

India Tiny Targets Report: Tobacco Advertisement, Sales, Product Displays, and Purchase Incentives around Primary and Secondary Schools

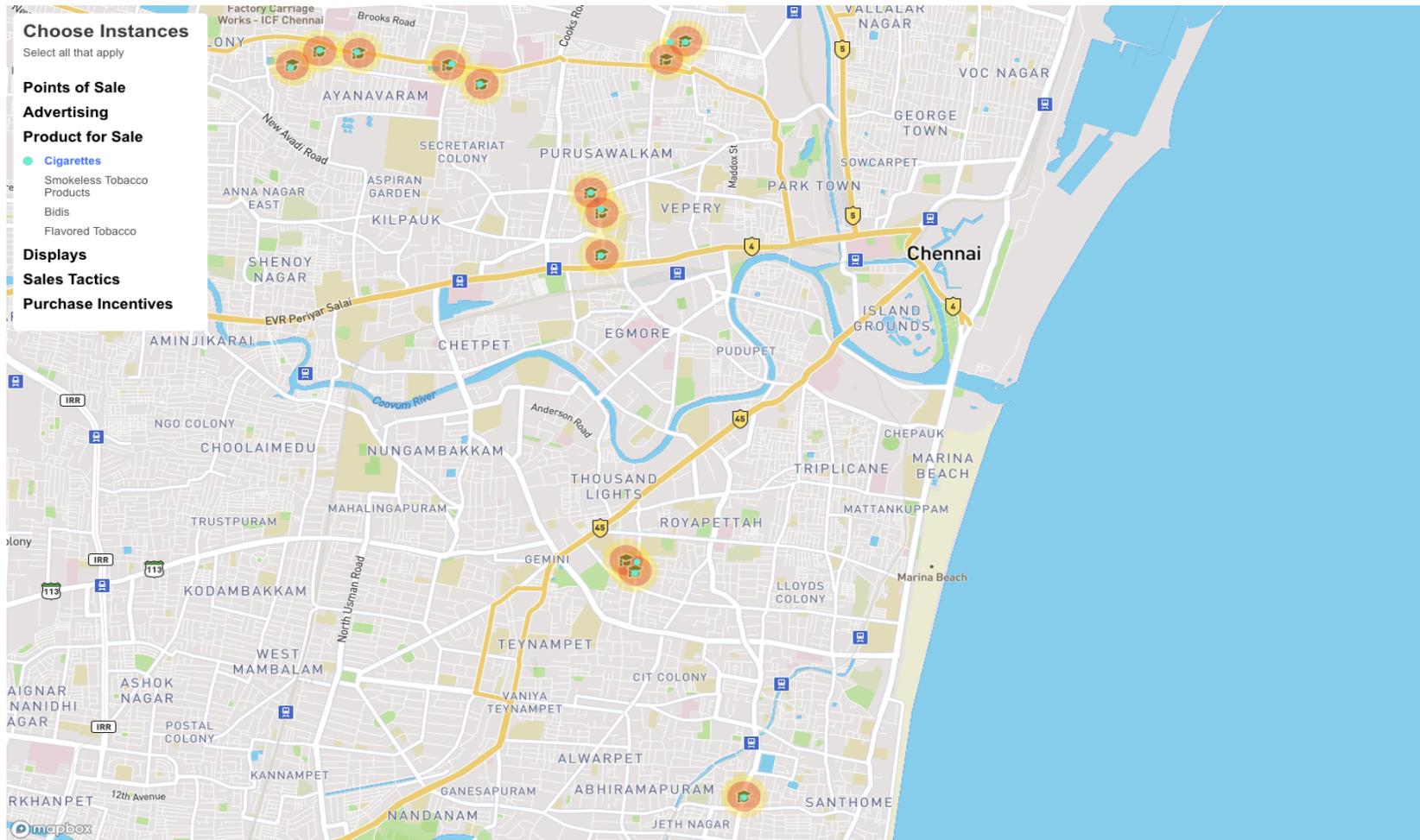


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Executive Summary

Tobacco is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease and premature deaths globally and in India. According to Global Adult Tobacco Survey 2016-17, Tobacco use is estimated to cause more than 13 lakh deaths in India annually. One in 10 deaths in India is attributable to tobacco use. Per day, the number of tobacco-related deaths in India is 3,700 – almost 154 per hour. Tobacco related diseases account for an estimated 6 million deaths globally and 0.8-0.9 million deaths in India each year. The Global Adult Tobacco Survey, undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), India (2016-17), shows that nearly 28.6% of adults use tobacco, and the average age at initiation of daily tobacco use is 18.9 years. As per the GATS data, 14.6% of 13 –15 year old students in India use tobacco. As many as 11% of all male students surveyed were found to be users of smoking or smokeless tobacco, while 6% of female students used smokeless tobacco and 3.7% smoked tobacco. According to the MOHFW, nearly 37% children in India initiate smoking before the age of 10, and, each day, 5500 children begin tobacco use and consequently may become addicted. One third of these 5,500 children will lose their life to tobacco through diseases like cancer, heart attack, asthma, among others.

Among the first countries to ratify the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in 2004, India has undertaken several domestic tobacco control initiatives. The country enacted comprehensive tobacco control legislation, entitled, “The Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003” (COTPA), which has the objective of protecting the public health of citizens and certain risk groups. It has the potential of saving the lives of the one million people who annually die from tobacco use in India. COTPA Section 6 bans the sale of tobacco to and by minors and prohibits the sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of educational institutions. MOHFW Rules, enacted under COTPA’s authority, further require signage detailing this sales prohibition to be displayed prominently near the main gate and on the boundary wall of schools and institutes. Also, Section 77 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 additionally criminalizes the distribution of tobacco products to children.

The MOHFW recently issued an advisory letter, dated 21st September 2017, recommending the licensing of tobacco

vendors through municipal authorities. The advisory observes that it would be appropriate to include in the authorization a condition / provision that the shops permitted to sell tobacco products cannot sell non-tobacco products such as toffees, candies, chips, biscuits, soft drinks, among others, which are meant for the non-user – particularly children.

Despite the prohibition on sales of tobacco products near educational institutions, numerous shops sell tobacco products around schools. Shops which otherwise should be beyond the reach of children become mechanisms to introduce tobacco to minors.

With support from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, two civil society organizations, **Consumer Voice and Voluntary Health Association of India**, undertook a study from November 2017 to December 2017 in **20 cities across 6 states of India**. Entitled, *Tiny Targets*, the study sought to determine whether tobacco products are sold near schools in India. Surveyors visited a total of 243 schools and 487 points of sale and found the following:

Around schools:

- a. Vendors sell tobacco products. (Investigators observed 225 points of sale selling tobacco products out of the 487 surveyed around schools. Street vendors were the most common form of vendors at 56.6% of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed.)
- b. Multinational tobacco companies sell tobacco products around schools. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 52.2% carried British American Tobacco brands and 25.3% carried ITC brands.)
- c. Vendors advertise tobacco products around schools. (Investigators observed tobacco advertising at 34% of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed.)
- d. Vendors sell cigarettes and bidis via single sticks, making these products cheap and accessible to children and youth. (Investigators observed single stick sales in 90.9% of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed.)
- e. Vendors display tobacco products in ways that are appealing to children and youth. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 91% of displays were at 1 meter – a child’s eye level; 54% of the

points of sale had no visible health warning; and 90% of displays were beside candy, sweets and toys – items marketed to children.)

- f. Vendors utilize sales techniques such as discounting products and distributing free samples. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 37.5% offered price discounts and 32.5% offered free tobacco products.

All of the above violate India's tobacco control law, COTPA.

To combat these flagrant violations of law that harm Indian children and youth; this Report recommends the following:

1. The Government must improve enforcement of COTPA.
2. Municipal authorities should implement the MOHFW's 21st September 2017 advisory by licensing tobacco vendors. Regulating tobacco vendors can aid COTPA enforcement.
3. COTPA compliance should be a condition of a vendor license where violations of COTPA constitute a violation of the license itself.
4. Municipalities should consider licensing only exclusive tobacco shops where only tobacco products can be sold. This will reduce exposure to tobacco products by children and non-users who will not frequent such stores.
5. Municipalities further can enforce state bans on the sale of single sticks of tobacco through vendor licensing with violations of such bans constituting a violation of the license itself.

Methodology and Process

Field investigators were equipped with a mobile reporting form to document instances of tobacco companies advertising, selling, displaying, or incentivizing the sale of tobacco products within a 100-meter radius. A total of 243 schools were covered in 20 cities in 6 states of India. The regions included in the study were: Chennai, Coimbatore, Pudukkottai, Hyderabad, Mahbubnagar,

Karimnagar, Warangal, Jamnagar, Rajkot, Morbi, Ahmedabad, Indore, Bhopal, Sagar, Jabalpur, Gwalior, New Delhi, Guwahati, Dibrugarh and Jorhat.

The mobile form automatically captured the date, geographic coordinates, and data collector name for each record uploaded to the dataset. The order of questions and format of response options were designed to facilitate rapid and discrete observation by data collectors. The data reported in this study reflects the reports they submitted from November 21st, 2017 until December 22nd, 2017.

Data gathered from the Kobo Toolbox was then mapped using MapBox, an open source mapping platform for custom designed maps. Mapbox, was used to define the sampling area radius of 100 meters surrounding each school (the legal boundary for tobacco publicity, promotion, sponsorship or display or tobacco products visible from outside, as well as on shelves, kiosks, or streets sales). Circles were drawn to represent the radius 100 and 150-meters from a school.

To view all maps, go to <http://tinytargets.grassriots.com/>

School Data

The schools in this study were reported by field investigators data collectors. Data collectors observed and recorded 487 points of sale (POS) around 243 schools in India.

