



TPackSS: Tobacco Pack Surveillance System Cigarette 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. Text warning displayed on contrasting background color
3. Six different tobacco use health warning messages, in Bengali



Bangladesh's HWL size tied for 6th in the WHO South-East Asia Region and tied for 57th globally in 2016.¹ Bangladesh meets 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 cigarette packs in Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chittagong using a systematic protocol.² Cigarette packs were assessed for compliance with the current HWL policy in place at the time of data collection.³

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.

TPackSS systematically collected a sample of 65 unique cigarette packs that displayed the HWLs mandated by Bangladesh. Packs were assessed for compliance with four key requirements.³

Warning Location

100 percent of the packs had a health warning in the lower portion of the front and back of the pack.



Warning Size

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



Warning Label Elements

95 percent of packs had white health warning text printed on a black background.



Warning Text Size

100 percent of packs had a graphic to text ratio of 6:1.

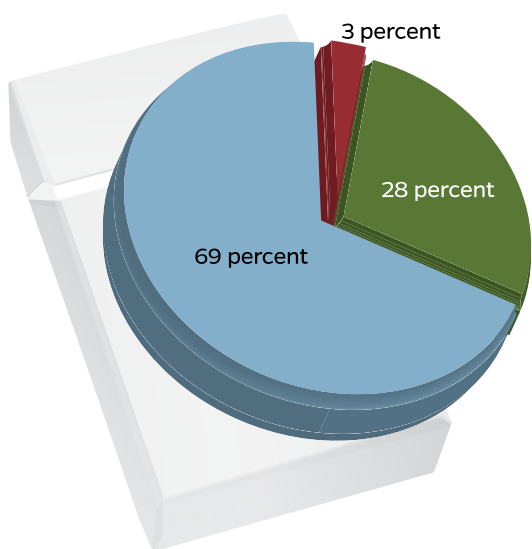


89%

of the unique cigarette packs assessed were compliant with the four key HWL requirements.

Area of Concern: Health Warning Label Printing

These packs demonstrate the wide variation in warning label printing and display among the tobacco products available in Bangladesh. On traditional cardboard packages, the warning label is clear. However, on some smokeless and bidi packages using traditional paper or tin packaging, the warning label is faded, obstructed, and/or smeared.



Breakdown of packs collected and presence of required HWLs

Total number of unique packs collected: 233

- **69 percent** of total packs had no HWL or a non-Bangladeshi HWL (n=162)
- **28 percent** of total packs had a current mandated HWL (n=65)
- **3 percent** of total packs had a previous text-only Bangladesh HWL (n=6)

Approximately seven in ten of all packs collected displayed a non-Bangladeshi HWL or no 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.

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, Vadhais 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.

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.