

# Use of Term “Less Smoke Smell” on Tobacco Packs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Ryan David Kennedy, PhD; Kevin Welding, PhD; Kara Robinson, BS; Katherine Clegg Smith, PhD; Joanna Cohen, PhD

## Background

In 2005, Japan Tobacco Incorporated (JTI) applied to trademark the term “LSS Less Smoke Smell”, a phrase printed on some JTI cigarette packs to describe products designed to have the appearance of reduced negative qualities of cigarette smoke including secondhand smoke.

LSS cigarettes are no safer than regular cigarettes. LSS products were introduced during a time of rising public knowledge of SHS health effects and demand for smoke-free spaces.

LSS cigarettes have been sold in high-income countries like Japan and Canada for over 10 years. It is unclear to what extent LSS cigarettes have been marketed in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), or if manufactures other than JTI have used similar terms or phrases.

## Methods

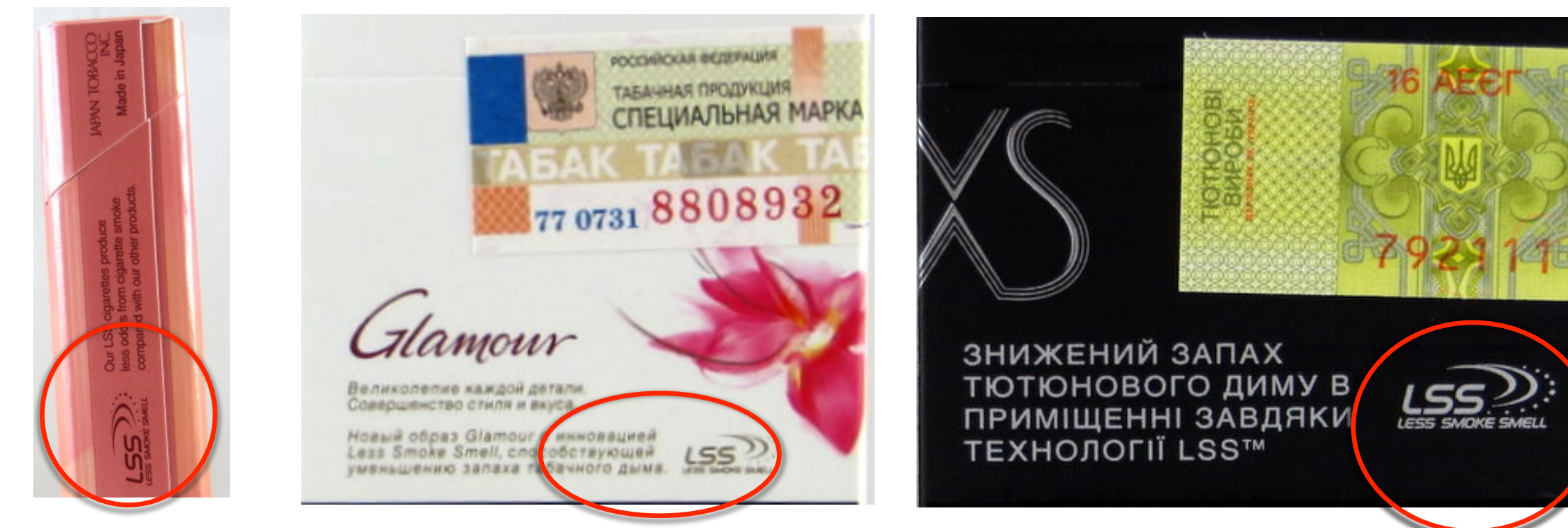
The Tobacco Pack Surveillance System (TPackSS) systemically collects tobacco packs available in 14 low- and middle-income countries with high tobacco use including: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and Viet Nam.

Between 2013-2017, TPackSS collected and coded over 4,000 packs for marketing appeals including lexical content related to smoke smell.

The current study reports the tobacco manufacturers that included claims on packs that suggest reduced odor, and from which countries these packs were purchased.