Results

Tobacco Brands Sold, Advertised, or Displayed

- Our investigators logged all advertising and product availability around schools and playgrounds where of the 670 brands available, the maximum instances were of the brand Gold Flake (185 or 27.6%).
- Other brands observed around schools and playgrounds include Classic (149 instances, 22.2%), Marlboro (73, 10.8%), Wills (64, 9.5%) and Red and White (30 instances or 4.4%)

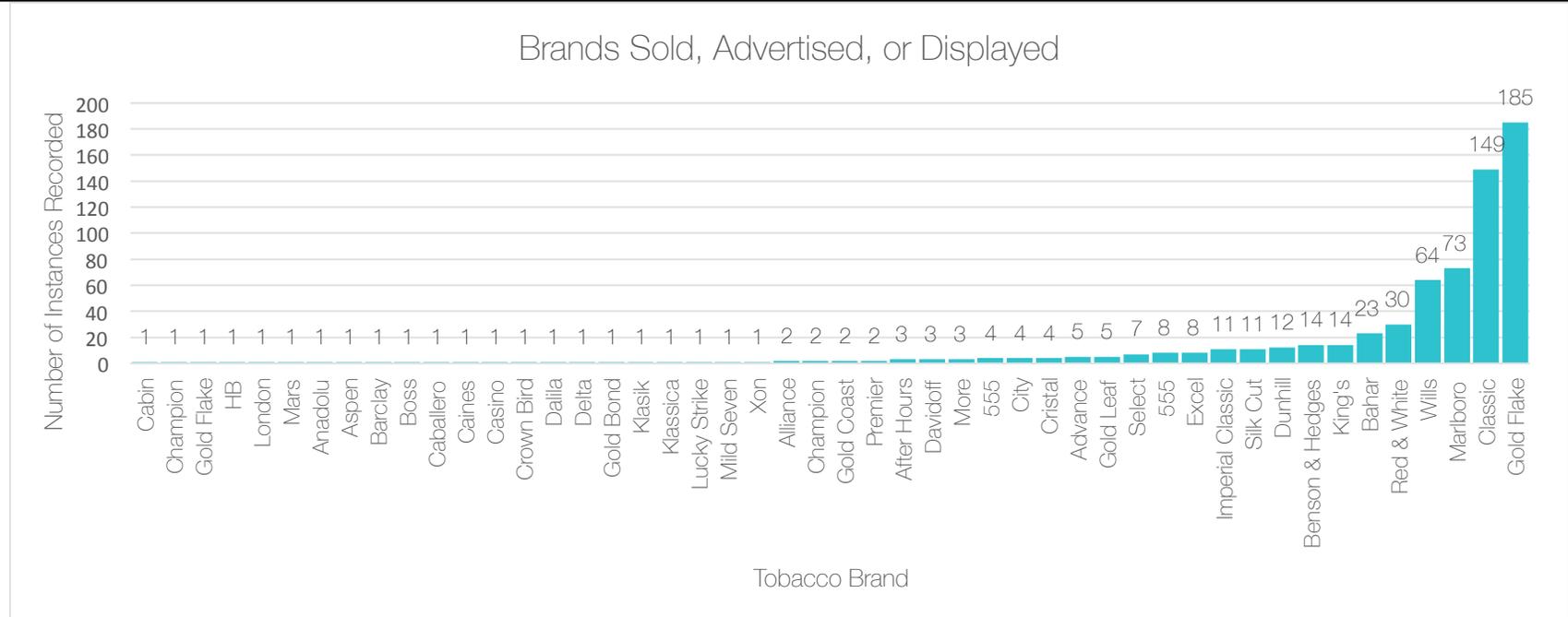
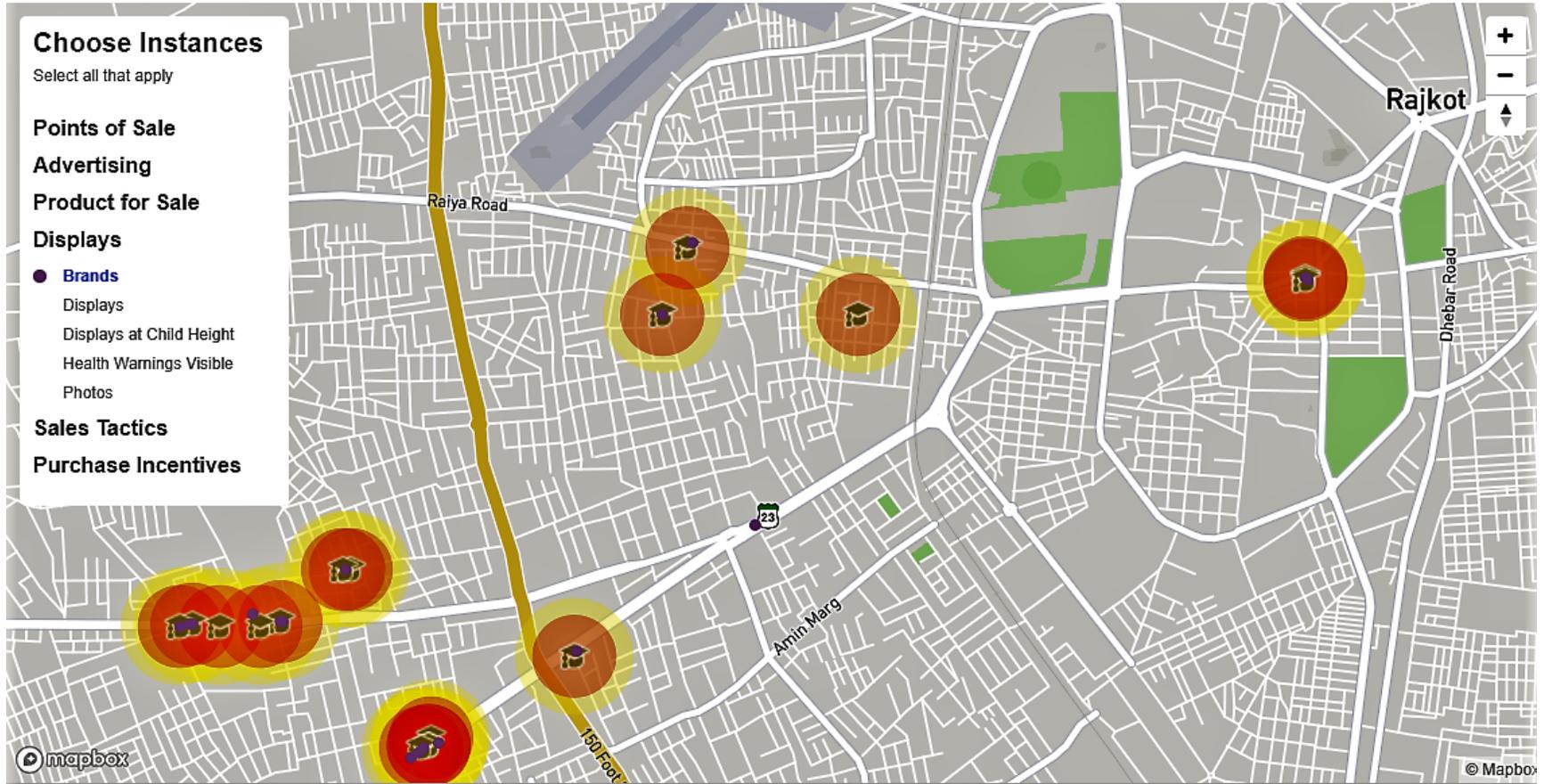


Fig 1. Instances of tobacco brands sold, advertised, or displayed recorded in India



Image 1 & 2: Display of Cigarette Brands like Classic & Gold Flake at a shop in New Delhi

Map of Tobacco Brands Sold, Advertised, or Displayed in Rajkot, Gujarat



Big Tobacco Company Brands Sold, Advertised, or Displayed

British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco and Philip Morris International were the most common big tobacco companies advertising in India. Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed of this British American Tobacco (BAT) had the highest advertising share (52.2%) followed by Imperial Tobacco or ITC (25.3%).

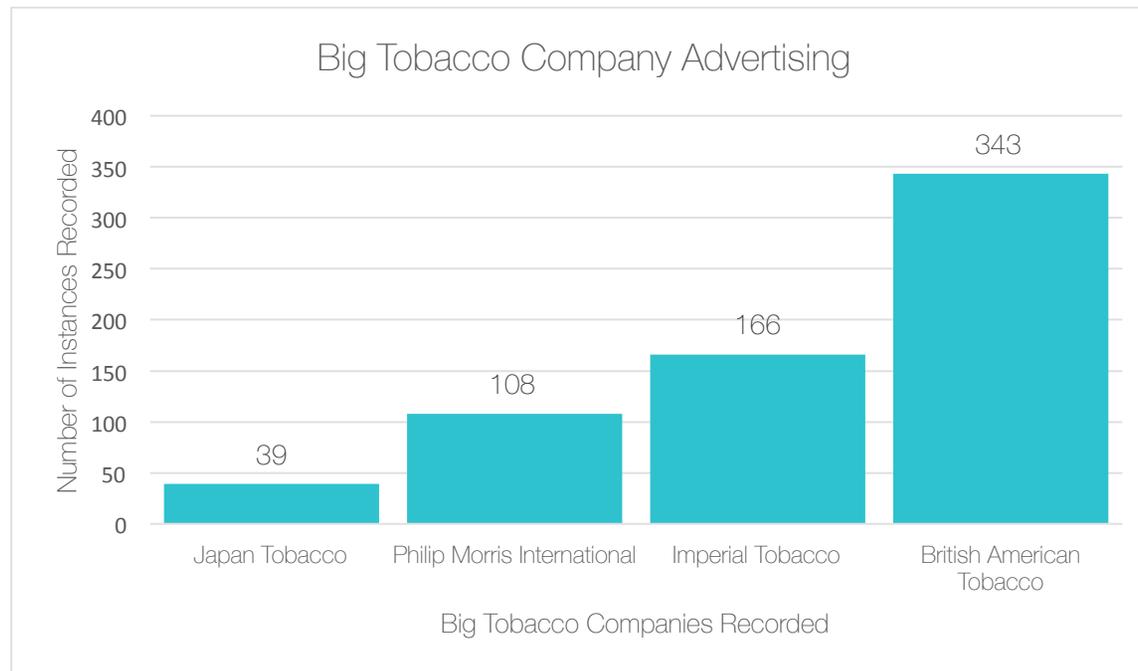


Fig 2. Big Tobacco parent company tobacco brands sold, advertised, or displayed in India

Tobacco Advertising around Schools

Our investigators logged all advertising observed around schools and playgrounds. Of the 225 points of sale observed, Posters were the most common form of advertising (35.1%), followed by other advertising (34%) and branded umbrellas and carts (16.2%). Other advertising includes in the Indian context includes Newspaper advertisements, Promotions with a tobacco product purchase, Brand stretching/trademark diversification, LED TV displayed inside the shop doing promotion of tobacco products, Vending machines and free distribution/samples.

