



UGANDA ALCOHOL POLICY ALLIANCE

“A nation free from alcohol related harm”

“Addressing Alcohol-Related Harm: A Pathway to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals and Protecting Human Rights”

Venue : Embassy of Sweden in Uganda

Date : 11th December 2024



IOGT - NTO
MOVEMENT



4TH Uganda Alcohol Policy Conference 2024 (UAPC24)



LM International
UGANDA

Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
Religions for Peace



Somero
Education for Young People in Uganda



BREAK FREE
MENTAL HEALTH CARE & REHABILITATION CENTRE



FORE
FOCUS ON RECOVERY
Reaching People



AFRICA RETREAT CENTRE



CARE FIRST
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The Government's Choice for the Future

ACTS
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CENTRE FOR
POLICY
ANALYSIS



Kanyanya Pioneer



UAPA's Role in Policy Advocacy

- Vision; A Nation Free of Alcohol Related harm
- Pioneers and Lead organization of Alcohol regulation advocacy in Uganda
- Founded in 2011
- 65 members (this helps us to do both National & sub-National Advocacy)
- 20 Partners
- **Support;** Ban on alcohol sold in sachet-2019, National alcohol Control policy, 2019, 4 Successful Alcohol Policy Conferences. Part of the drafting team of the alcoholic drinks control bill in offing.

Key Goals of the Bill:

- Prevent those underage from early exposure to alcohol use.
- Promoting public health through evidence-based policies.
- Protecting youth, families, and communities from alcohol-related harm.

Supported/Funded by :

1. IOGT-NTO-MOVEMENT/SIDA
2. RESET/VITAL STRATEGIES
3. MOVENDI INTERNATIONAL

Alcohol crisis in numbers

UGANDA (2019):



12.5 litres of alcohol were consumed per person aged 15+

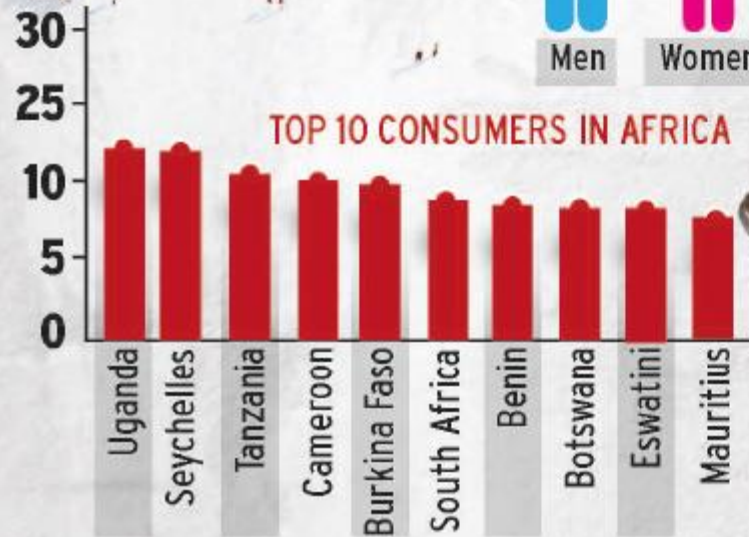


GLOBALLY:



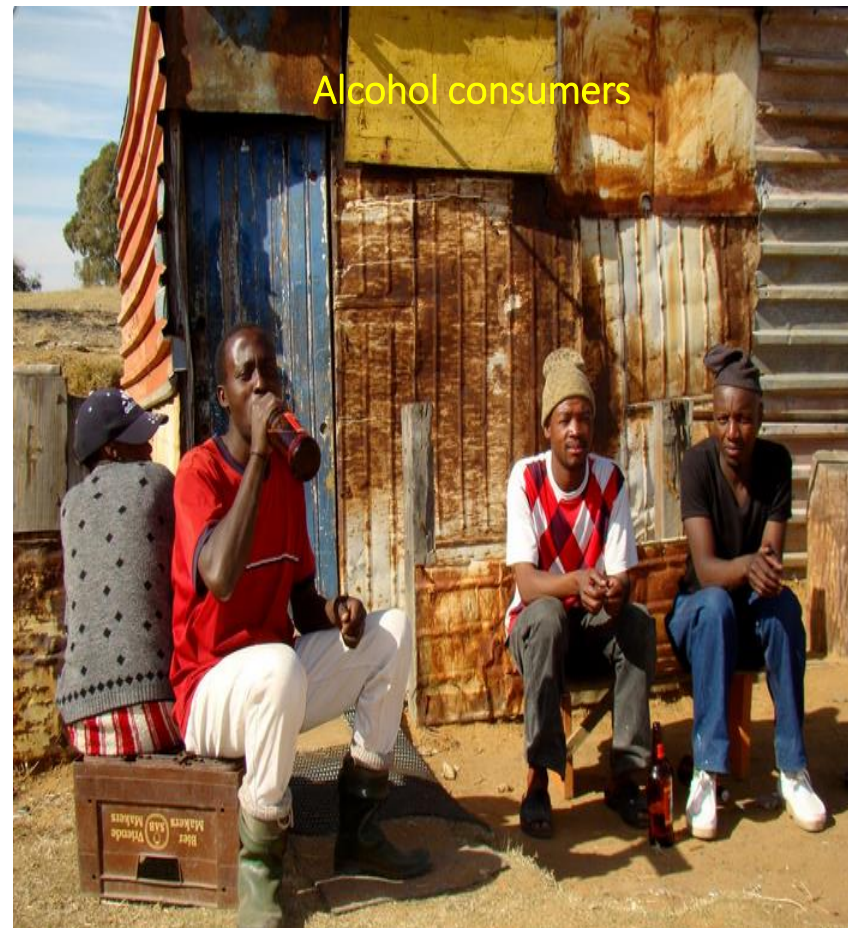
5.5 litres of alcohol consumed per person aged 15+

