

LEADS IN ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN E. AFRICA

Born-Again Christians, 13.7 are Muslim

64%

Percentage increase
in illicit alcohol
consumption from
2017 to 2021.

■ Average daily intake
for Ugandans is
20.6 grams above
Africa's **13.0** and
worlds' **13.5**.

POLICY BRIEF ON ALCOHOL

FACT:

Home-made
waragi and Ajono
(malwa) topped
the list of popular
drinks. Beer was
4% and 2%

for wine.



UGANDA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK (UYDEL)



P.O. Box 12659
Sir Apollo Kaggwa Rd, Kampala
www.uydel.org



INTRODUCTION

Uganda is classified as a low-income country; half of their population is young and are currently experiencing a 'youth bulge' characterized by high levels of poverty, unemployment, and HIV/AIDS[1]

The United Nations, 2015- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goal 3 on Health and Well-being carries a specific target 3.5 entitled "strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol" (United Nations, 2015). This target highlights the value of evidence-based prevention, linking it to a health-centred and human-focused response to substance abuse and alcohol prevention.

Data from World Health Organization (WHO)

Data from WHO is also indicating that drinking patterns in Uganda have changed. According to the 2018 Global Status Report on Alcohol [1]and health, the total Alcohol per capita for Uganda in the year 2016 was 9.5 compared to 6.3 for the

WHO Africa region. In Uganda for example year 2019-2020, in all the 8 months the substance most commonly used by the new clients to the rehabilitation centres was alcohol (51.9%) followed by cannabis (19.3%). (Mbona et al., 2020).

Taxation, Revenue and alcohol

In terms of taxation on alcohol, globally we largely notice a mixture of approaches in taxation. There is the Public Health approach as well as the Economic Approach. In Uganda however, we see more of an Economic Approach and alcohol produces considerable revenue with minimal evasion and resistance hence, a relatively efficient way to raise revenue. Data indicates that Breweries ranks and position in contributing to revenue keep shifting but largely remains in top five in terms largest Tax payers. (Source: URA Annual Performance Report 2019/2020).

The structure of taxes in the different East African countries (EAC) continue to differ significantly with no recognizable pattern of increase or decrease in taxes on alcohol[1]. Greater harmonization of alcohol on excise duty is urgently needed so as to move specific tax regimes in EAC. Social and Health objectives of taxing alcohol to negate its effect are difficult to establish as any increase is a welcome boost for revenue. Taxes increases may have a deterrent effect on the youth initiation age to drinking, drunk driving, violence, food shortage and increased productivity in Uganda.



UGANDA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK

POLICY BRIEF ON ALCOHOL

	Taxpayer Name	Sector Description	FY 2018/19 Collected Amount (UGX. Bn)	FY 2019/20 Collected Amount (UGX. Bn)	Growth (%)
1	MTN UGANDA LIMITED	J-Information and communication	158.44	175.95	11.05%
2	AIRTEL UGANDA	J-Information and communication	116.92	154.79	32.39%
3	NILE BREWERIES	C-Manufacturing	93.70	91.74	-2.10%
4	BUJAGALI ENERGY	D-Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	74.62	81.12	8.71%
5	KAKIRA SUGAR LIMITED	C-Manufacturing	74.47	68.00	-8.69%
6	UGANDA BREWERIE S	C-Manufacturing	50.92	67.06	31.68%
7	TORORO CEMENT LTD	C-Manufacturing	48.83	62.77	28.54%
8	UMEME LIMITED	D-Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	57.53	36.37	-36.78%
9	KINYARA SUGAR	C-Manufacturing	33.63	35.34	5.08%
10	ATC UGANDA	L-Real estate activities	20.25	31.10	53.60%

Source: URA Annual Performance Report 2019/2020

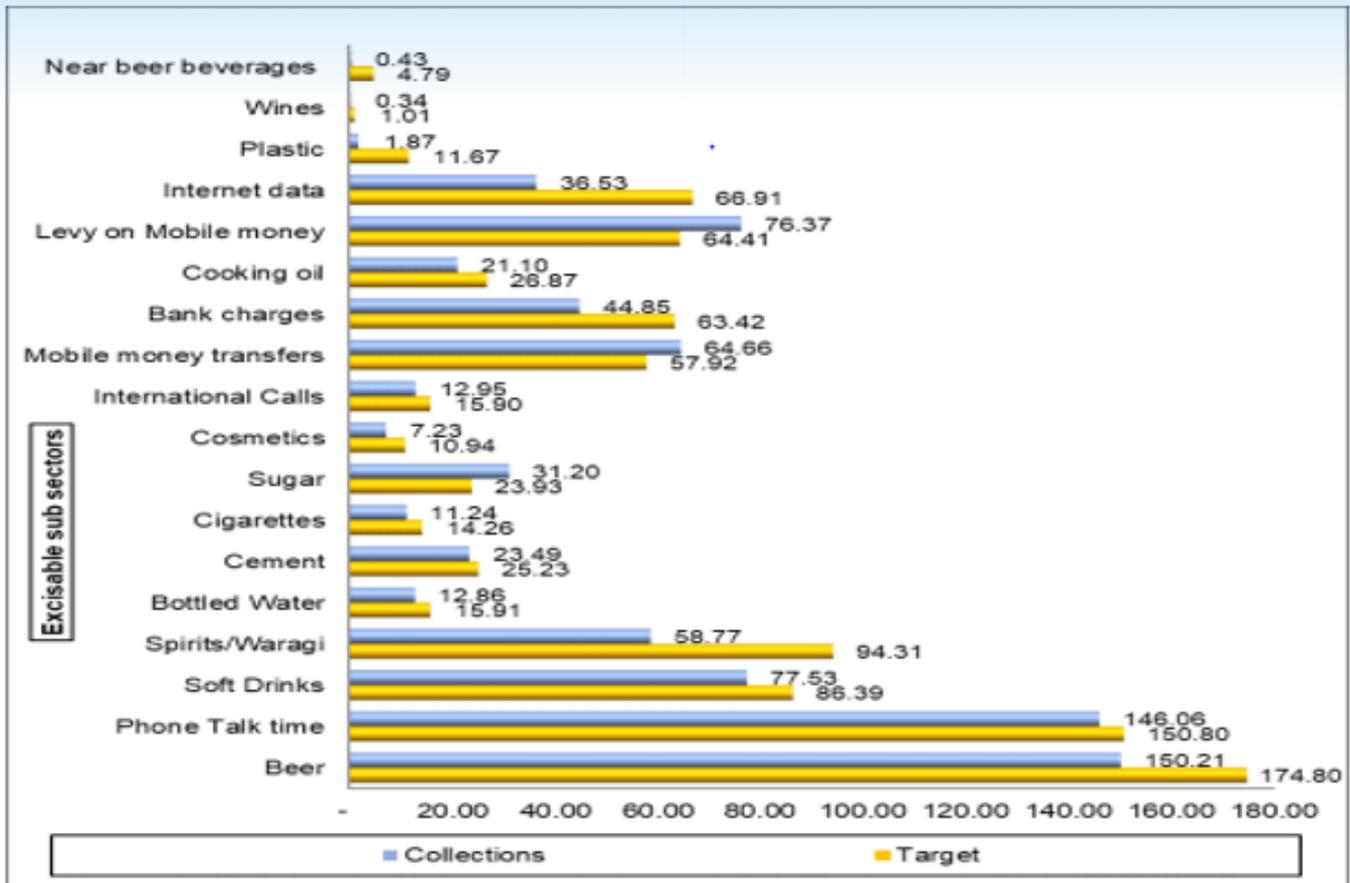
Top contributors of Local Excise Duties collections