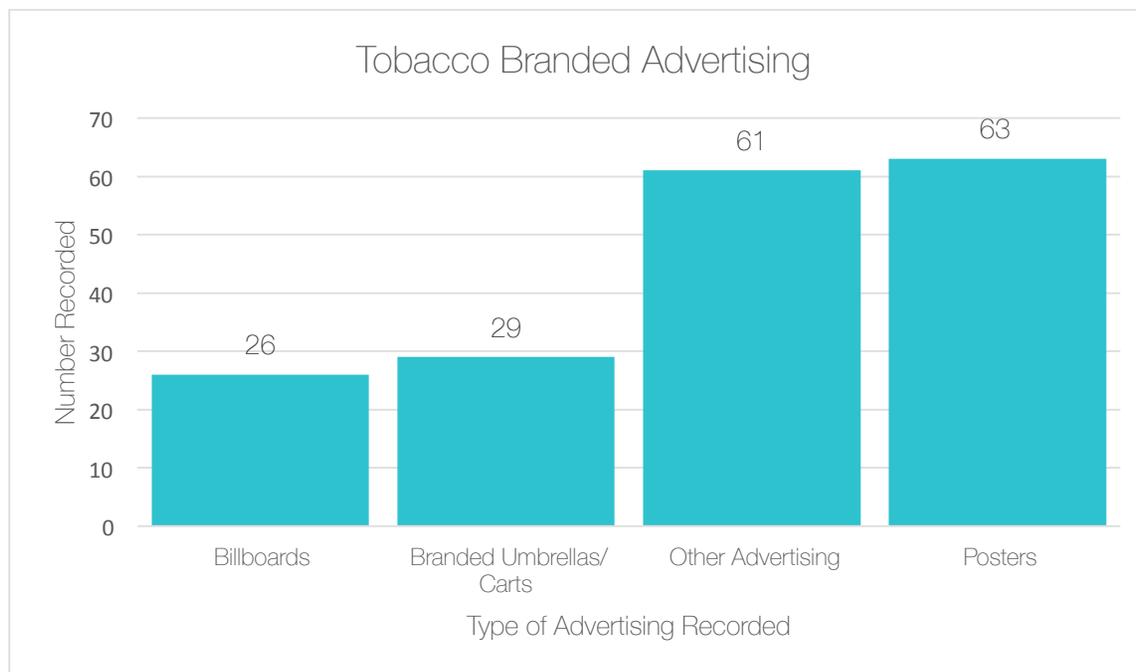
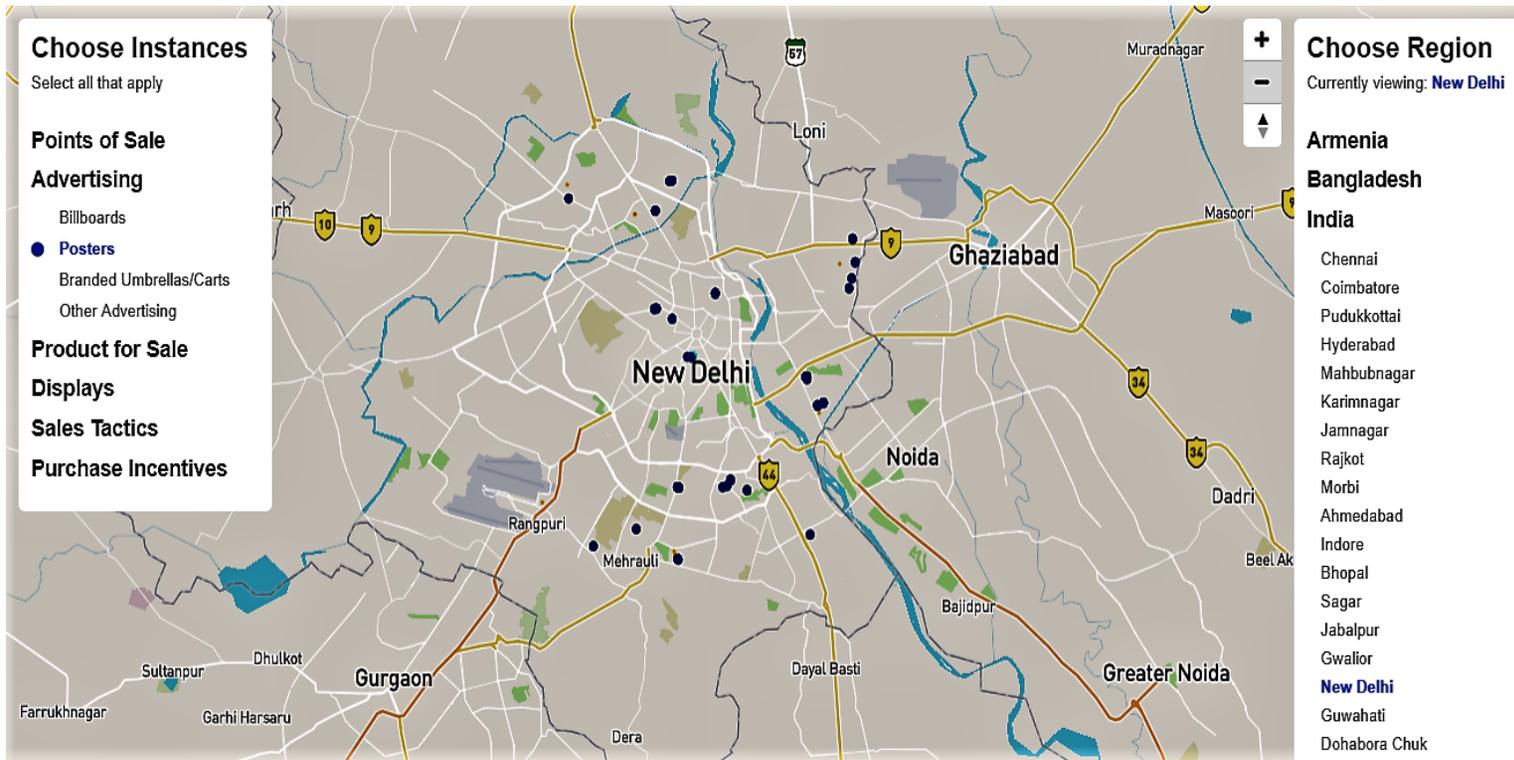


Fig 3. Tobacco branded advertising instances recorded in India

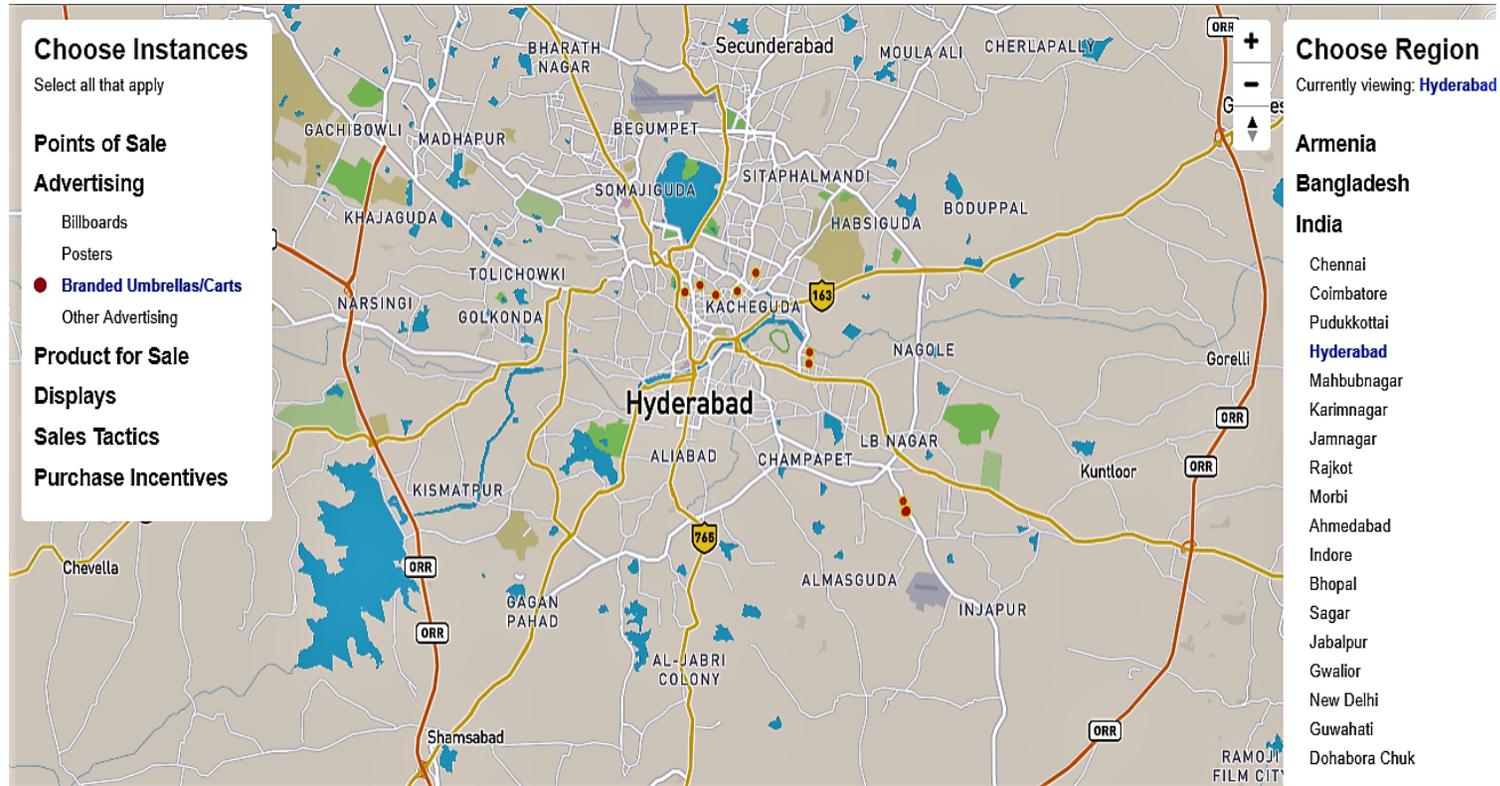


Image 3: Advertisement of product brand and product display alongwith candies at eye level near school area in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Map of Tobacco Posters in New Delhi