TOP 10 CONSUMERS IN AFRICA



Source: World Health Organisation

We can Change the Narrative



Advocacy at National & Sub-National level





Introduction/ overview

- Alcohol misuse in Uganda remains a significant public health issue with far-reaching social and economic consequences.
- Despite past regulatory efforts, alcohol-related harm continues to affect vulnerable populations, particularly youth and rural communities.



Objective

This presentation aims to outline:

- The proposed interventions by UAPA and her Members,
- Assess their potential impact, and
- Highlight strategies for overcoming challenges in implementing these measures.

◦ .



Background and context; Alcohol Misuse and related effects in Uganda:

- Alcohol consumption is widespread in Uganda, with an estimated 23% of adults reporting alcohol use (WHO, 2019).
- 70% of Ugandan youth aged 15-24 report consuming alcohol, with harmful drinking behaviors on the rise (MoH, 2021).
- **45% of men** and **13% of women** reported alcohol consumption, with a marked increase in alcohol use among younger adults. The financial resources spent on alcohol often contribute to **high levels of household debt**, as families borrow to sustain drinking habits, (UDHS **2019**).
- Alcohol-related health problems and lost productivity cost the Ugandan economy an estimated **\$300 million per year**. This includes direct healthcare costs, as well as losses due to absenteeism in the workforce and accidents, particularly in sectors like agriculture and construction (**UBOS,2020**).
- Rural areas experience higher levels of alcohol misuse, contributing to significant health and social challenges (**UDHS, 2020**).

Background and context; Alcohol Misuse in Uganda and its related harm contd

- **22% of adult patients** admitted to **Mulago hospital** (Uganda's largest referral hospital) had alcohol-related liver disease, with **cirrhosis** being the most common diagnosis.
- **30% of people with hypertension** also had a history of alcohol abuse. Moreover, regular alcohol consumption can **worsen hypertension** in people already diagnosed with the condition, (Uganda Medical Journal (2020)).
- **Alcohol and Hepatitis:** In addition to cirrhosis, alcohol misuse in Uganda also contributes to the higher rates of **Hepatitis B and C**, which can accelerate liver damage when combined with alcohol abuse (Uganda Health Research Council, 2019).
- **48% of young people** aged **18–34 years** had consumed alcohol in the past month, with significant increases in binge drinking behaviors, (Uganda National Drug Authority (UNDA, 2021)
- Alcohol-related traffic accidents have risen by **14%** over the past five years, making alcohol a key factor in Uganda's road safety issues, (**The Ugandan Police Force, 2018**).
- Studies estimate that alcohol consumption is associated with **24% of new HIV infections** in Uganda each year (Uganda AIDS Commission, 2020).



Background and context; Alcohol Misuse in Uganda and its related harm contd

- Approximately **15% of alcohol users** experience mental health issues such as depression and anxiety disorders, which are often exacerbated by the social stigma surrounding addiction, (**Ugandan National Institute of Mental Health Study, 2020**).
- Uganda has one of the highest alcohol consumption rates in sub-Saharan Africa, with **19.6 liters of pure alcohol per capita** consumed annually. Among men, the percentage of alcohol consumers is much higher than that of women, with **45% of men** and **13% of women** reporting alcohol use (WHO, 2020).
- **28% of domestic violence cases** in Uganda were directly related to alcohol consumption, with women and children being the most affected, (The **Uganda Police Force 2018**).
- A significant portion of household income is spent on alcohol, with estimates indicating that **nearly 30% of household spending** in some regions is allocated to alcohol (**UBOS, 2020**).