## Results

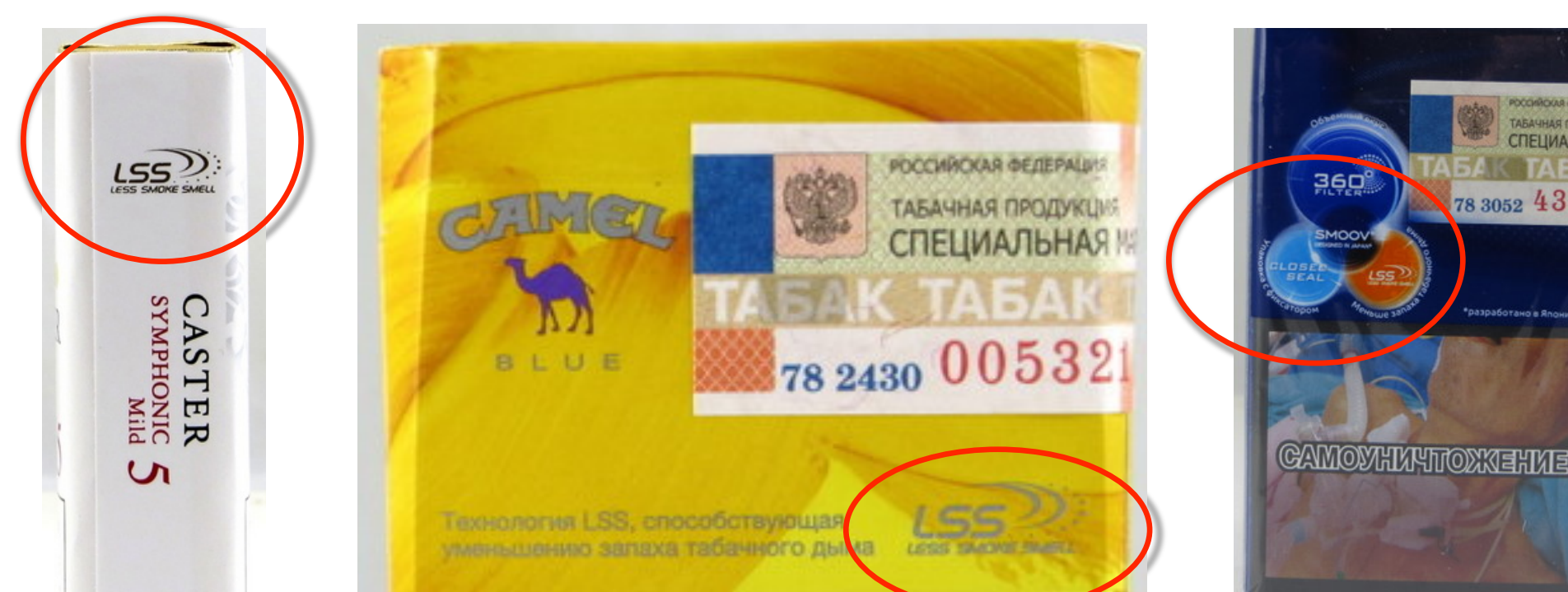
The lexical terms “LSS”, and/or “Less Smoke Smell” appeared on JTI cigarettes in China, Russia, Ukraine and Viet Nam. JTI packs included the phrase “Less smell of tobacco smoke”, on packs from Russia.