Map of Tobacco Branded Umbrellas/Carts in Hyderabad, Telangana



Map of Other Tobacco Advertising of Morbi city in Gujarat

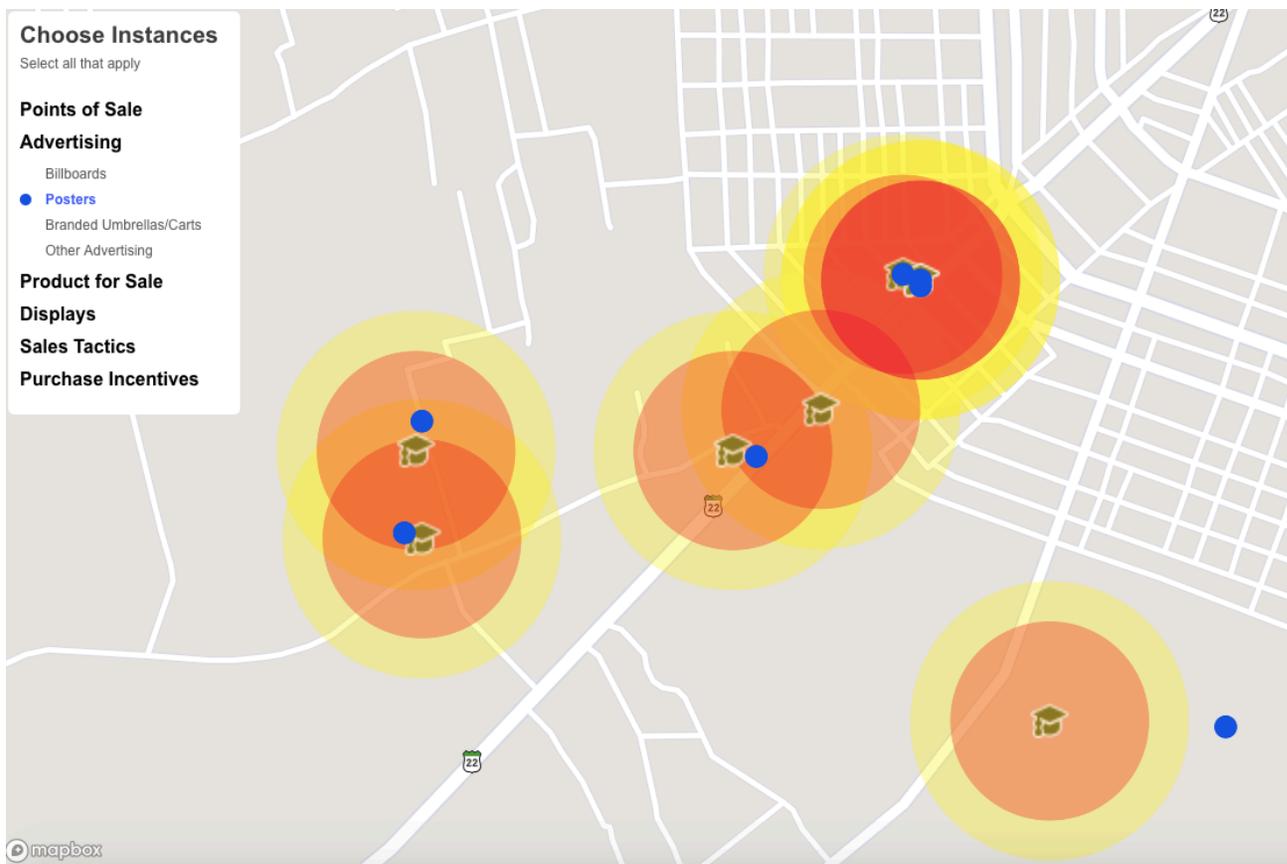




Image 4 & 5: Tobacco product posters at child's eye level 100m from a school in Ahmedabad, Gujarat India

Tobacco Products for Sale

Our investigators logged all tobacco products available for purchase around schools and playgrounds in India. The most common tobacco products available for purchase in these areas were cigarettes (225 instances or 29.6%), followed by smokeless tobacco products (212 instances or 27.9%) and then followed by bidis (204 instances or 26.8%).

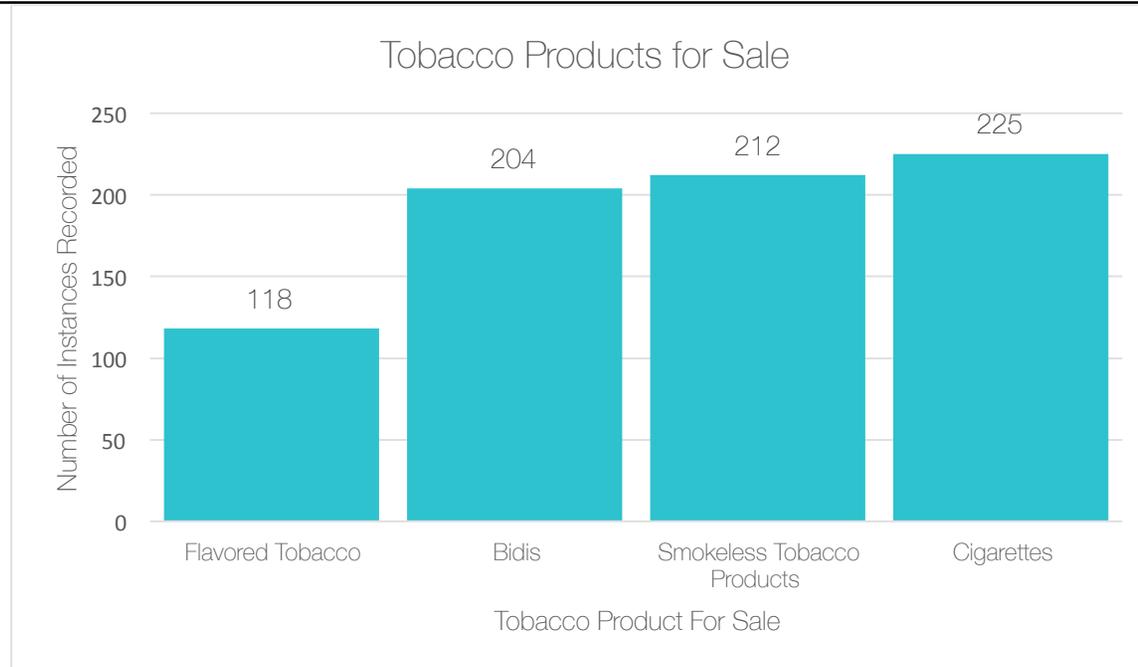
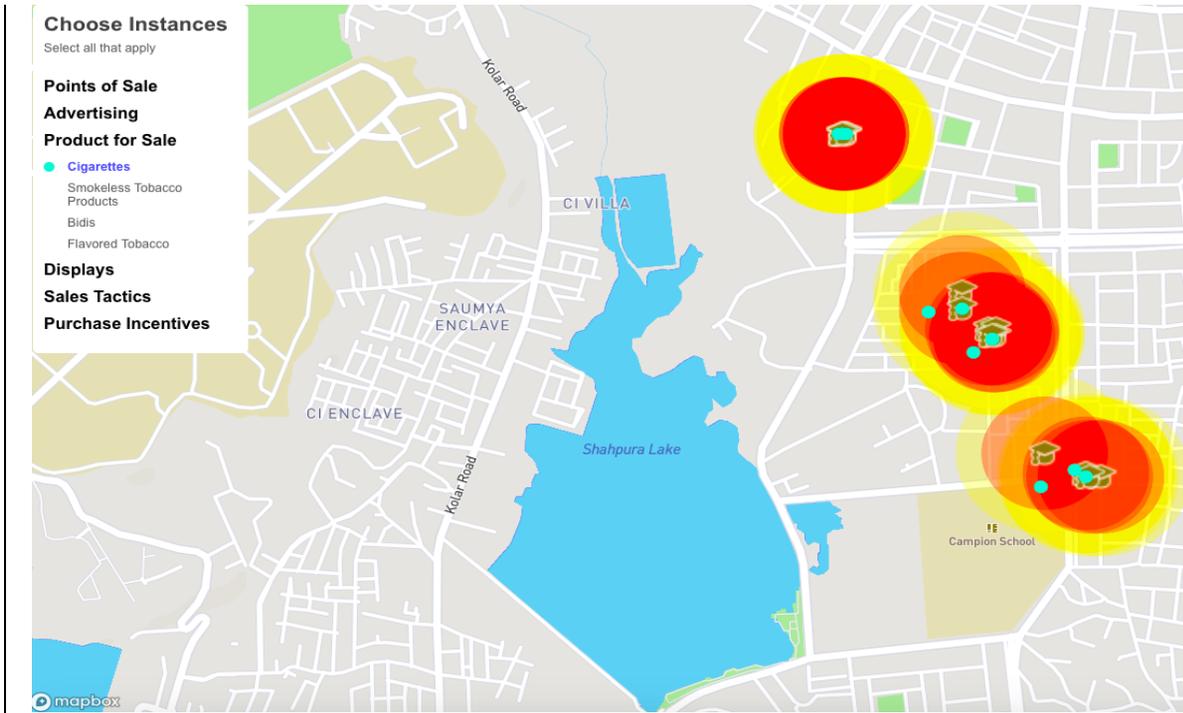
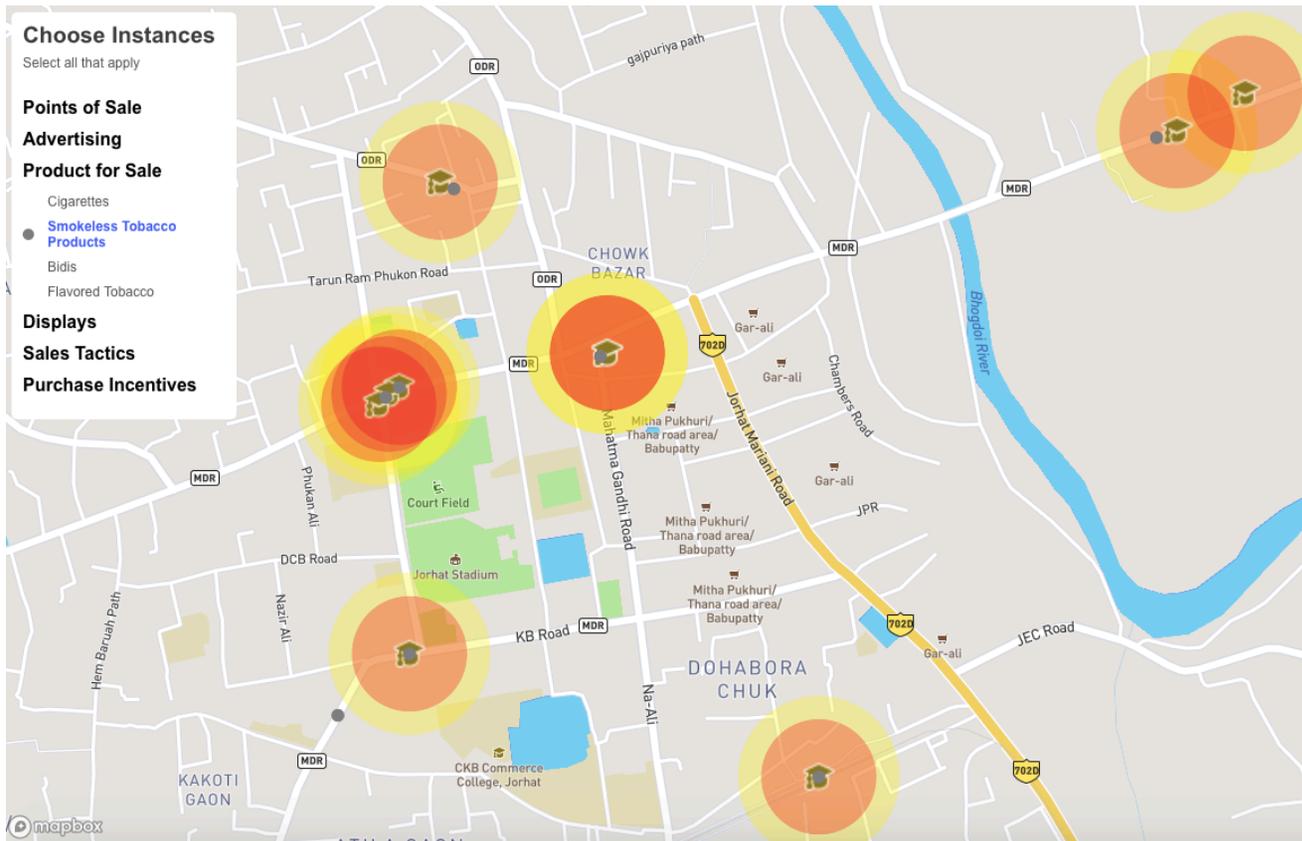


