

Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm – Whose Responsibility?

Alcohol Conference, Tallinn, Estonia

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**Derek Rutherford, Chairperson
Global Alcohol Policy Alliance**



Societal Responsibility



Alleviating the problems caused by alcohol consumption is everybody's business

Role of WHO

- 1992 European Alcohol Action Plan
- 1995 Ministerial Conference, Paris
- 2001 Ministerial Conference, Stockholm
- 2005 Framework for Alcohol Policy in WHO European Region

WHO EUROPE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

1. All people have the right to a family, community and working life protected from accidents, violence and other negative consequences of alcohol consumption.
2. All people have the right to valid impartial information and education, starting early in life, on the consequences of alcohol consumption on health, the family and society.
3. All children and adolescents have the right to grow up in an environment protected from the negative consequences of alcohol consumption and, to the extent possible, from the promotion of alcoholic beverages.

WHO EUROPE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

4. All people with hazardous or harmful alcohol consumption and members of their families have the right to accessible treatment and care.
5. All people who do not wish to consume alcohol, or who cannot do so for health or other reasons, have the right to be safeguarded from pressures to drink and be supported in their non-drinking behaviour.

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY 2010

The historic decision by the World Health Assembly to adopt a global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol is a recognition of the serious and adverse impact of the use of alcohol on the global burden of disease.

Ten policy options

- 1 leadership, awareness and commitment
- 2 health services' response
- 3 community action
- 4 drink–driving policies and countermeasures
- 5 availability of alcohol
- 6 marketing of alcoholic beverages
- 7 pricing policies
- 8 reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication
- 9 reducing the public health impact of illicit alcohol and informally produced alcohol
- 10 monitoring and surveillance

WHO Commission on Social Determinants 2008

Global Movement

“calls on WHO and all governments to lead a global movement on the social determinants of health.....governments, civil society, WHO, and other global organizations to come together in taking action to improve the lives of the world’s citizens.”

Social Determinants Commission

- Framework Convention on Tobacco control is seen as an excellent example of coherent global action to restrain market availability of a lethal product
- Urges WHO to initiate a discussion with Member States on regulatory action for alcohol control

S D Commission

“Caution be applied by participating countries in the consideration of new global, regional and bi lateral economic (trade and investment) policy commitments. Before such commitments are made, understanding the impact on health and health equity is vital”.

UN High Level Meeting on NCD's November 2011

Alongside tobacco use, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol was identified as one of the top four risk factors for NCDs globally.

called on WHO to set targets for the reduction of death and disability due to NCDs, and the WHA responded by committing to reduce the global burden of NCDs by 25% by the year 2025.

Industry Influence on NCD target

1st draft targets recommended 10% reduction in per capita consumption.

In the WHO's Feedback from the first draft targets it is reported that

“some Member States expressed concern about the implicit difficulties in working with the alcohol industry towards a goal that is counter to their best interests.”

Target dropped in subsequent draft

The industry's marketing has a global outreach



It contributes to similarities in patterns of drinking in different cultures. The influence of the traditional protective culture of Asian communities appears to be on the wane. We are witnessing the growth of a global drinking culture.

Drinks Industry

- Market analysts concur that the Industry is highly innovative; that new product development is a vital factor in its profitability
- Impact of globalisation, economic liberalisation, growing disposable income and aggressive marketing

Impact of Sports Sponsorship on consumption and patterns of drinking

“We are delighted to have extended our sponsorship of the Rugby World Cup. The Heineken brand is enjoyed in almost every country throughout the world. As such, Heineken is the perfect partner for rugby’s premier global tournament.” Over 3.5 billion people view the Rugby World Cup across 209 countries”.

Freeke de Wette, Sport sponsorship manager Heineken International, reported in April 2006

Sponsorship

- Carling documents

*“Football and beer are perfect partners.
Football’s not the same without beer and
beer’s not the same without football.
Together let’s change the word ‘beer’ in the
above sentence to Carling”*

Sponsorship

Carling's primary target group is young male drinkers – 'lads in the pack'. When looking for sponsorship opportunities, Carling executives seek events such as football, music festivals and gigs. In the words of one Carling executive:

“They [young men] think about 4 things, we brew 1 and sponsor 2 of them”

Molson Coors Brewing Company (UK) Ltd. 14 May 2009

Sports Sponsorship



Buy a baby-grow (a baby-suit) in Liverpool FC colours embellished across the front with Carlsberg!



Impact of Sports Sponsorship



World Development Report 2007



“The developing world’s 1.3 billion young people aged 12-24 are its next generation of economic and social actors..... As a result of epidemiological transition from communicable to non-communicable diseasesyoung people are exposed to a different range of health risks than before.”

Culture of Intoxication - Meeting the Challenge

The Young
BOTTLE TRAINING



“importance of building human capital in youth” we have to create the right climate since “missed opportunities to invest in and prepare this generation will be extremely costly to reverse, both for young people and society.”