Taxpayer Name	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	Growth (%)
	Amount Paid (UGX. Bn)	Amount Paid (UGX. Bn)	
MTN Uganda Limited	312.24	300.82	-3.66%
AIRTEL Uganda Limited	208.01	204.61	-1.63%
NILE Breweries Limited	189.95	170.10	-10.45%
Uganda breweries limited	135.51	139.30	2.80%
Kakira sugar limited	58.17	50.29	-13.54%
Crown beverages limited	46.88	46.06	-1.74%
Century bottling company	46.91	44.06	-6.08%
Hariss international limited	29.45	27.63	-6.16%
Bidco Uganda limited	21.12	25.69	21.67%
Leaf tobacco & commodities (u) limited	14.91	21.02	40.99%

Source: URA Annual Performance Report 2019/2020



Local Excise Duty Performance for period July to December 2021



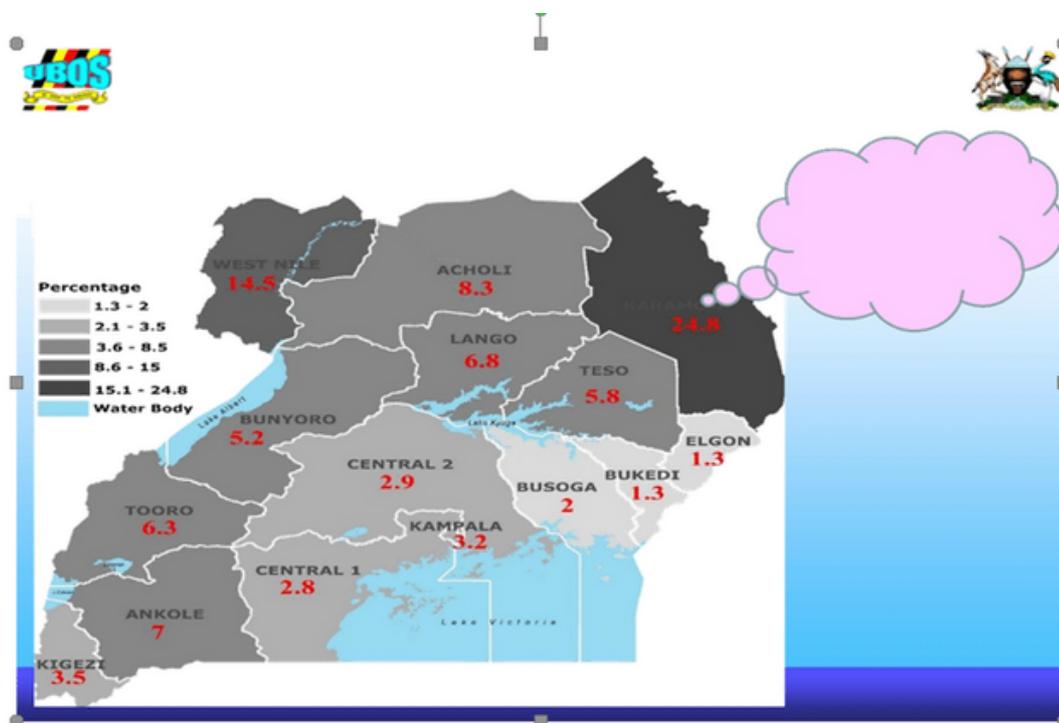
Source: Half Year Revenue Performance report July to December 2021

Pattern and observations

1. Alcohol industry contributes significantly to total revenue collected per Tax category (appear in the top five tax contributors per tax type).
2. b) Increased alcohol consumption every year in Uganda. Current alcohol consumption was high among the males at 17 percent compared to the females at seven percent (UBOS, 2019).
3. The Alcohol industry targets for Local Excise Tax collection are higher than other excisable products because they rely on its significant contribution to the tax revenue. The target revenue for beer between July to December 2021 was UGX 174.8 billion.
4. URA introduced digital stamps and electronic fiscal devices for eight products (cigarettes, beers, sodas, water, wines, spirits, sugar and cement) which has expanded of tracing and tracking tracked products which has grown the revenue contributions from the VAT and LED tax heads. These are all efforts towards curbing illicit trade and eliminating uneven playfields for taxpayers.

The Uganda National Household Survey UBOS 2016/17 reveals high rates of substance use in the country as seen from the graphs below.

Substance use (%)



Vicious cycle of Alcohol and Poverty



Source: UBOS 2016/17

COMPARISONS OF TAXATION OF ALCOHOL IN EAST AFRICA

Alcohol Excise Duty in Uganda

Beer made from malt	60% or UGX 2,050 per litre, whichever is higher
Opaque beer	20% or UGX 230 per litre, whichever is higher
Beer produced from barley grown and malted in Uganda	30% or UGX 950 per litre, whichever is higher
Any other alcoholic beverage locally produced	20% or UGX 230 per litre, whichever is higher
Un-denatured spirits made from locally produced raw materials	60% or UGX 1,500 per litre, whichever is higher
Un-denatured spirits made from imported raw materials	100% or UGX 2,500 per litre, whichever is higher
Ready-to-drink spirits	80% or UGX 1,700 per litre, whichever is higher
Any other fermented beverages made from imported cider, perry, mead, spears or near beer	60% or Shs. 950 per litre; whichever is higher
Any other fermented beverages made from locally grown cider, perry, mead, spears or near beer	30% or Shs. 550 per litre; whichever is higher
Powder for reconstitution to make juice or dilute-to-taste drinks, excluding pulp	15% of the value
Wine produced from local raw materials	20% or UGX 2,000 per litre, whichever is higher
Other wine	80% or UGX 8,000 per litre, whichever is higher

