



# TPackSS: Tobacco Pack Surveillance System Cigarette Health Warning Label Compliance



## Egypt - 2013

As of November 2013, Egypt'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. Four different tobacco use health warning messages, in Arabic



Front of pack      Back of pack

Egypt's HWL size tied for 1st in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region and tied for 19th globally in 2012.<sup>1</sup> Egypt 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 November 2013, TPackSS collected cigarette packs in Cairo, Alexandria, and Mansoura using a systematic protocol.<sup>2</sup> Cigarette packs were assessed for compliance with the current HWL policy in place at the time of data collection.<sup>3</sup>

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 55 unique cigarette packs that displayed the HWLs mandated by Egypt. Packs were assessed for compliance with two key requirements.<sup>3</sup>

### Warning Size

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



This non-compliant pack has extended red and white branding into the space which should be used for the HWL.



### Warning Label Elements

100 percent of packs had health warning text printed on a black background and a smoking quit line printed on a yellow background.



# 73%

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

## Area of Concern: Quality of Printed Health Warning Label

These packs are compliant with the two key HWL requirements; however, a comparison of the HWLs reveals differences in the printed color and crop of the image influencing the overall impact of the HWL.



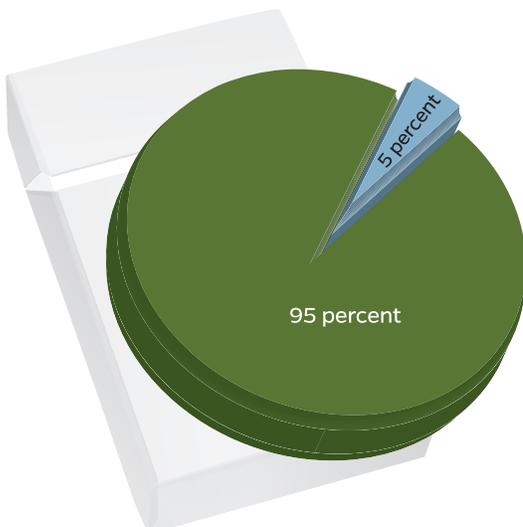
Reference Image



HWL with proper contrast and correct crop



Partially cropped out HWL with darkened contrast



## Breakdown of packs collected and presence of required HWLs

Total number of unique packs collected: 58

- **95 percent** of total packs had a current mandated HWL (n=55)
- **5 percent** of total packs had no HWL or a non-Egyptian HWL (n=3)

Nearly all of the packs collected in Egypt displayed a current Egyptian HWL. Egypt should consider placing the health warning label at the top of the pack to improve visibility, and adopting plain and standardized packaging to further improve the effectiveness of HWLs in Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Cancer Society. Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report, Third Edition. European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention; 2012. [http://www.ensp.org/sites/default/files/CCS\\_status\\_report\\_health\\_warnings\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ensp.org/sites/default/files/CCS_status_report_health_warnings_2012.pdf). Accessed May 25, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> 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). doi: 10.2196/publichealth.4616.

<sup>3</sup> Law No. 154 of 2007, Specific to Amendment of Some Provisions of Law No. 52 of 1981 in the Matter of Preventing Smoking Related Harm, June 2007, Government of Egypt; Executive Bylaw of Law No. 52 of 1981 on Prevention of the Harms of Smoking, 2010, Government of Egypt; Ministry of Health and Population Decree No. 443 of 2008, Government of Egypt; Health Warning Labels, 2012, Government of Egypt.

## 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.