Fig 4. Instances of tobacco products for sale recorded in India

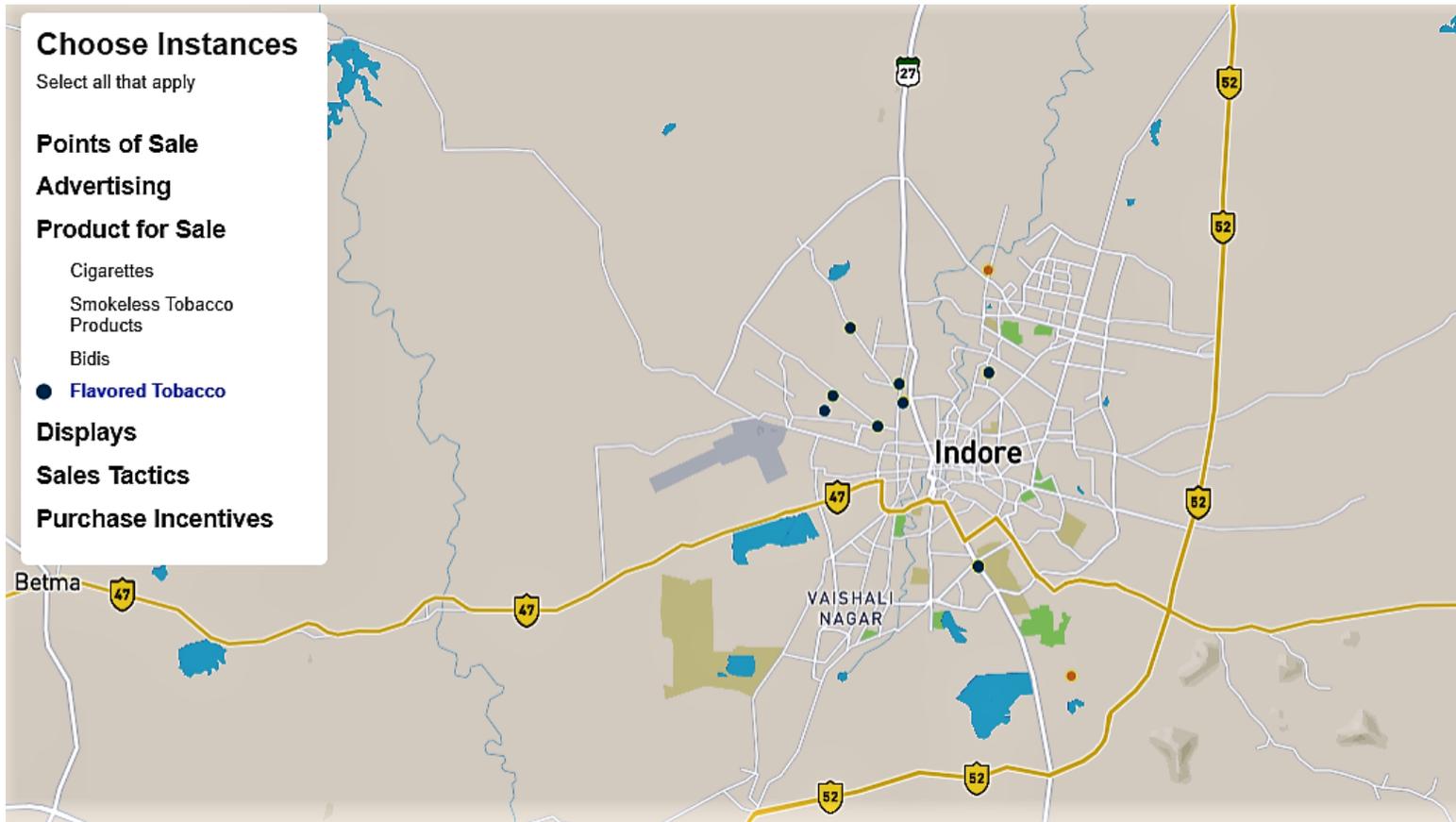
Map of Cigarettes sale in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



Map of Smokeless Tobacco Products for Sale in Jorhat, Assam



Map of Flavored Tobacco for Sale in Indore, Madhya Pradesh



Map of Bidis for Sale in Hyderabad, Telangana

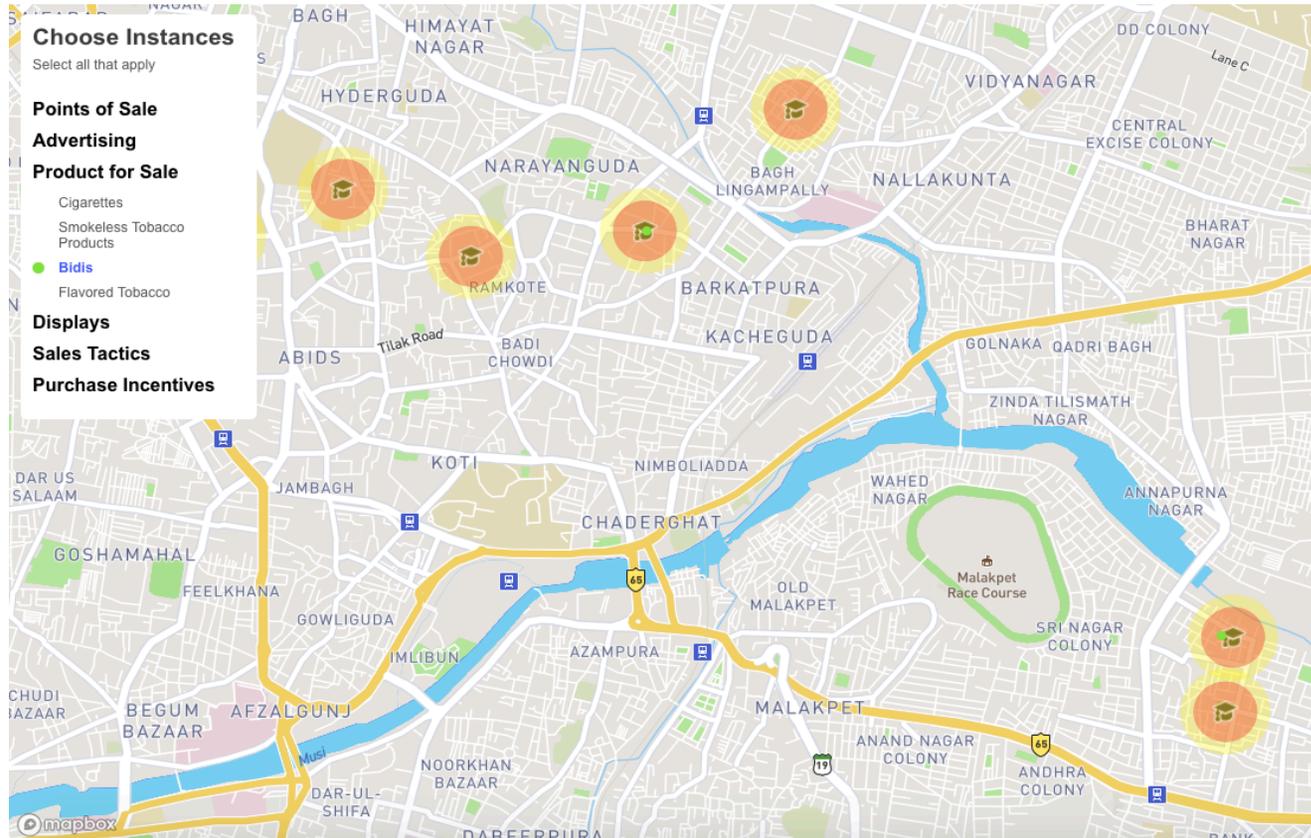




Image 6: Tobacco Products for Sale near Green Field High School, Karimnagar, Telangana



Image 7: Tobacco Products for Sale near ST. Ann's School in Ahmedabad, Gujarat



Image 8: Tobacco Products for Sale near Masters' Junior College, Karimnagar, Telangana

Tobacco Points of Sale

Our investigators logged all points of sale where tobacco products were available for purchase around schools and playgrounds in India. The most common and popular types of points of sale in these areas were street vendors (56.6%), followed by mobile vendors (17.5%) and small grocery stores (13.7%).