Source: PwC network Uganda, 2022

- Excise taxes on alcohol in Kenya are too high by a wide margin as compared to other East African countries and are being updated and enforced. Excise tax rate in Uganda and Tanzania are too low to counterbalance the estimated net costs of misuse (Parry, 2003).
- Rwanda collects 16% out of 8.376 billion dollars.
- Tanzania collects 47.43 billion USD
- In Kenya 20% out of 70,529 billion dollars
- Uganda collects 13% out of 25.53 billion USD far lower than most sub-Saharan African countries (Therefore a lot of revenue is lost as a result of low percentage of taxes.
- There is need to align the tax regime to other East African countries. Kenya and Rwanda have less problems related to alcohol compared to Uganda).
- Uganda alcohol consumption is still high but the revenue is not commensurate with the levels of consumptions and a lot of illicit alcohol still produced but untaxed (Swahn et al., 2018) this local brew needs to be brought into the tax curve and increase its revenue. Untaxed illicit brew and many producers are outside the tax base.
- Likewise, 56% of the population does not drink. Many young people may be living alcohol free.

THE COUNTRY LOCKDOWN DUE TO COVID-19 AND POVERTY LEVELS

The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated government measures to limit mobility impacted patterns and places of alcohol consumption. During the COVID-19 lockdown, people significantly changed drinking habits, shifting places of consumption from bars and restaurant to home. Information from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicates the following:

- The country lockdown due to COVID-19 had a negative effect on daily consumption of alcohol generally. However, for some regions there were an observed increase in the percentage of persons that consumed alcohol on a daily basis, these include: Kampala, Elgon, Bunyoro, Tooro, Ankole and Kigezi including the mountainous areas.
- By region, Karamoja stood out with the highest percentage of alcohol consumption at 48 percent while Busoga had the least at four percent in 2019/20. Two in every ten persons were found to be consuming alcohol on a daily basis (as shown in table 4.18).
- Poverty varies across geographical areas. In 2019/20, 20.3 percent of the population of Uganda is estimated to be poor, of whom nearly 85 percent is rural population.
- Overall, one in every ten persons (13%) aged 10 years and above consumed either alcohol, tobacco or drugs in 2019/20. Karamoja region had the highest percent at 50 percent while Busoga had the least at five percent.
- Current use of tobacco in Uganda has consistently reduced and as seen by drop in revenue. Alcohol industries are one of the largest revenue producers (2016).

Taxes on alcohol seem to be in constant flux and tax exemptions

There are significant inconsistencies in establishing the tax regimes on alcohol in Uganda and this needs further investigations not influenced by the alcohol lobby. The New Vision Monday April 9, 2018 page 4 indicates that under the Income Tax Amendment Bill, Nile Breweries had been granted tax exemptions to produce Chibuku beer. The unprogressive tax on opaque beer rendered Chibuku uncompetitive with other local brews such as tonto, ajono, mulamba, malwa, kwete among others. Due to this, annual VAT worth Shs5 billion was lost (Parliament of Uganda report 18th May 2022).

We are glad that the tax exemption has been lifted and a 30% excise duty has been imposed on Chibuku and low cost beer brands on the market. No tax exemptions on any alcohol should be allowed in future because this reduces the price for the alcohol thereby making it more affordable for even the young people to access.

LOSS OF REVENUE VS REVENUE GROWTH

Price of alcohol still at the same price: During the 2019/2020 the budget increased taxes on alcohol but a shocking advert in one of the leading newspapers said that the price of alcohol was still at the same price (taxation of alcohol is yet to be felt and bring the net results to increase revenue). Turnover for the industry is increasing and boosting of high profit margins. Limited impact of taxation may need serious review from time to time.

With the new Financial Year 2022/2023 factories producing the low-cost opaque beer will enjoy a tax relief intended to attract more local manufacturers into the alcohol production industry. In the Financial Year 2020/2021, companies were paying 30 per cent or Shs650 per litre in excise tax before the Act was amended in Financial Year 2021/2022 to reduce it to the current 20 per cent or Shs230 per litre. The proposal to reduce the excise duty rate on opaque beer would encourage the reopening of companies that had closed as a consequence of the higher tax as manufacturers of opaque beer will pay only 12 per cent or Shs150 per litre of the beer produced as compared to the current 20 per cent or Shs230 per litre. (Parliament of Uganda report 18th May 2022)

UBL defies closure of bars to post 33% revenue growth

Monday, August 02, 2021



An employee inspects beer bottles in a production line at Uganda Breweries Limited. The revenue growth, which stood at 33 per cent, was mainly supported by flagship brands in both beer and spirits divisions, which all recorded double-digit growth. PHOTO / FILE

By **MARTIN LUTHER OKETCH**

Despite a difficult business environment due to Covid-19, Uganda Breweries Limited (UBL) has registered growth in revenue for the year ended June.

The revenue growth, which stood at 33 per cent, was mainly supported by flagship brands in both beer and spirits divisions, which all recorded double-digit growth.

Low alcohol consumption forces drop in Tax revenue

Unprecedentedly low levels of consumptions in Uganda are beginning to emerge for instance in the Daily Monitor Newspaper Wednesday, March 23, 2022 that Ministry of Finance noted that tax collections were low that targets. Also see UBOS HH study 2019/2020 drop in drinking in some areas. The trend is likely to change as people consumer power and capacity diminishes because of limited revenue. Covid 19 also awakened people economic and many reviewed their expenditure list and probably dropped alcohol on their list. There has also been awareness about the harm being caused by alcohol and many people and communities are resenting alcohol. Alcohol and Corvid 19 showed that alcohol use was a major risk factor for infection; weakens the immune system and reduced the body ability to cope with Covid-19. Increased awareness



Illicit alcohol trade, loss of revenue and Breweries fighting the battle

The observer Wednesday March 30, 2022 (page 38) noted that in 2021, UBL seized illicit alcohol worth Shs 375 million and between 2019 and 2020 government lost 1.9 trillion in revenue from the sale of illicit alcohol alone. Counterfeits take 64.5 percent of alcohol market share(this fact has not been fully investigated as it is a loss of revenue to the government) leaving the remain smaller percentage to genuine dealers. This same argument is also fronted by the tobacco industry about illicit trade and smuggling on in the same article.

1. The New Vision Monday April 9, 2018 page 4

That the country is losing 38 billion shillings annually because of illicit trade in cigarettes. All these entities blame their woe on illicit trade.