Pianissimo;  
Pack from China,  
Shanghai, collected  
2013

Glamour;  
Pack from Russian Federation,  
Moscow, collected 2013

Winston;  
Pack from Ukraine,  
Kyiv collected 2013

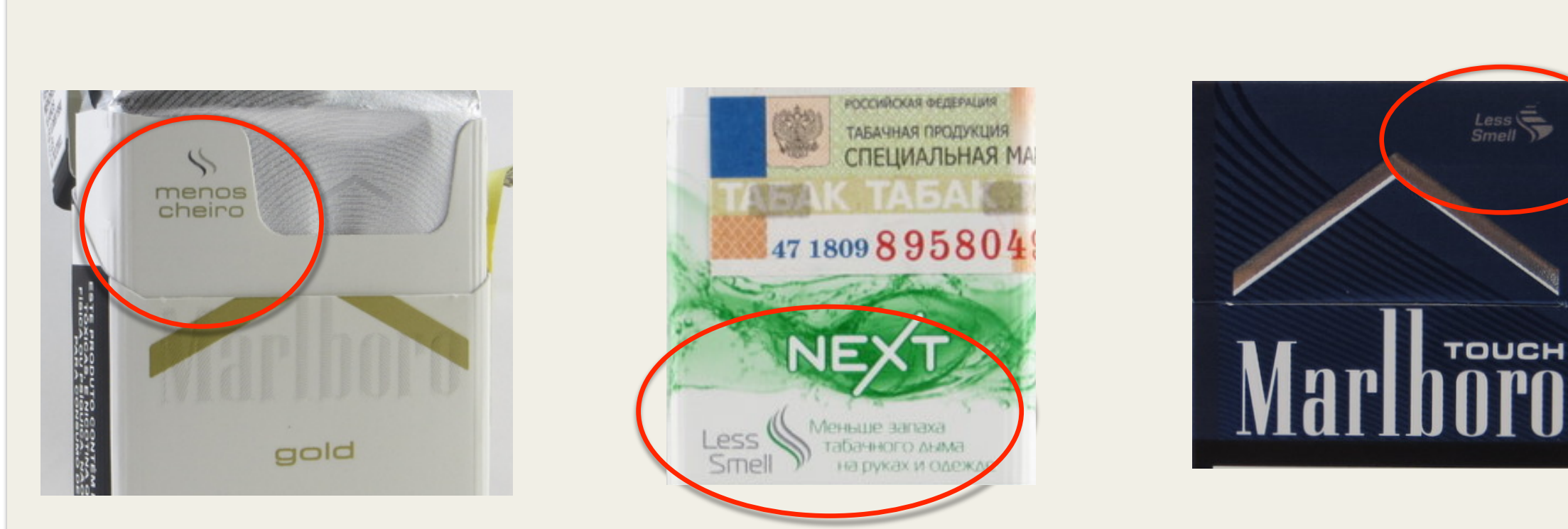


Caster;  
Pack from Viet  
Nam, Hanoi,  
collected 2015

Camel;  
Pack from Russian Federation,  
St. Petersburg, collected 2015

Mevius;  
Pack from Russian Federation,  
Moscow, collected 2015

PMI packs included terms similar to LSS, including the phrase “menos cheiro”, Portuguese for “less smell” on packs in Brazil, “menos olor”, Spanish for “less smell” on packs in Mexico, “Less Smell” from packs in Ukraine and Russia.



Marlboro;  
Pack from Brazil,  
São Paulo, collected 2016

Next;  
Pack from Russia,  
Moscow, collected 2015

Marlboro;  
Pack from Ukraine, Kyiv,  
collected 2013



Marlboro;  
Pack from Viet Nam,  
Ho Ci Minh City, collected 2015

Benson&Hedges;  
Pack from Mexico,  
Mexico City, collected 2013

Parliament;  
Pack from Russia,  
Moscow, collected 2015

In India, Godfrey Philips India Ltd, who distribute Marlboro used the phrase “Clear sense of less smell on you and around you”; and Imperial Tobacco Calcuta (ITC) packs included the term “Low smell”, and KT&G packs used the phrase “Smoke smell down innovation”



Marlboro;  
Pack from India, Chennai,  
collected 2016

Classic;  
Pack from India, Mumbai,  
collected 2016

One & Only;  
Pack from India, Bengaluru,  
collected 2016

The lexical term “Odor reduction technology” appeared on British America Tobacco packs in Brazil.



BAT - Vogue  
Pack from Brazil (Manaus) collected 2013

## Discussion

The world’s largest tobacco companies are using terms “LSS”, and “Less Smoke Smell” as well as terms like “Less Smell”, “Odor reduction technology”, and “Smoke Smell Down” on packs in LMICs. The marketing tactic of less smoke smell is likely salient to consumers in jurisdictions, like Russia, that have recently implemented smoke-free environments. Terms like LSS should be considered when jurisdictions regulate misleading terms on tobacco products. Future research should study how terms like LSS impact consumer perceptions of product harm.

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