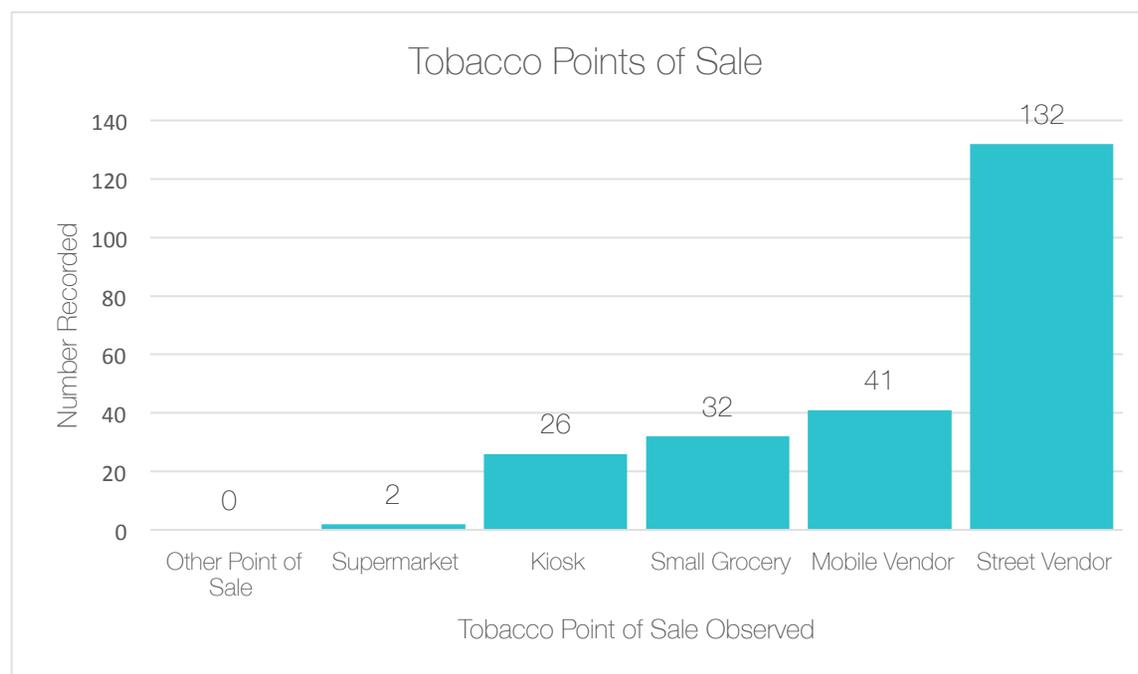


Fig 5. Points of sale where tobacco products are sold, advertised, or displayed recorded in India



Images 9, 10 & 11: Tobacco products displayed by street vendors/ Street Vendors selling tobacco near schools in New Delhi

Tobacco Sales Tactics

Our investigators observed several different sales tactics around schools and playgrounds in various locations in India that would be appealing to the youth. The most common tactic overwhelmingly of the 225 point of sale instances observed (out of 487) was that of selling single cigarettes (90.9%) to boost sales. Vending machines (9%) were also seen as a tactic employed by the industry to boost tobacco sales around schools and playgrounds in various locations.



Fig 6. Tobacco sales tactics in India

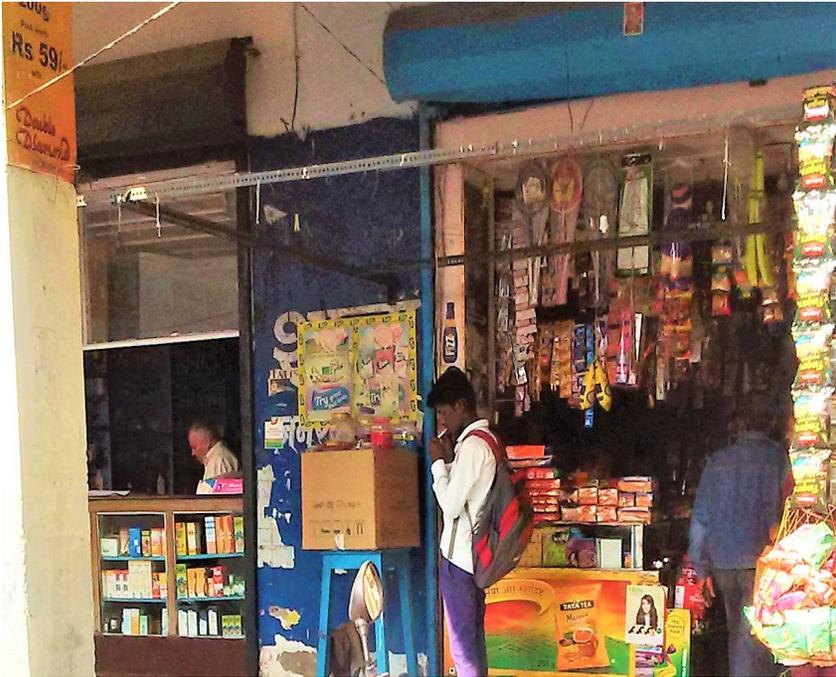
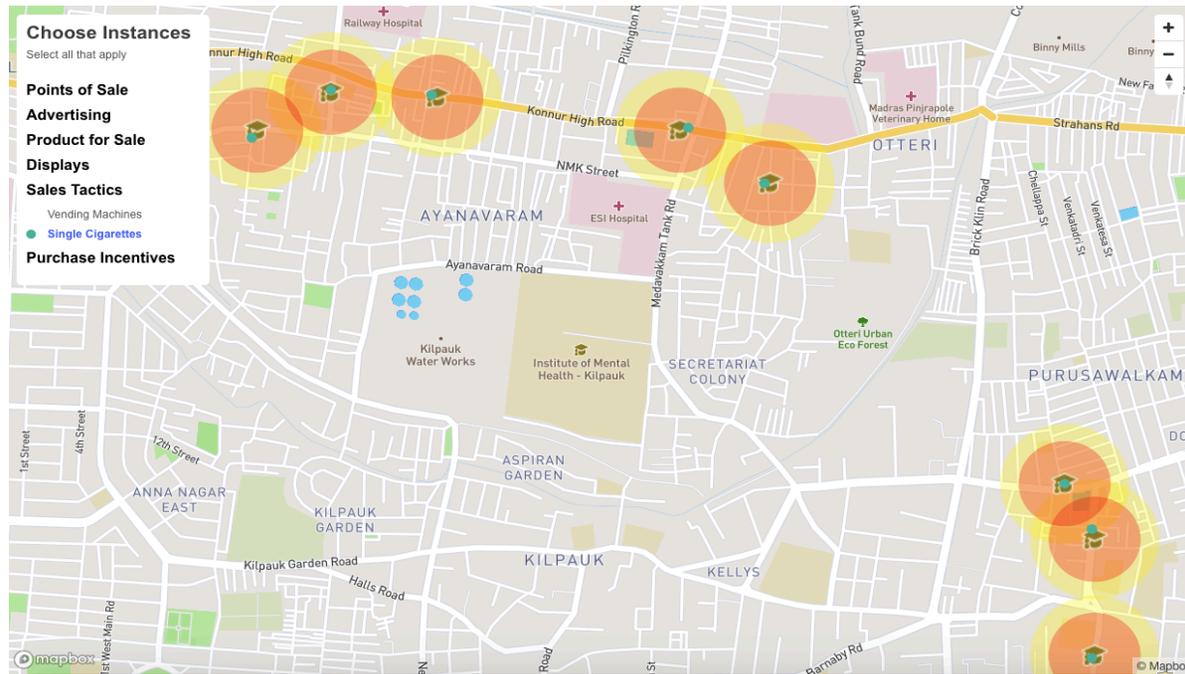


Image 12 &13: Single cigarettes available within 100m from a school in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



Image 14: Single cigarettes for sale in Delhi near a school

Map of Single Cigarettes for Sale in Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Tobacco Displays

- “*Eye Level is Buy Level*” because items placed at eye level are more likely to be purchased than those on higher or lower shelves.”- British American Tobacco (BAT)
- Tobacco Displays at a child’s eye level (approximately 1 meter) were observed in 91% of the 225 tobacco point of sale locations investigated in India.

91%

of tobacco displays
were at a **child's**
eye level (1m)