The intention partially is to weed out 'illicit' alcohol, expand the market, maximize their profits. It is a culture to apportion the blame differently.

Excessive use of fuel wood for distilling waragi has led to deforestation. This affects SDG 13 of climate action on raising human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation and impact reduction (target 13.3)

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Previous Alcohol Package



Challenges in taxation

Non-recognition of the health approach when taxing the new categories of the rural poor. Alcohol marketing is targeting young people. We need to keep young people safe and alcohol free. Breweries appear to be promoting heavy alcohol use that targets young people.

Nile Breweries' "Be a Millionaire" campaign returns⁴ b 27th July 2022 at 08:15

Uganda's beer market leader Nile Breweries Limited (NBL) on Tuesday launched season 11 of its annual entrepreneurship campaign dubbed "Be A Millionaire." Season II themed the "Last Man Standing", returns with a couple of twists in a game show format, while maintaining the core objective of supporting businesses with both financial injection and knowledge transfer. Announcing the launch of Season 11 at the company head office in Luzira, Kampala, NBL's Legal and Corporate Affairs Director Mr Onabito Ekomoloit said Shs100M was earmarked as prize money, with participants winning at both regional competition and the national grand finale. The nationwide five-week campaign is aimed at sharpening the business acumen of aspiring youth entrepreneurs who will traverse five regions (North, West, Central, East and South West) culminating in the national finale, televised on NBS TV. The regional competitions will be broadcast live on partner media, Capital FM every Saturday at 3 pm.

Minimum alcohol advertisement standards are not adhered to. The Alcohol industry distributes free alcohol drinks during music shows and all regalia supporting and promoting alcohol products. Poor enforcement of the alcohol policy and weak laws largely to blame in Uganda. Recruitment of young people and unethical marketing has been noted. We need to address norms that encourage drinking, stress responses, and social control patterns. Regulation (packaging, density distribution, drunken driving, hours of sale which has led to enforcement and modifying drinking contexts.

Tax rates should generally be defined in terms of alcohol content (Unit- price) so that alcoholic beverages are treated (in terms of levels of ethanol) similarly coupled with an effective enforcement system. Government should increase excise duty on alcohol by an additional tax of 3% from the current 30% to 33% in order to increase alcohol prices. Uganda should review prices of alcohol regularly in relation to inflation and income levels. Regulation and taxation are complements, and those concerned with reducing the social costs of alcohol consumption need to pay special attention to enforcing regulations.

ALCOHOL MARKETING AND PACKAGING OF ALCOHOL

Packaging of alcohol

Packaging is still attractive to children metamorphosed from 50 mls to 100ml same drinking, this is a serious packaging issue. This is too small still a youth burden that encourage drinking, increase and expand availability. The lowest package of alcohol should be 300ml; this will make it hard to drink, higher price, easy to collect taxes. Eliminate/control alcohol packaging which is contributing to the 89% of unregulated alcohol. For example, alcohol packed in 100 ml should be banned and recommend packaging of 300 mls in glass bottles which is easier to tax to realise the needed revenue.

Uganda needs to have an endowment fund from alcohol taxes of at least -5% of the revenues to enforce regulation, research and prevention so as to protect children.



- The alcohol marketing campaigns are sexual in nature (women are portrayed as sex objects while masculine men drink alcohol) and largely the social marketing campaigns target a male audience and young people. These messages need to be re-examined and a link to alcohol be brought up the UCC broadcasting standards need to be applied and adverts be vetted.
- Prices are still the same for alcohol and in some cases are lower making it easy to drink and makes alcohol cheaper than water. Alcohol marketing in terms of free distribution of alcohol and minimal standards are not adhered to.

Marketing of Alcohol in Uganda

The following have been proposed as urgent actions that need to be addressed by Government.

1) Regulating alcohol packaging:

a. Alcohol packed in small bottles of 100ml be banned with immediate effect. Alcohol should be packed in bottles with a minimum of 300 ml and these are packaging standards as provided in the national standards governing packing of food and drinks.

b. Rising affordability:

Some of the alcohol industry members are pushing ultra-cheap alcohol into Ugandan communities which leads to increase in consumption especially among young people.

2) Regulating Alcohol advertisements:

The Liquor Act, Cap. 93 prohibits all forms of alcohol advertising, promotion and sponsorship through means that are false, misleading or deceptive or likely to create an erroneous impression about characteristics, health effects, or hazards of alcohol. Appropriate health warnings must accompany all alcohol advertising. UCC should urgently regulate all unethical alcohol advertisements.

3) Prohibition of public sales and advertising in form of road side promotions and free distribution of alcohol to minors. The time of advertising on electronic media should be from 10 pm to 6am when children are less likely to be listening to radio or watching television.

All alcohol billboards must be located 500 meters away from schools and hospitals. This practice is meant to minimize on the effects of marketing and enticing children to start consuming alcohol at early age. Ban the display and free distribution of alcohol products at public and social events where children are part.

4.) Regulating alcohol production and Increasing availability: In the informal market the number of unregulated local brewers and other manufacturers is increasing with increasing alcohol poisoning products on the market. In the formal market, the alcohol industry is pushing alcohol into every social space, forcing alcohol retailers to sell alcohol to anyone at any time.

Regulating sale of alcohol

a. Time of sale: During week days (Monday to Friday) bars should open at 4pm to 10pm and on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) bars should open at 2pm to 12pm.

b. Licensing Alcohol selling places: The Liquor Act, Cap. 93 prohibits the selling of alcohol anywhere in Uganda without a license. All alcohol selling places should have a special license allowing them to sale alcohol and their trading licenses shall be revoked once they do not abide by set the standards and guidelines.

Justification for issuance of licenses

The issuance of the extra license for selling alcohol is to reduce on density outlets of places selling alcohol thereby regulating distribution of alcohol selling places. This is already provided for in the Enguli Act and Trade licenses Act. This needs only to be enforced by local governments. This will help get rid of people who sale alcohol in markets, on streets, on road sides, in taxi parks and hawking because licenses regulate the method of selling alcohol. Issuance of licenses will also increase on revenue for local government urban councils and municipalities accruing from alcohol selling places.

No person under the age of 18 is allowed to buy, drink, or sale alcohol: The Liquor Act, Cap. 93 Section 19 places a restriction upon the license not to allow persons under the apparent age of 18 be raised up to 21 years to be in a bar or licensed premises during the period of sale and consumption of alcohol.

Improve alcohol availability limits and improve enforcement

Government needs to set standards for emerging informal alcohol production to help reduce informal alcohol production and help informal alcohol producers to transition to healthier, more sustainable means of sustenance.

