partners (who could deliver and support peer supporter training)
- Features of school year group including gender & transition points
- Questions about effectiveness or on the process of implementation

Sharing findings from scoping work and building collaboration

Between 20th to 24th May 2019, an international group including researchers from East Asia (China), South-east Asia (Indonesia and the Philippines), Eastern Europe (Moldova) & the UK (England and Scotland), met at the University of Glasgow!

What's next!.....A possible larger bid in countries where scoping work indicated implementing and researching ASSIST this might be feasible.