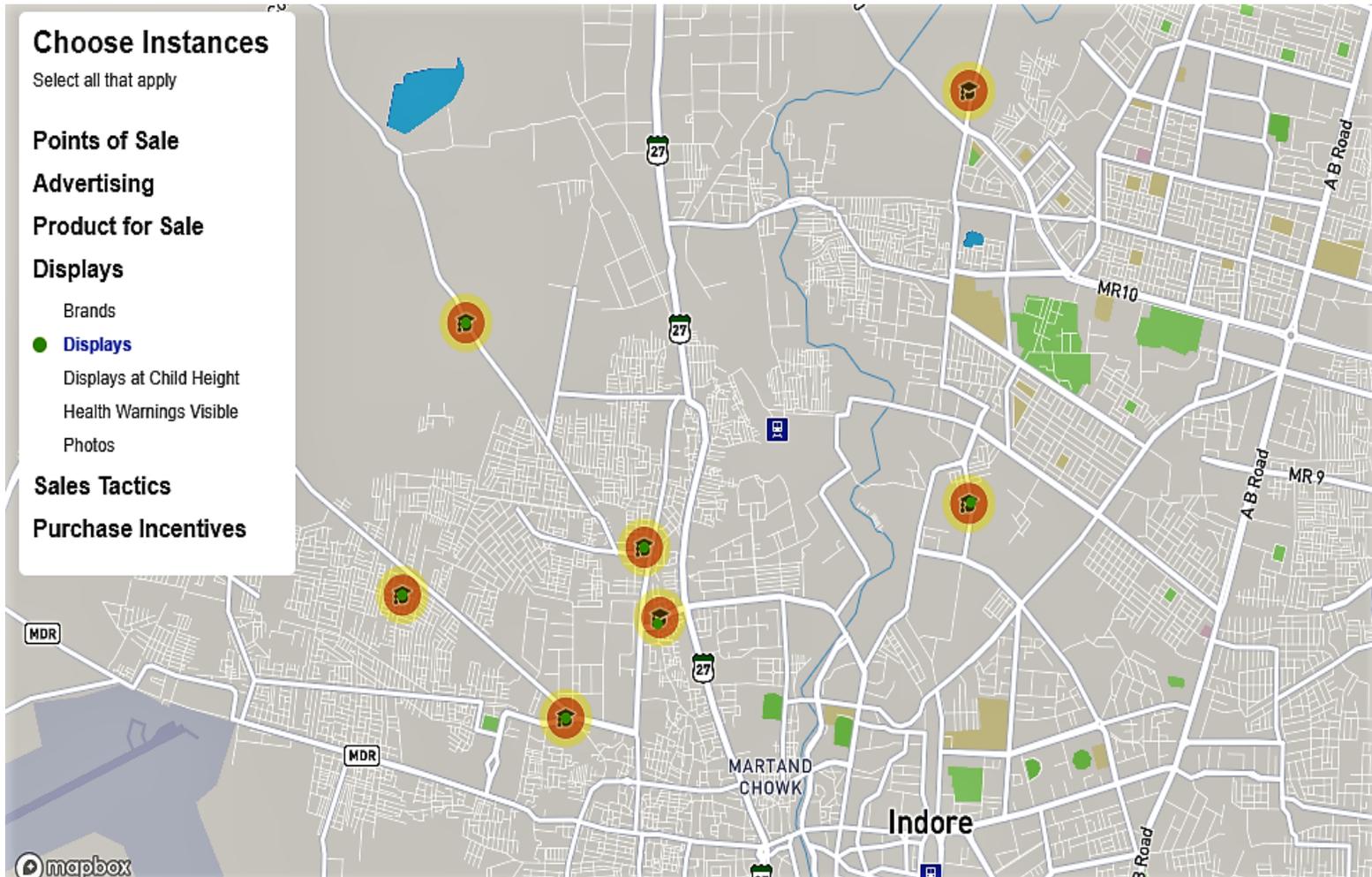
54%

of tobacco displays had
no health warnings
visible

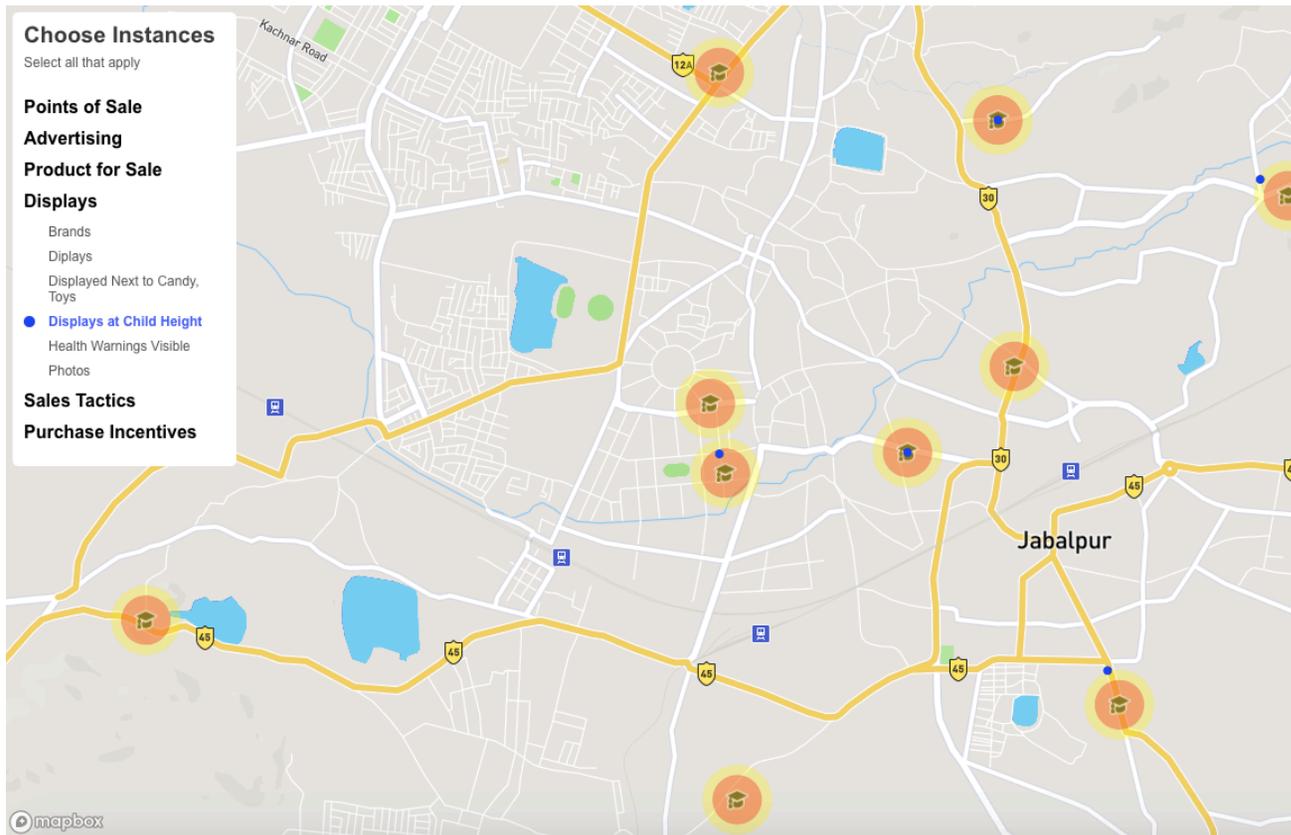
90%

of tobacco product were
displayed beside candy,
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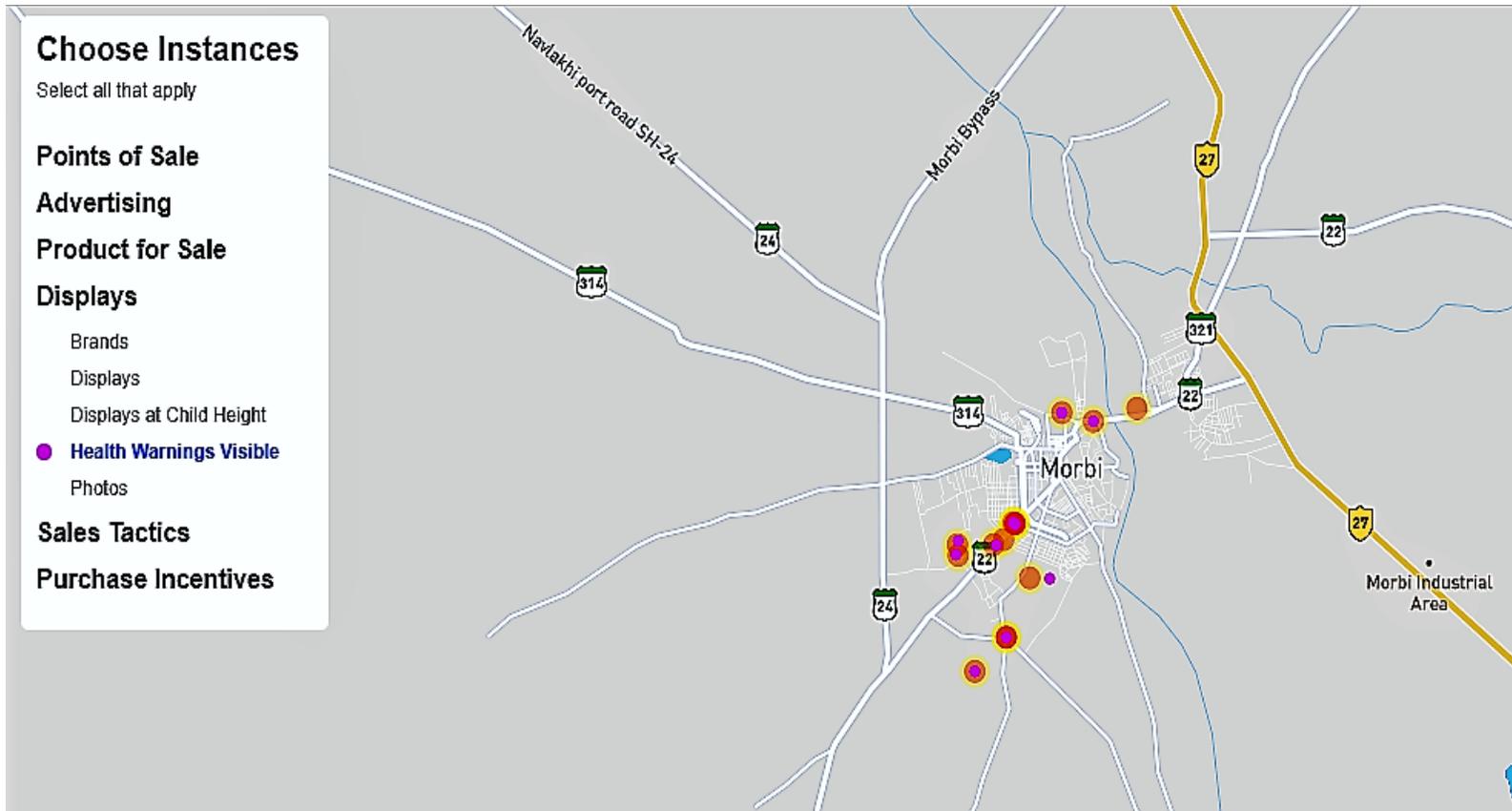
Map of Tobacco Displays, Indore, Madhya Pradesh



Map of Tobacco Displays at Child Height, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh



Map of Tobacco Displays with Health warnings visible, Morbi, Gujarat



Map of Tobacco Products Displayed Near Candy, Toys in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

