

THE ROLE OF THE WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA IN PREVENTING ALCOHOL & ALCOHOL RELATED HARM IN AFRICA

WAAPA
calls on
WHO AFRO 69th REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING to prioritise WHO AFRO STRATEGY TO REDUCE THE HARMFUL USE OF ALCOHOL

The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Africa is the Governing Body of WHO in the African Region. It is a decision-making body with the mandate of formulating regional policies, supervising regional activities, commenting on regional budget, etc.

The World Health Organization's (WHO) African Regional Office (AFRO) in 2007 acknowledged the increase in the harmful use of alcohol and projected a worsening situation if appropriate actions are not taken to address the problem. This was captured in a report to the WHO Regional Committee for Africa, titled; "Harmful Use of Alcohol in the WHO African Region: Situation Analysis and Perspectives" (Document Number AFR/RC57/14).

The WHO Regional Committee for Africa at its Fifty-seventh session in August 2007 called for a Pan-African regional conference on the rising pattern of consumption and problems related to the harmful use of alcohol in the African Region. This call was to be achieved with the involvement of the African Union and the establishment of a Regional Observatory, for monitoring progress in addressing the harmful use of alcohol in the Region. The committee further mandated the WHO African Regional Office to prepare a regional strategy to address the harmful use of alcohol in the African Region.

In a resolution adopted by the Sixtieth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

in 2010 referenced AFR/RC60/4, the committee, noting the lack of public awareness and low recognition of alcohol related harm endorsed the Regional Strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol in the WHO African Region.

The West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA) welcomes the progress in the adoption of a regional strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol.

WAAPA therefore appeals to the upcoming 69th WHO Regional Committee for Africa to further consolidate the progress by prioritising the implementation of the regional alcohol control strategy adopted 9 years ago. The WHO Regional Committee for Africa should at its August 2019 meeting in Congo specifically consider the establishment of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Alcohol Control (RCM-AC) within the Regional Office for monitoring progress in addressing the harmful use of alcohol.



Dr. Stephen Shangwe; NCDs Director- WHO AFRO with Issah Ali; Head of Secretariat - WAAPA in Accra, Ghana

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ALCOHOL CONTROL RECOGNISED AT PMAC 2019

Several Global Alcohol Alliance (GAPA) representatives participated in the Prince Mahidol Award Conference (PMAC) in Bangkok 31 January–3 February. Alcohol received quite a bit of attention in the conference and was mentioned by many speakers and in interventions from the floor, both in the plenary and parallel sessions as well as on Twitter (#PMAC2019).

GAPA Chair, Prof Sally Casswell spoke in the plenary session “Address Determinants of NCD: the Whole of Government and Systems Response”, and in the parallel session, “Building Ethical Systems for Public Interest in the National Response to NCDs”.

Alcohol was also mentioned in the PMAC Conference statement:

“Recognizing that alcohol remains the only psychoactive and dependence-producing substance with significant global impact on population health that is not controlled at the international level by legally-binding regulatory frameworks;

that although evidence is available on the most cost-effective ‘best buy’ actions which include increasing taxes on alcoholic beverages, enacting and enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on exposure to alcohol advertising across all types of media, and enacting and enforcing restrictions on the physical availability of retail alcohol; these are yet to be fully implemented;”

<https://globalgapa.org/index.php/2019/03/14/pmac-side-meeting-framework-convention-on-alcohol-control-why-and-how/>



NATIONAL ALCOHOL POLICY ALLIANCES (NAPAs) IN WEST AFRICA



WHO AFRO 69th Reg. Comm. Meeting

August 19 – 23, 2019
Brazzaville, Congo

Global Governance of Alcohol

September 30 – October 3, 2019
Melbourne, Australia

AMERSA Annual National Conference

November 7 - 9, 2019
Boston, United States

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