Improve mechanisms to protect against alcohol industry interference and to

eliminate conflicts of interest, to keep the Public health and sustainable development areas free from alcohol industry. Invest in Monitoring, documenting and exposing the unethical practices of the alcohol industry, revealing their hidden agenda and fundamental conflict of interest, the costs to society.

Alcohol, food shortages and famine north East

Famine had become a persistent problem for last six years up to 20 22 in Uganda but alcohol as a serious casual factor has been sidelined from the discussion. Most of the breweries focus on their goal to encourage farmers to grow sorghum and casava for better prices and at a larger scale. The perenial food staff are sold and families left with nothing, thereby providing low-end market brands of alcohol at almost half the price of some premium brands.

Turning to major food crops to brew beer has started to interfere with food security in Uganda. Household heads are selling all their food to get money and end up using it to buy premier cheap beer and other local gins. Husbands are spending more time drinking alcohol and is seriously affecting their contribution in terms of food production, most of their productive time is spent drinking and then nursing hangovers. Bars and places start selling alcohol as early as 8am, yet this early morning time could be translated into food production time.

Alcohol Consumption and Drug Abuse

According to the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020, the current consumption of alcohol reduced from 17 percent in 2016/17 to 12 percent in 2019/20. Alcohol consumption was high among the males at 17 percent compared to the females at 7 percent. By region, Karamoja stood out with the highest percentage of alcohol consumption at 48 percent while Busoga had the least at four percent in 2019/20. Two in every ten persons were found to be consuming alcohol on a daily basis. The country lockdown due to COVID-19 had a negligible effect on daily consumption of alcohol generally. However, for some regions there were an observed increase in the percentage of persons that consumed alcohol on a daily basis, these include: Kampala, Elgon, Bunyoro, Tooro, Ankole and Kigezi including the mountainous areas.

Overall, one in every ten persons (13%) aged 10 years and above consumed either alcohol, tobacco or drugs in 2019/20. Karamoja region had the highest percent at 50 percent while Busoga had the least at five percent.

According to UBOS reports (2015-2020) we note that areas with highest alcohol consumption also had highest poverty levels. Districts with high levels of alcohol consumption also have high levels of poverty which needs to be seriously addressed.

Rising alcohol consumption in poorer societies or in lower-income segments of populations is an obstacle to achieving the SDG1. The resources spent on alcohol are diverted from more productive and sustainable uses and the harms from alcohol use often include impoverishment as well as ill-health. Alcohol can push people into deeper poverty. The direct costs of alcohol harm to the household are often considerable and frequently underestimated – and put a big burden on development.

When the poor become a consumer market, purchasing commercial brands of alcohol takes a larger toll on personal and family income than it does in other social classes. The poor are also more vulnerable to the public disruption, violence and health-related harms that come with increased alcohol consumption.

Alcohol taxation is a catalyst for equality. Health and social costs double and exceed the alcohol excise tax revenue. A disproportionate share of the health and economic costs of alcohol falls on poorer households. But they are more responsive to increased prices than richer households. Therefore, alcohol taxes substantially benefit people with lower socioeconomic status through reducing alcohol use and related harm, such as

having fewer sick days, living longer and more productive working lives, and spending less on health. Increased resources from alcohol taxes can be invested in programs that favour people with lower socioeconomic status.

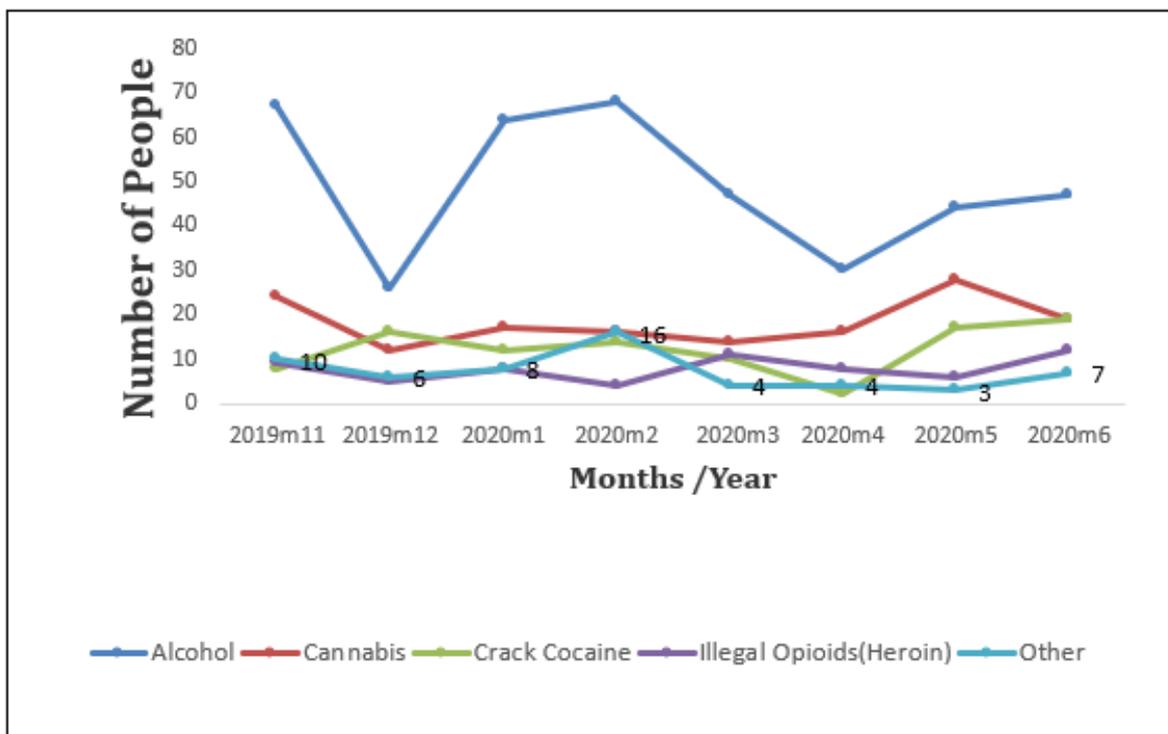
3. Treatment and Hospital burden

Information from hospitals and drug treatment facilities is showing an upward trend for increased need for treatment due to alcohol use in Kampala city metropolitan area.