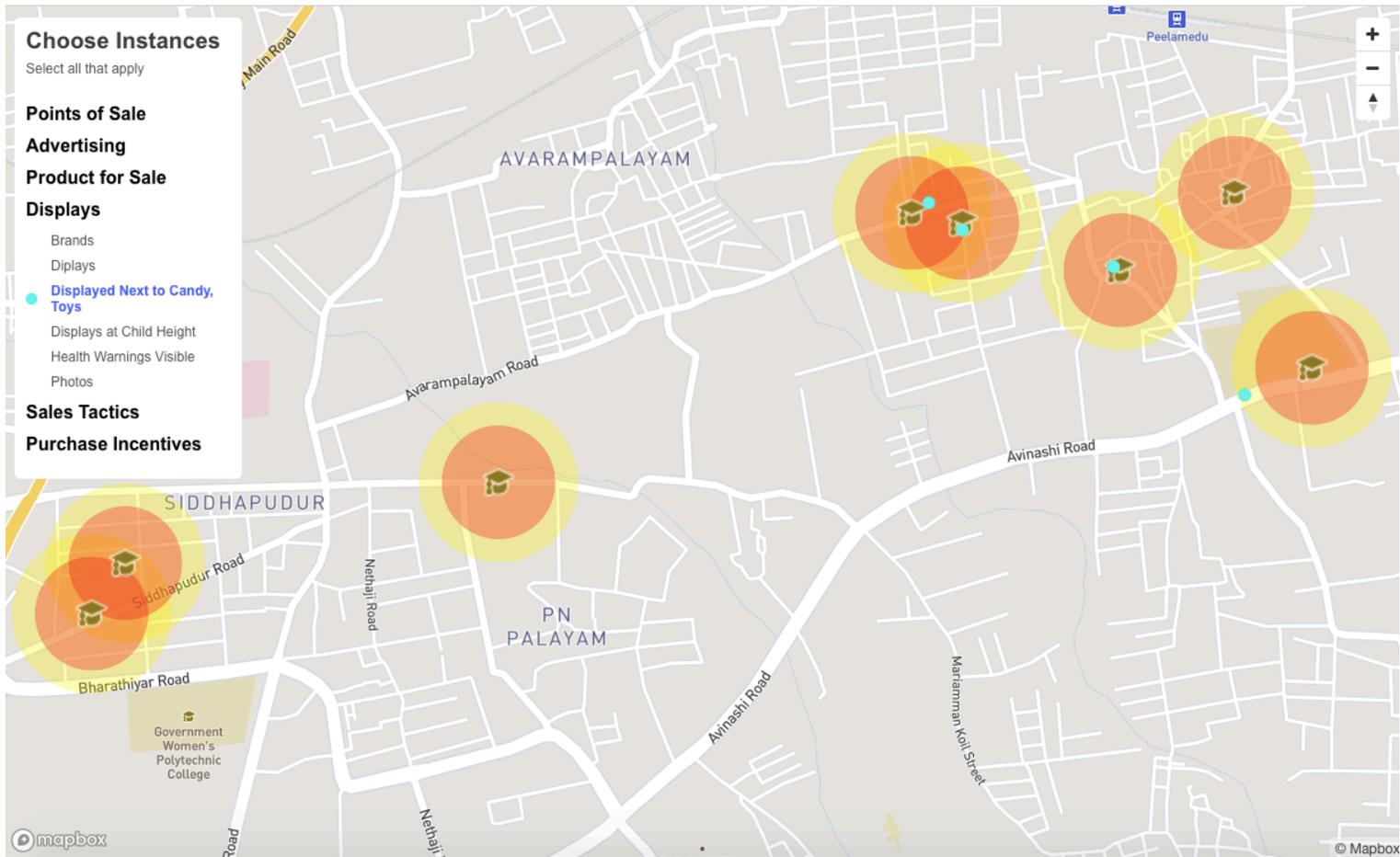




Image 15: Tobacco Products sold near Candy or Toys at Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

Tobacco Purchase Incentives

Our investigators observed incentives for tobacco product purchases and retailer sales around schools and playgrounds in 225 tobacco points of sale in India. The most common tactics included: Price Discounts (37.5%); Free Tobacco Products (32.5%) and Special or Limited Edition Packs (12.5%).

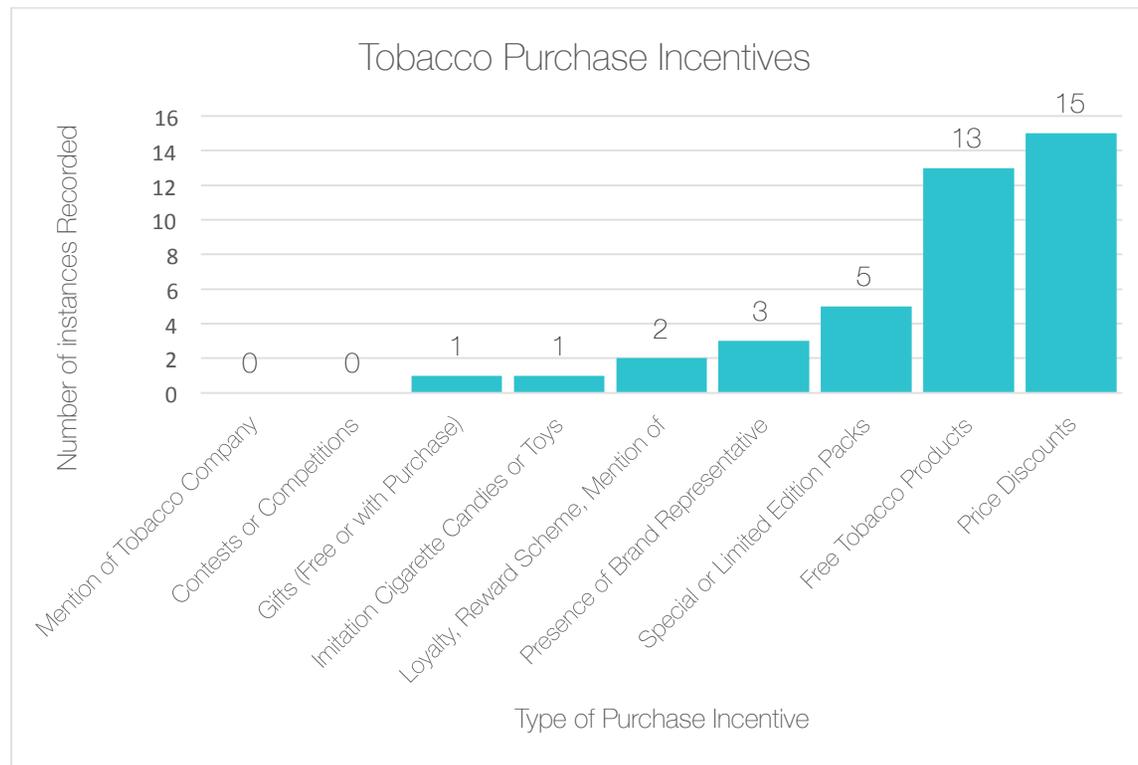
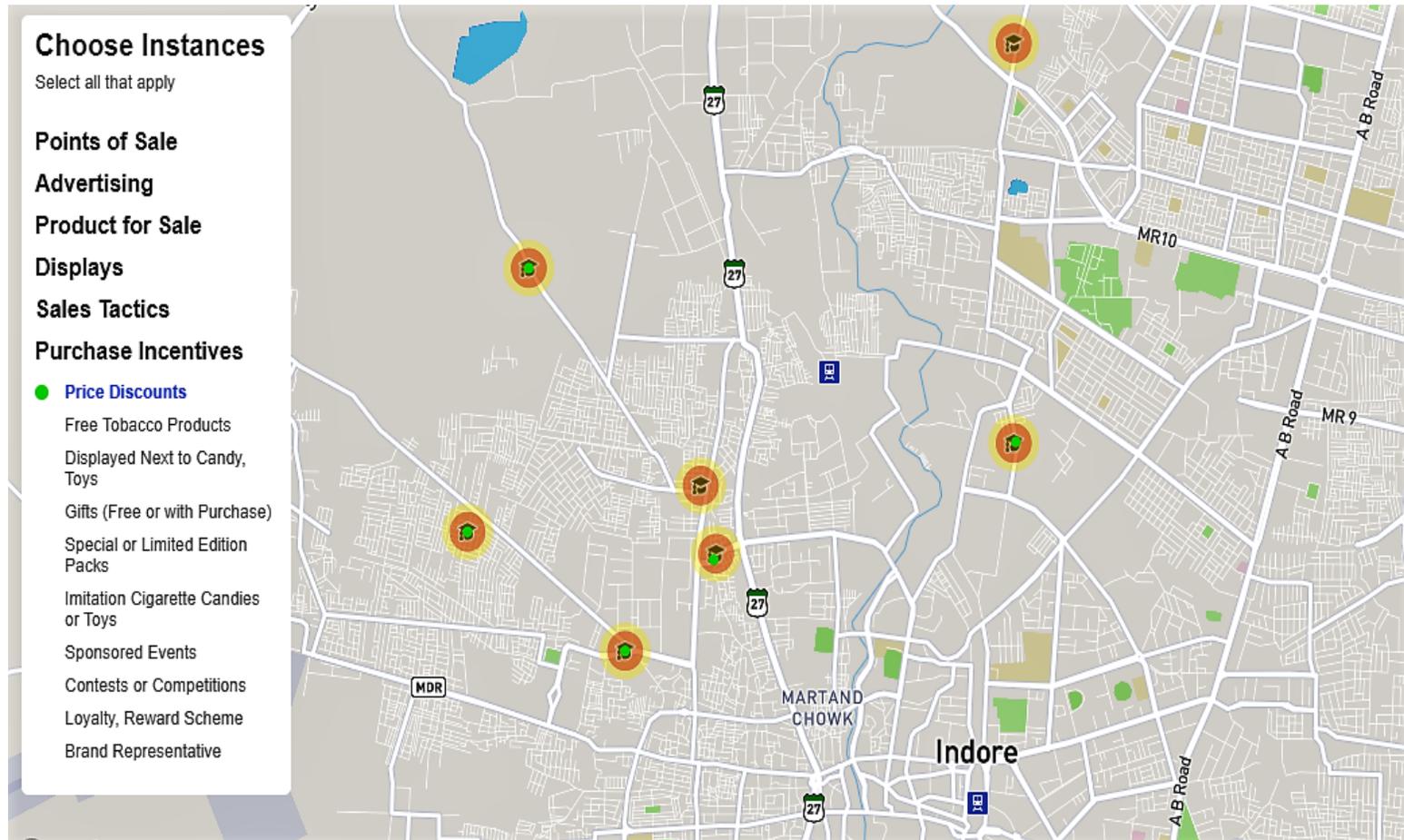


Fig 7. Type of Tobacco Purchase Incentives sold, advertised, or displayed recorded in India

Map of Price Discounts at Indore, Madhya Pradesh



Conclusion

These results demonstrate that children and youth in India are targets of the tobacco industry. Around schools:

- a. Vendors sell tobacco products. (Investigators observed 225 points of sale selling tobacco products out of the 487 surveyed around schools. Street vendors were the most common form of vendors at 56.6% of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed.)
- b. Multinational tobacco companies sell tobacco products around schools. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 52.2% carried British American Tobacco brands and 25.3% carried ITC brands.)
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- e. Vendors display tobacco products in ways that are appealing to children and youth. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 91% of displays were at 1 meter – a child’s eye level; 54% of the points of sale had no visible health warning; and 90% of displays were beside candy, sweets and toys – items marketed to children.)
- f. Vendors utilize sales techniques such as discounting products and distributing free samples. (Investigators documented that, of the 225 tobacco points of sale observed, 37.5% offered price discounts and 32.5% offered free tobacco products.)

All of the above violate India’s tobacco control law, COTPA.

Recommendations

1. The government must improve enforcement of COTPA. COTPA prohibits tobacco sales around schools and, more generally, most forms of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. Tobacco sales are pervasive and occur in supermarkets, pan-shops, kiosks, and on the street, among other places, with no need for vendors to obtain permission to sell tobacco products – except in a few municipalities.
2. Municipal authorities should implement the MOHFW's 21st September 2017 advisory by licensing tobacco vendors. Licensing can reduce vendor numbers and can prescribe where tobacco products are sold. Regulating tobacco vendors can aid COTPA enforcement.
3. COTPA compliance should be a condition of a vendor license where violations of COTPA constitute a violation of the license itself.
4. Municipalities should consider licensing only exclusive tobacco shops where only tobacco products can be sold. This will reduce exposure to tobacco products by children and non-users who will not frequent such stores.
5. Municipalities further can enforce state bans on the sale of single sticks of tobacco through vendor licensing with violations of such bans constituting a violation of the license itself.