Evidence from Other Countries(Australia, UK, south Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana)

- Strengthening Regulatory Measures; invested in alcohol related harm research.
 - enhanced enforcement of alcohol regulations.
 - increased inspections of alcohol production facilities,
 - enforcing minimum age requirements for alcohol purchase, and
 - regulating alcohol advertising, especially in media channels frequented by young people.
- **Community-Based Interventions;**
 - mainly focusing on **life skills training**, particularly for young people,
 - to help them resist peer pressure and make informed decisions about alcohol use
- Economic Empowerment Programs for alternative livelihood to address poverty and unemployment.
- Programs that offer vocational training, microfinance opportunities, and financial literacy could help reduce alcohol misuse by improving economic stability.

Evidence from these countries shows that well-enforced alcohol policies lead to reductions in consumption and related harms, particularly among vulnerable populations.



Proposed Interventions in the Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill (ADCBC)

1. Restrictions on Sales Near Sensitive Areas:

- Alcohol sales prohibited near schools, health centers, and religious institutions to reduce exposure to alcohol, especially for young people

Evidence: In Uganda, **40% of youth** (ages 15-24) report easy access to alcohol near schools, (Chikritzhs & Stockwell, 2002).

2. Higher Taxes on Alcohol:

- Introducing a tax increase on alcoholic beverages to reduce consumption, particularly among low-income groups.

Evidence: a **10% increase in alcohol taxes** can reduce alcohol consumption by **8-10%**. (Vassallo et al., 2019).



Proposed Interventions in the Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill (ADCBB)

3. Strict Advertising Regulations:

- Banning alcohol advertisements on mass media, especially those targeting youth and women.

Evidence: A 2020 survey in Uganda found that **65% of youth** are exposed to alcohol advertisements, which increases their likelihood of drinking, harm. Restrictions on alcohol advertising reduce youth consumption and drinking-related harm (Hastings et al., 2005).

4. Establishment of a Regulatory Authority:

- Creating a body to oversee the enforcement of alcohol-related policies and ensure compliance with regulations.

Evidence: Countries with dedicated alcohol regulatory bodies have more effective policy enforcement (Babor et al., 2010).



CHALLENGES OF ADOPTION OF THE ADCB

- **Resistance from Industry Stakeholders:**

Alcohol industry lobbies argue that stricter regulations will harm the economy and lead to job losses.

Counterpoint: Evidence from other countries shows that long-term economic benefits, such as reduced healthcare costs and increased productivity, outweigh short-term losses (Stockwell et al., 2017).

- **Political and Social Challenges:**

Some policymakers and members of the public view alcohol as a cultural norm and resist policies perceived as overly restrictive.,

others argue that alcohol control is a violation of personal freedoms., it constrains the night economy.....

- **Public Awareness:** Lack of widespread understanding of the long-term benefits of alcohol regulation

CHALLENGES OF ADOPTION OF THE ADCB

Implementation and Enforcement:

- The success of the bill will depend on the ability to enforce regulations consistently across urban and rural areas.
- **Statistic:** In Uganda, over 70% of alcohol outlets operate without licenses, indicating a need for better regulation and monitoring (esp. illicit traders).

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

- **Strategy:** Strengthen public awareness campaigns using data-driven messaging.
- **Counterpoint:** Public health data consistently demonstrates that alcohol misuse imposes significant societal costs, justifying regulatory intervention (Rehm et al., 2009).





Strategies for Overcoming Challenges.....

- **Advocacy and Public Awareness:**
 - **Data-Driven Campaigns:** Use of local statistics and case studies to highlight the health, social, and economic impacts of alcohol misuse in Uganda.
 - **Community Engagement:** Engage communities through outreach programs and local dialogues to build public support for the bill.
 - **Youth Education:** Promote education programs in schools and communities to raise awareness about the dangers of alcohol misuse.
- **Building Political Will:**
 - Engage policymakers with evidence on the long-term economic and social benefits of alcohol control, including reduced healthcare costs and improved productivity.
- **Strengthening Enforcement:**
 - Propose measures for improving alcohol outlet monitoring, creating a national database of licensed sellers, and increasing penalties for non-compliance.