Number of clients at facilities by months

Overall, between November 2019 and June 2020. 763 clients were managed fo

AOD in the facilities. More than a half of the clients/ patients were from Butabika National Referral Hospital (BNRMH) (51.5%) while the least number of clients registered in the same period were from Recovery solutions (2.1%) as well as Safe Places (2.2%) These numbers varied in each of the facilities although they remained high in BNRMH. The data revealed Alcohol as the commonest substance of abuse (52%) across all 10 facilities from November 2019 to June 2020



Background characteristics of clients. The overall average age of clients in all the ten facilities was 32 years with 45% of the clients in the 25-34 age group and 23% under 25 years. Most of the clients were men (85%), had attained at least secondary level of education (84%) while those with no education were only 5.6%. More than half of the clients were single (57%), nearly a third (29%) were unemployed while majority were Christians (protestants, 45% and Catholics, 35%) and Urban residents (87%).

The data showed that 47% of the clients aged 35 years and more mentioned alcohol as their primary substance used compared to 40% and 13% among 25-34 years and 15-24 years respectively. The study further revealed that a higher proportion of men (89%) took alcohol compared to women (11%). Additionally, majority of the clients that took alcohol were urban residents (81%). In terms of religion, protestants had the highest proportion that took alcohol (47%) followed by Catholics (39%). Those who had attained secondary education had the highest proportion that took alcohol (44%).

Alcohol and Gender

According to data collected by Uganda Youth Development link (UYDEL) 2007 to 2022, 45% of the Out of school youth aged 15-24 years that come into their rehabilitation and reintegration programs take alcohol and drugs to help them deal with the difficult situations they are faced with in life. UYDEL DREAMS Project reports (2018 – 2020) reveal that, of the 59,290 Adolescent Girls and young women aged 15 to 24 years engaged in transactional sex served in 7 Rural Districts of Uganda; 52% were using and abuse alcohol and other drugs (Including Alcohol (Sachet Waragi, bottled waragi, Beers and Wines), Marijuana, Shisha, Kubar, Khat (Mairungi), Cigarettes, and aviation fuel) and as a result: 62% of the AGYWs presented Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including Pain during sex, vaginal discharge, lower abdominal pain, and Genital sores. Of these, 30% had given birth; 47% tried to terminate pregnancy; 0.29% tested HIV positive; 14.1% presented Intimate Partner Violence/ Gender Based Violence cases; and 11% attempted suicide.

Analysis from previous UYDEL implemented project beneficiary's data 2003 to 2022 also shows that females are now more likely to drink than males of the same age due to their social influences and the life vulnerabilities they have experienced.

The Kampala Youth Survey is a cross-sectional study conducted in 2014 among youth (ages 12-18 years) living in the slums of Kampala (n = 1133) who were participating in Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) centers. Chi-square tests were used to determine differences in alcohol use behaviors between 1) gender (boys vs. girls), and 2) alcohol use behaviors between problem drinkers and non-problem drinkers, stratified by gender. Among all participants (n = 1133), the prevalence of any alcohol use in the past 12 months was 31% (n = 346). A higher percentage of girl drinkers reported having sex in the past month, without a condom (57.9%) due to alcohol consumption, compared to boy drinkers (41.9%) ($\chi^2 = 8.09$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.005$). For girl and boy drinkers, nearly half (49.5% and 44.1%, respectively) met the criteria for problem drinkers, measured using the Cut-Annoyed-Guilty-Eye-Opener (CAGE) questionnaire.

Some of the reasons for alcohol and drug use shared by the adolescent girls and young women aged 15-24 years engaging in transaction sex include:

- Enhance feelings when having sex with multiple partners and strangers and helps them to build self-confidence to approach clients. Helps them stay awake at night
- Helps them forget your problems and kills boredom. Helps them feel better when you are depressed. Boosts one's energy to work harder especially during the cold and hard night working environments
- Supports bonding with other peers and their clients as they hung out in the hotspots and entertainment places

Major Influencers include: Peers and friends; Male sexual Partners; Availability of Alcohol and Drugs. Family members already on drugs and alcohol; Environment (slums, Bars, lodges, Sex work)

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Use by the AGYWTs.

Although men are more likely to drink alcohol and drink in larger amounts, gender differences in body structure and chemistry cause women to absorb more alcohol, and take longer to break it down and remove it from their bodies (i.e., to metabolize it). After drinking the same amount of alcohol, women tend to have higher blood alcohol levels than men, and the immediate effects of alcohol usually occur more quickly and last longer in women than men. These differences make women more susceptible to the long-term negative health effects of alcohol compared with men.

Even though men typically drink more frequently and consume higher amounts, women are more likely to absorb and metabolize alcohol because of the differences in their body structures and chemistry. This means the effects of alcohol will usually last longer for women and they are more susceptible to the detrimental health effects associated with alcohol use and alcoholism.

Excessive alcohol use is associated with more than 43,000 deaths among women. Excessive alcohol use poses unique health and safety risks to females.² Based on UYDEL DREAMS Project Data 2018-2019. A total of 7,608 AGYWTs using alcohol also presented Sexually Transmitted Infections; 141 tested HIV Positive and; 4,829 were Teenage mothers.

Other Health and Safety risks presented by the AGYWTS using alcohol and drugs included:

Rape, Partner Violence; STIs/ HIV infection; Increased abortions/unwanted pregnancies; Limited and inconsistent condom use and negotiation; Physical Abuse and violence; Hangovers/ blackouts; Cognitive deficits; Depression and anxiety; Increased suicidal thoughts and attempts.

Alcohol and Drug Use in relation to Gender Based Violence

The Uganda Police Forces, Criminal Investigations Directorate Report January to June 2020, indicated: A total of 16,242 cases of SGBV were reported in 2020; On average, 2,707 cases of SGBV were reported to the police per month; and a total of 523 cases were taken to court, out of which 96 cases secured convictions, 13 cases were dismissed and 414 cases were still pending in court, while 3580 cases were still under investigations. The report also indicates that majority of the Domestic violence has mainly been caused by: disputes over family property, failure to provide for the family, drug and alcohol abuse and cases of infidelity.

Alcohol drinking can lead to more severe forms of violence that can quickly escalate to extremely dangerous situations. The short- and long-term effects of alcohol will blur a person's mental state, contributing to an increased risk of committing violent crimes. Physical violence; Emotional Violence; Sexual Violence, Economic Violence.

