JOHNS HOPKINS
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The Use of Sports Imagery and Terminology on Cigarette Packs from Fourteen Countries

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Background

- Study goal is to identify ways that tobacco companies use the pack to link products to sports & sporting concepts in low and middle income countries
- Tobacco industry has a long history of linking products with sports through sponsorship and sports-related product marketing
- Linkages between sports and cigarettes can serve to make products appeal to young men, and tie products to positive qualities such as athleticism, health and strength

Image taken from tobacco.stanford.edu (January 28 2017)

Methods

- Study focus on 14 low and middle income countries with high burden of tobacco use
- Data collection 2013 & return in 2015 to 4 countries where health warning policies had changed
- Systematic purchase of unique packs from diverse retailers in 3 populous cities in each country
- Double coding of each pack to identify appeals and existence of sporting text and imagery
- >4000 packs collected and analyzed

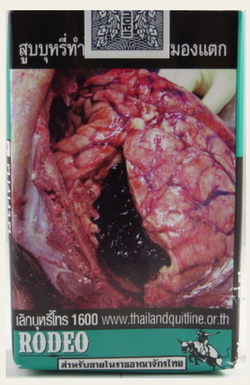
Image taken from grandprix.com (January 28 2017)

Results

- 36 brand variants had distinct depictions of sport on the pack
- 25 brand variants had packs that contained sporting terminology (e.g. 'win', 'polo' or 'goal')
- 22 brand variants had packs that contained sports-related imagery
- Sports depicted included popular sports such as football (soccer) and cycling as well as luxury sports such as polo and Formula One racing

Diyarbakir, Turkey, 2013

Surabaya, Indonesia 2013



Bangkok, Thailand, 2015

Semarang, Indonesia, 2015

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 2013

Davao City, Philippines, 2013

Hat Yai, Thailand, 2015

Lahore, Pakistan, 2013

Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2013

Lahore, Pakistan, 2013

Conclusions

- As the marketing environment for cigarettes becomes more restrictive, the pack becomes key as a communication medium
- Connections between sports and cigarettes undermine public health messages by conveying aspirational notions of health, strength & power
- Sporting text and imagery can distract from health warning labels
- Sporting messages can be aspirational and convey a sense of luxury and an extravagant lifestyle
- Plain packaging policies would prevent harmful connections being made between sports and cigarettes on the pack itself

Acknowledgement: This work was supported with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies' Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (www.bloomberg.org). No conflicts.

www.globaltobaccocontrol.org/tpackss