Expected Impact of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill

- **Reduction in Alcohol-Related Harm:**
 - Evidence suggests that the proposed measures could lead to a **20% reduction in alcohol-related deaths** and injuries over the next 5 years.
 - **Decrease in Underage Drinking:** With stronger sales restrictions and advertising bans, underage drinking could decrease by up to **30%**.
- **Economic and Social Benefits:**
 - A reduction in alcohol misuse would lead to **lower healthcare costs**, improved workplace productivity, and a reduction in social issues like family violence and crime.
 - employees who misuse alcohol are **2-3 times more likely** to miss work and are **less productive** when present due to hangovers or alcohol-related health issues.
- **Improved Public Health:**
 - With fewer people suffering from alcohol-related diseases, Uganda's overall public health indicators could improve, particularly in rural areas.

Alcohol consumption trends and some of the related harms



	2009	2024	2034
Alcohol Consumption Trends regular alcohol use	35% of adult men and 7% of adult women	45% of men and 13% of women	50 -65% of men and 20 -25% of women
Alcohol-Related Health, family and social Impact.	Liver disease accounted for about 20% of hospital admissions.	30-40% of liver disease cases. hypertension is now 26% among adults,	alcohol may contribute to 40-50% of liver disease cases by 2034.
Policy & regulatory changes	alcohol consumption in Uganda was subject to limited regulation	introduced stronger regulatory measures.	public health crisis, economic instability, The cost of inaction would be extremely high, both in terms of human lives and economic resources.

Impact: Public Health Strain: More people, particularly the youth, will develop alcohol dependency and associated health problems such as **liver disease, hypertension, and mental health disorders.**

Increased Social and Economic Costs: Greater alcohol consumption will strain public health resources, including hospitals, clinics, and emergency care services, as more people seek treatment for alcohol-related injuries and diseases. while alcohol consumption has always been part of Ugandan society, the scale and impact of alcohol-related harm have grown significantly over the past 15 years

Key drivers: increased disposable income (campaign time), robust youth targeted marketing, urbanization, cultural shift, No alcohol regulation Now, changing social norms

- **LM International-Uganda**

Opened in 1992 and is currently engaged in development work in Pader, Agago, Kikuube, Terego and Madi-Okollo districts in Northern Uganda. Humanitarian work is also carried out in refugee camps in Kyangwali

Programmatic Areas

- i. Water and Sanitation
- ii. Education and training
- iii. Health and wellbeing
- iv. Food security and livelihood

<https://www.lminternational.org/publications/lm-annual-report-2023>



Interventions

1. Empowering grassroots structures- cultural leaders, Religious leaders, Opinion leaders and grassroots political structures to take lead in awareness creation on alcohol harm at community level..
2. Livelihood diversification from alcohol production and sale to alternative livelihood means.
3. Awareness creation of alcohol harm within schools- through school health clubs.
4. Supporting formulation of alcohol related bylaws and ordinances.
5. Major thematic areas: WASH, Livelihoods, Education and Mental with climate Change, Gender Equality and alcohol prevention - mainstreamed.

Milestones: empower community individuals, happier families due to the alternative livelihoods, improved hygiene.



Uganda National Association of Community and Occupational Health;

This project was implemented in Jinja and Masindi where harmful consumption of alcohol is highly prevalent and documented by research.

The availability and affordability of raw materials for illicit alcohol production in these communities, presented an opportunity for high alcohol production and therefore increasing hazardous and harmful consumption.

Mission; Community engaged with several other alternative income generating activities with an aim of reducing alcohol consumption and improving family welfare.

Target population; women involved in the alcoholism, specifically those brewing and selling.

Approach: participatory, to identify both the negative and positive effects (advantages and disadvantages), and discussed possible alternative livelihoods without much difference in capital required.

<https://unacoh.org/our-work/health-rehabilitation/>

UNACOH

"Health for All & By All"

- **Uganda National Association of Community and Occupational Health;
Key findings.**

Alcohol requires less advertising,

participants engaged in alcohol business find no time for families,

Income from alcohol is also very small

Many alternative income generating activities allow time for family.

The same capital used in the alcohol business could serve for other alternative income generating activities.

Milestones

By end of 2021, the Project recorded the risky Alcohol consumption reduction of 16% from baseline of 25.6%.