Challenges faced in rehabilitating survivors of GBV and Alcohol and Drug Use

Where the family is involved it becomes very difficult to follow up the cases; Corruption and Bribery at the police when it comes to prosecuting the culprits

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is an urgent need to strengthen primary care, early identification and brief interventions for people with alcohol use problems.
2. Invest in community mobilization for alcohol prevention, and treatment;
 - a. Invest in evidence-based alcohol prevention on community, district levels
 - b. Invest in country-wide alcohol awareness activities – including in local languages
 - c. Support championing of the modern and high-impact Alcohol Control Bill.
 - d. Invest in alcohol literacy initiatives and support efforts to promote alcohol-free environments and lifestyles.
 - e. Conduct large scale community mobilization campaign for support of alcohol law and policy development and to raise awareness about alcohol harms, alcohol industry practices and alcohol policy solutions.
3. Capacity building in the primary healthcare system to deliver screening, brief interventions and development of quality standards for prevention and involving young people.
4. Establish standards for emerging treatment facilities to avoid doing harm on the clients.
5. There is a need to focus on building up a national alcohol, drugs and tobacco (ADT) monitoring system in Uganda with indicators on consumption, related harm and policy responses.
6. Generate data and information about alcohol issues and engage in continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Alcohol Road accidents and fatalities

Causes of crashes

Table 70: Nature of Crashes with respect to Causes January - December 2021

Causes of Crashes	Nature of Accident			Total
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	
Reckless Driving	2,644	7,071	3,459	13,174
Careless pedestrian	182	378	104	664
DMC	280	381	398	1,059
Other causes	243	306	178	727
Over speeding	125	276	102	503
Unknown cause	150	265	155	570
Passenger falls from vehicle	48	109	39	196
Under influence of alcohol	31	103	65	199
Over loading	28	62	41	131
Dangerous loading	13	51	28	92
Dazzled by Lights	08	36	26	70
Obstacle on carriage way	05	32	21	58
Sub Total	3,757	9,070	4,616	17,443

Source: The Police Annual Crime Report, 2021

2) Improve DUI counter-measures

Reduce BAC level: According to the Traffic and Road Safety (Prescribed Alcohol Limit) Regulations, 2004, the prescribed blood alcohol level beyond which a person is not allowed to drive a motor vehicle is 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood. On the other hand, the prescribed breath alcohol level beyond which a person is not allowed to drive a motor vehicle is 35 milligrams of alcohol in 100 milligrams of breath. This exercise is no longer being enforced by the traffic police and we don't know why? Improve road safety measures, such as random breathalyser testing.

Alcohol Use, age and Young People: The huge cost of underage Drinking.

Unregulated alcohol use sends the wrong message to the nation's youth, and children. We fear it will lead to serious public health and social problems. Our children will be worse with unregulated alcohol environment. In March 2013, CNN study ranked Uganda 8th in the world and first on the African continent in liquor intake.

It has been estimated that the per capita consumption in Uganda is 11.9 litres (WHO, 2011) implying high consumption levels. This is a slight decline from 2005 when Uganda was number one consumer of alcohol with per capita alcohol consumption of 19.5 litres. President Museveni was quoted in one

of the national newspapers the Uganda Daily Monitor, see link below having said that alcohol kills young people's innovativeness. He also expressed concern over the alcohol use of young Ugandans. Museveni said that alcohol causes premature death to Ugandan youth - calling it slow suicide. A study by Georgia State University (GSU) 2013-2015 (Swahn, 2018) in urban slums of Kampala revealed a more unfavourable report on alcohol consumption and high levels of alcohol exposure among the youth.

Interestingly UNAIDS and Ministry of Health 2021 report indicate districts with high prevalence of new infections acknowledging the high-risk sexual behavior amongst the risk pupations. Surprisingly the two bodies don't mention the role of alcohol use in the risk sexual behaviors where alcohol normally is central in compromising such situations, yet correct sexual behaviors will normally discuss the negative effect of alcohol. (See New Vison, Tuesday August, 2, 2022 page 2). Swahn et al., 2016, 2017, 2019 reported extensively of high sexual behaviors amongst urban slum young people and noted is that out of 1,134 youth interviewed 50% drink more than 2 times per. The study reports also indicated that 56% of youth never used a condom and 46% report sex with 3 or more partners and 17% had been raped.

Economic cost of consuming alcohol. When people drink more it affects the economic productivity of individuals which implies less work, savings and less investments in the country thus vicious cycle of poverty, violence, food shortage and crime. Treatment costs rise in hospitals (as more that 200 diseases associated with use of alcohol WHO, 2013) and large sums of money are spent on individuals during hospitalization, rehabilitation and treatment of addicts and victims of road carnage. The police, judiciary and enforcement costs go up and money which would rather be invested in education, economy and health is taken up to police alcohol related crimes. Money saved by people giving up drinking can be reinvested else in more productive work if alcohol is regulated.

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL USE AND RELATED HARM AMONG YOUTH

Interventions to address alcohol Problems

The Ministry of Health is drafting an Alcohol Control Bill to make all scattered Alcohol laws codified together; hopefully this work we be resumed with all the vigor it requires and the responsible Ministry to expedite the process.

1. Hoping that this will curb underage drinking and protect children.
2. Necessitates the need to introduce an endowment fund from alcohol taxes-5% of the revenues of the industry as one of the best practices globally recommended to prevent alcohol abuse among the population.
3. Regulate marketing, promotion and advertisement of alcohol.
4. Promote Prevention interventions and address enforcement issues.
5. Control illicit/informal alcohol/illegal production which continues to dominate in Uganda.
6. Limit access of alcohol in terms of age, density, volume, and advertisements.
7. Address packaging so that it is not attractive to children.

Alcohol an agent of harm to others: Alcohol harm and policy in Uganda

Alcohol use: Poisoning, and deaths: Alcohol poisoning continues to ravage the country. Twelve (12) people died in separate intervals after consuming adulterated local gin while 13 others remained admitted at various health centers. The deceased developed complications after drinking the waragi in the West Nile region. The police closed the factory which manufactured the local gin (The Daily Monitor, Tuesday August 23, 2022). The same newspaper quotes Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) spokesperson saying that UNBS had only certified the wine and not the local gin. Approximately 40 cases of deaths due to drinking adulterated waragi packed in sachets were first reported in March 2007 and close to 300 people are reported to have lost their lives due to alcohol poisoning between 2007-2009.

http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Museveni-warns-youth-on-alcohol/-/688334/2713504/-/sb4l6e/-/index.html?__scoop_post=48d651a0-f8e2-11e4-e80a-842b2b775358&__scoop_topic=3296145#__scoop_post=48d651a0-f8e2-11e4-e80a-842b2b775358&__scoop_topic=3296145

Cases of deaths and blindness were reported in different parts of the country mainly in Kasese, Kampala, Kabarole, Gulu and Mpigi districts. To date all these efforts were abandoned and the industry is back at rampage.

