



TPackSS: Tobacco Pack Surveillance System

Smokeless Tobacco Health Warning Label Compliance

Bangladesh - 2016



As of December 2016, Bangladesh's health warning labels (HWLs) – which fulfill the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Article 11 minimum requirements – included the following:

1. 50 percent coverage of the front and back of the pack, with color pictorial HWLs
2. Health warning text displayed on contrasting background color
3. Two different tobacco use health warning messages, in Bengali

Article 11 of the World Health Organization's (WHO) FCTC requires that Parties implement effective tobacco packaging and labeling measures to increase public awareness of the negative health impacts of tobacco products.

Bangladesh's HWL size tied for 6th in the WHO South-East Asia Region and tied for 57th globally in 2016.¹ Bangladesh meets minimum FCTC guidelines for warning size on the front and back of the pack.

TPackSS assesses health warning label compliance as HWL requirements improve in countries. In December 2016, TPackSS collected smokeless tobacco products (SLT) in Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chittagong using a systematic protocol.² SLT products were assessed for compliance with the current HWL policy in place at the time of data collection.³

84 unique SLT Packs were systematically collected, of which 35 packs displayed the HWLs mandated by the Bangladesh Ministry of Health. Packs were assessed for compliance with four key HWL requirements.³

Location

20 percent of the packages had a health warning label in the upper or lower portion of the front and back of the pack.



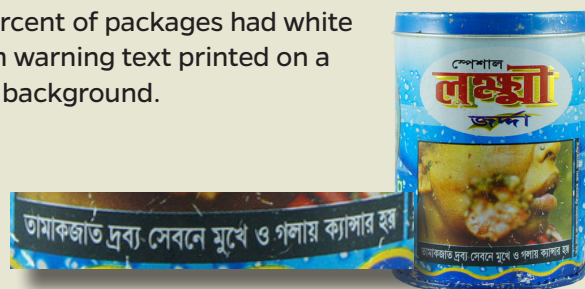
Size

0 percent of packages had a health warning that covered 50 percent of both the front and back of the pack.



Label Elements

54 percent of packages had white health warning text printed on a black background.



Text Size

43 percent of packages had a graphic to text ratio of 6:1.



0%

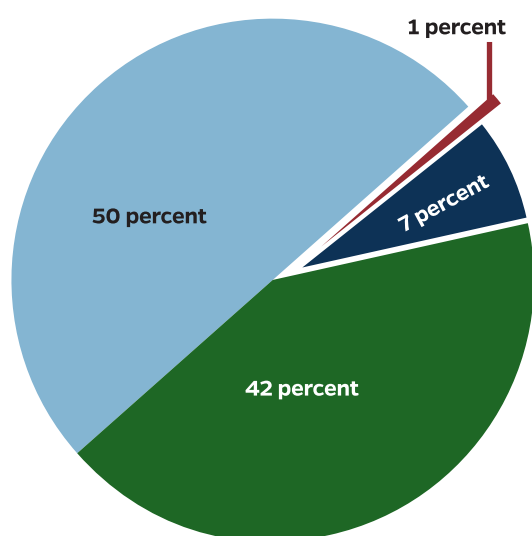
of the unique SLT products assessed were compliant with all four key HWL requirements.



Area of Concern: Non-Bangladesh Health Warning Labels

These packs demonstrate the presence of SLT packs in Bangladesh that either had no health warning label, or had a non-Bangladesh (foreign) health warning label.

The continued presence of SLT packs without government required health warning labels in Bangladesh undermines tobacco control efforts.



Breakdown of packs collected and presence of required HWLs

Total number of unique packs collected: 84

- **50 percent** of total packs had no HWL or a non-Bangladeshi HWL (n=42)
- **42 percent** of total packs had a current mandated HWL (n=35)
- **7 percent** of total packs had a smoked product HWL (n=6)
- **1 percent** of total packs had a previous text-only Bangladesh HWL (n=1)

Over half of all the SLT packs collected had no HWL or a non-Bangladeshi HWL. Bangladesh should take action to reduce the sale of packs that do not bear the mandated Bangladeshi HWL. Exposure to best practice HWLs can improve the effectiveness of HWLs in Bangladesh.

References:

1. Canadian Cancer Society. Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report, Fifth Edition. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids; 2016. http://global.tobaccofreekids.org/files/pdfs/en/WL_status_report_en.pdf. Accessed May 25, 2016.
2. Smith K, Washington C, Brown J, Vадnais A, Kroart L, Ferguson J, Cohen J. The Tobacco Pack Surveillance System: A Protocol for Assessing Health Warning Compliance, Design Features, and Appeals of Tobacco Packs Sold in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. JMIR Public Health Surveill. 2015;1(2): e8 DOI: 10.2196/publichealth.4616
3. Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) Rule (S.R.O. No. 58), 2015; Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) (Amendment) Act (Act No. 16 of 2013), 2013, People's Republic of Bangladesh

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About TPackSS

The Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health developed the Tobacco Pack Surveillance System (TPackSS) project to monitor whether required health warnings on tobacco packages are being implemented as intended, and to identify pack features and marketing appeals that might violate or detract from country tobacco packaging laws in these countries.