The two district alcohol control ordinances developed for Masindi and Jinja district have provisions for reducing the availability of alcohol by limiting the hours on the sale of alcohol, reducing the density of outlets and accessibility to the minors in the project area

UNACOH

“Health for All & By All”



UGANDA GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION

***Creating Girls of Virtue – Women
of Substance***

Empowering Girls and Young Women in Uganda



Uganda Girl Guides Association;

- Is a voluntary organization affiliated with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).
- Reaching girls and young women across Uganda through non-formal education and Girl Guide Clubs in schools and communities.
- Currently operating in 80 districts in Uganda with 500,000 members

Gender Equality

Our Impact in Gender Equality:

- **Leadership Development:** Building skills in leadership, self-confidence, and decision-making.
- **Advocacy:** Campaigns for education, girls' rights, and ending harmful practices like early marriage and GBV.
- **Life Skills Training:** Programs on communication, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship



Driving Change in Climate Action and Alcohol Prevention

- **Environment and Climate Change:**

Awareness on deforestation and pollution; activities like tree planting and clean-ups.

- **Promoting Sustainability:** Training in energy-efficient stoves and rainwater harvesting.

- **Advocacy:** Stories and peer education campaigns amplifying girls' voices in climate discussions.



Alcohol Prevention

- **Awareness and Training:** Engaged 120 peer educators and VHTs to educate on alcohol harm in Soroti and Kumi Districts
- **Community Outreach:** Workshops for schools, parents, and community leaders, fostering support for positive behavior.
- **Behavior Change:** Campaigns promoting healthy choices and role modeling.



Sexual Rights;

- **Sexual and Reproductive Health Education:** UGGA has provided comprehensive education on sexual and reproductive health (SRH), helping girls understand their bodies, their rights, and how to protect themselves against abuse and exploitation. This includes menstrual health management, and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS.
- **Advocacy for Sexual Rights:** The association has championed the rights of girls and young women to make informed decisions about their own bodies, addressing issues like early and forced marriages, teenage pregnancies, and GBV
- **Youth-Led Advocacy:** UGGA has empowered girls to lead campaigns on sexual rights, fostering peer education and enabling them to become advocates within their communities.

Dreams of the Tropical Youth- Uganda

- South Western Uganda, Kyotera and Rakai Districts.
- We are a youth led Non-profit organization established in 2016 to empower disadvantaged rural youth (10-24 years) in the areas of Reproductive Health, youth livelihoods and environmental conservation.



What we do;

- Raising the Socioeconomic and Reproductive Health of adolescents and youth in rural Uganda through trainings
- Promote the Girl child education through improving Menstrual Hygiene Management in Rural Schools.
- Empower disadvantaged young Ugandans to lead healthy and fulfilling lives through tackling issues blocking their enjoyment of basic human rights one at a time.



Milestones;

- Created awareness on the different issues that challenge the girl child.
- Strengthen grassroot structures.
- Trained over 1000 young adolescent girls how to make re-usable sanitary towels.
- Distributed over 1000 re-usable sanitary pads to rural adolescent girls.
- Fundraising for the construction of 2 VIP latrines, 2 Incinerators & 2 Hand washing facilities.





Conclusion;

- * Alcohol negatively impacts equitable health by contributing to chronic diseases, unintended pregnancies, and STIs, particularly harming sexual and reproductive rights.
- * It aggravates human rights violations, gender inequality, and violence, undermining democracy and the rule of law. Environmentally,
- * Alcohol production strains resources, worsens climate change, and hampers sustainable development.
- * Economically, it diverts resources from essential needs, hindering inclusive growth and perpetuating inequities in vulnerable communities.

Recommendations

- * Comprehensive public health campaigns, focusing on raising awareness of its harms, especially in vulnerable communities.
- * Policies that restrict alcohol marketing, particularly to young people, and provide stronger regulations on its availability can help reduce its consumption and associated risks.
- * Investment in programs that support alcohol addiction treatment and prevention, as well as sexual and reproductive health services to mitigate the impact on unintended pregnancies and STIs.
- * Incentives for sustainable and responsible practices in alcohol production, including reducing environmental footprints, should be implemented to align with global climate and sustainability goals.
- * Multi sectoral collaboration is needed to ensure that human rights protections are enforced, especially in regions where alcohol-related violence and gender inequality are prevalent.



Declaration;

- All Humanitarian projects' goals are significantly undermined by the pervasive impact of alcohol use, this hinders progress towards achieving sustainable development. Hence, addressing alcohol-related harm is essential for advancing sustainable, inclusive development.
- Protecting human rights also involves ensuring access to treatment, preventing alcohol-related harm, and promoting policies that address alcohol's societal and environmental consequences while safeguarding individual freedoms and well-being.
- Facilitation of multi-sectoral collaboration to address alcohol-related violence and gender inequality, especially in regions where these issues are prevalent.
- Public health campaigns targeting vulnerable communities to raise awareness of alcohol harms.



Alcohol Dealers



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