Intimate partner violence (physical aggression, sexual rape and psychological abuse alcohol is cause number one (48%) of all abuses in Uganda. Alcohol consumption is highly correlated to HIV/AIDS infection. Various categories of criminal behaviour have been identified as having alcohol links such as homicide, domestic violence, other assaults, sexual violence, and child abuse. National accidents statistics from Police records indicate that; in 2009, 5.6% of the total numbers of road crashes registered countrywide were due to driving under the influence of alcohol. Road accident and the cost of road traffic enforcement and medical bills are going up.

Life lost due to alcohol: Uganda ranks among the top countries for years of life lost due to alcohol. In 38 African countries, taxing harmful products, especially alcohol and tobacco, prevents pre-mature deaths and enhances population health both in the short- and long-term.

SDG 5: Alcohol fuels gendered violence in public and private spheres. Violence against intimate partners: Alcohol fuels a significant proportion of cases of violence against intimate partners both in and outside the household.

SDG 6: Alcohol production fuels water insecurity

When a territory withdraws 25% or more of its renewable fresh water resources it is said to be 'water-stressed'. The effects on poor communities are most severe. Scarce resources are drained for the production of alcohol instead of sustaining community life and development. For instance, the alcohol industry is causing serious emissions of chemicals into waterways in its production, around the world and is fuelling water insecurity through its water intense production. In Uganda, gin distilleries contaminate the rivers and lakes which provided many villages with drinking water.

CASE STUDY 7:

THE WORLD-WIDE FUND (WWF) IN 2007

Economics and the environment

In Uganda, sugar factories sell molasses to distillers for the production of waragi, a locally-brewed gin. The distilled alcohol is in high demand and is traded within the country and as far as eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and southern Sudan. Alcohol production is becoming more and more attractive as it earns much more than traditional farming activities. But increased production is raising environmental concerns, particularly as waste from the alcohol-making process is being dumped straight into the Waki River. Fish kills and the death of other species near some 50 brewing sites along the river have been reported. “The water is so heavily polluted that local people can’t even drink water from the river anymore,” said one local resident. “The alcohol plants should be removed from here,” exclaimed another. “Fish are dying and we can’t fish as we did before. Only a few people are profiting from this business while many locals are dying from drinking waragi and other risks related with its distillation.” Excessive use of fuel wood for the distillation process has also led to deforestation. And alcoholism is becoming a problem in many communities.

Poverty and the environment

Despite the problems, more and more people are getting into the waragi business. Farms are being neglected. Communities are affected.

WWF, through its Lake Albert Eastern Catchment Management Project, is working with local communities and other stakeholders to conserve the water catchment area. Faced with the challenge of trying to curb the adverse effects of the industry on the lake and mounting public health issues, concerted efforts are being made to help communities change their attitudes towards conservation and encourage them to adapt to less destructive practices. “As a way of devising solutions to the problem, the project has been working together with the local authorities and has organized distillers into an association,” said Dr Musonda Mumba, Freshwater Programme Coordinator at WWF’s eastern Africa regional programme. Dialogue with Uganda’s Kinyala Sugar Works, for example, has been initiated to try and find an alternative use of the molasses.

“We need to work very closely with the community and other stakeholders in order to engage communities in alternative income generating activities that are not detrimental to the environment,” Dr Mumba added. “Saving the river will not only be for the benefit of the environment but the community itself and generations to come,”

Good practices in other countries coordinating alcohol efforts

Kenya

Government passed an alcohol law and established a national coordination authority-NACADA with funding to address alcohol and other drugs. The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) is a Semi-Autonomous State Corporation under the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government as per the Executive Order No. 1 of June 2018 (Revised).

A Gazette Notice dated April 26, 2001, established the National Agency for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) to undertake public education and awareness campaign against drug abuse, especially among youth in schools and other institutions of higher learning.

Through a Legal Notice No. 140 published in the Kenya Gazette Supplement on 29th June 2007, the Agency was transformed into the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse Authority (NACADA) under the State Corporations Act (Cap 446 of the Laws of Kenya) to coordinate a multi-sectoral campaign to prevent, control and mitigate the impact of alcohol and drug abuse in the country. In 2010, the Authority's mandate was expanded to include implementation of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act, 2010.

In July 2012, the Authority was again transformed to the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) having been firmly established under an Act of Parliament and its mandate expanded and elaborated in the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) Act, 2012. The Authority works with schools, workplaces, colleges, universities, technical institutions, county governments, ministries, parastatals, national government administrative offices, faith-based institutions, CBOs, NGOs, self-help groups as well as individuals interested in a society free from alcohol and drug abuse.

The current status of Laws and Policies and coordination of efforts.

A similar body is urgently needed in Uganda placed under the Ministry of Internal Affairs with an established National Alcohol Control Authority.

Proposed areas for regulation and enforcement of alcohol production, sale and consumption in Uganda that need urgent interventions:

Improve alcohol policy infrastructure and coordination among stakeholders that are free from conflicts of interest.

1. Annual inter-ministerial roundtable on alcohol policy and law development and implementation to ensure accountability and commitment.

2. Regular consultation with civil society.

3. Lack of political commitment, enabling effective law, long-term leadership the alcohol industry is also working aggressively to entice more Ugandans on their products.

4. Integrating best practices and prevention science into alcohol prevention in school curriculum and in the work of the Ministry of Education to train all teachers and non-academic staff and students.

5. Undertake capacity building for advocacy for opinion leaders in the media and public relations work for alcohol prevention and control.

6. Training in data collection, monitoring and evaluation of evidence-based alcohol prevention interventions

7. Raise additional funds to support stakeholder engagements on the development and validation of the Alcohol Control bill and SAFER to the citizenry.

8. Annual sharing of experiences in a forum about progress and challenges of alcohol prevention efforts.

a. Hold individual and joint advocacy activities and engage government.

b. Monitoring, documenting and exposing the unethical practices of the alcohol industry, revealing their hidden agenda and fundamental conflict of interest, the costs to society they cause, and share with key stakeholders.

a) Have a regular forum and periodic meetings for reviews and drawing action plans.

3) To urge government to increase alcohol excise taxation

- The most effective ways to prevent second-hand effects and costs from alcohol are policies that reduce alcohol affordability and availability.
- Raising taxes on alcohol to 40% of the retail price could have a big impact. Estimates for 12 low-income countries show that alcohol consumption levels would fall by more than 10%, while tax revenues would more than triple to a level amounting to 38% of total health spending in those countries. Even if only a portion of the proceeds were allocated to health, access to services would be greatly enhanced.

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