World Development Report



WTO

“The ability of governments had been substantially weakened to use some of the most effective tools to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm due to the growth of trade agreements”

European Regional Framework Document

“the rapid expansion of trade liberalization”

SEARO Strategy

Global World



Malawi: First sign on way from Lilongwe Airport

Marketing Strategies of Alcohol Industry

- Kevin Brain in *Youth, Alcohol and the Emergence of the Post Modern Alcohol Order* observes *‘the brewing industry was faced with a double whammy of losing its traditional market and losing out in the new psychoactive youth consumer market. The industry’s response was to accelerate the process of re-co modifying alcohol products that it had began in the eighties.’*

Marketing Strategies of Alcohol Industry

- Francis Thompson, Director Strategic Development, Whitbread
- *‘Young people seem less prepared to sip beer for hours, culturally they like short sharp fixes ...five years ago there were fewer alternatives to getting a buzz or getting high. The challenge of the industry is to make alcohol part of that choice.’*

Self-Regulation

The self-regulatory codes do not protect young people, they just hone the advertisers' skills either in camouflage or creativity.

Professor Gerard Hastings

What works

Strategy or Intervention	Effectiveness
Regulating physical availability	
Minimum legal purchase age	+++
Government monopoly of retail sales	+++
Hours and days of sale restrictions	++
Restrictions on density of outlets	++
Server legal liability	+++

What works

Taxation and pricing	
Alcohol taxes	+++
Altering the drinking context	
Outlet policy to not serve intoxicated patrons	+++
Training bar staff and managers to better manage aggression	+
Voluntary codes of bar practice	0
Enforcement of on-premise regulations and legal requirements	++
Promoting alcohol-free activities and events	0

Research Institutions

- Play a pivotal role in producing evidence for action and disseminating this to health professionals and the wider community

Role of Doctors, Social and Health Care Professionals

- Patients/clients
- Early Intervention
- Societal
 - Encourage Alcohol Control Policy Advocacy
eg Alcohol + Health Alliance UK
- Global
 - Support WHO Global Strategy

Role of NGOs and Civil Society

- Involvement and engagement of civil society, networks of community institutions and non-governmental organisations are essential
- Provide an independent voice warning about the impact of the harmful use of alcohol on individuals, families and communities

Alcohol Beverage Industry

■ Threats to the Drinks Industry - 1984

- Duties to be raised faster than inflation and thus curtail total alcohol consumption leading to less alcohol abuse.
- More vigorous measures to be taken to reduce drunken driving.
- Restrictions on retail hours, licences etc.
- Funding rehabilitation for those suffering the effects of alcohol abuse.
- Advertising and other marketing restrictions. In addition the industry would be expected to mount moderation and health education campaigns.
- Warning labels on alcoholic drinks and posters for all retail establishments.
- Ingredient labelling.

European Policy Centre Roundtable 2005-6

Alcohol Related Harm Ways Forward

- Assist Commission in its preparation of its proposed communication on alcohol related harm
- Identify areas of agreement and disagreement among stakeholders - Commission, Industry, NGO's Member States
- Use a system of traffic lights:
green – broad consensus
amber – partial agreement
red – no agreement
- Four meetings held

Policy Areas No agreement

- Submitting any educational type messages placed on alcoholic beverages to review by an independent government appointed public health body before placing them on the labels
- Refraining from the producing and marketing of products that are attractive to children and adolescents. .
- Endorsing the monitoring and enforcement of its own codes of conduct through a body independent of the advertising and alcohol industries

Policy Areas No agreement

- Assess the possibility to have a special rate of excise duty on specific alcoholic beverages that are proved to cause harmful consumption in particular among young people.
- **Establishing effective pricing policies that have an impact on ~~young people~~ [under-age drinking].**

Minimum unit pricing in Scotland

- Scottish Parliament passed Alcohol (minimum pricing) Act June 2012
- Scotch Whisky Association launched legal challenge in Scottish and European Courts
- Alcohol Focus Scotland applied for leave to intervene as a public interest body
- SWA opposed application, and opposed request for protected expenses
- Scottish Court granted AFS permission, making Scottish legal history

Wary of Industry

- “The Committee is concerned that those speaking on behalf of the alcohol industry often appear to argue that advertising messages have no effect on public attitudes to alcohol or on consumption. We believe this argument is implausible. If the industry wishes to be regarded as a serious and committed partner in the Responsibility Deal it must acknowledge the power of its advertising messages and accept responsibility for their consequences”

House of Commons Health Committee, July 2012

- “...too much of the industry still supports and encourages irresponsible behaviour through poor product location, under age sales, excessively cheap drinks and encouragement of excessive drinking”

Government’s Alcohol Strategy, March 2012

Rooney Anand, Chief Executive Greene King

It is time to take decisive and targeted action in the fight against the worsening relationship with alcohol that we see in Britain today.

Observer 4th November 2012

Tim Martin of J D Wetherspoon

Believes the whole policy is a political PR stunt.

[Minimum pricing] “is nuts.....It's utter bollocks...The problem with Cameron and Osborne is they haven't worked in a f.....pub. ”

Observer 4 November 2012

SUPERMARKETS

Widely blamed for allowing young drinkers to "pre-load" on cheap booze before hitting the nightclubs, argue their case in slightly less colourful language. Even so, they cannot find much common ground.

Asda, Morrisons and Sainsbury's have all come out against the government introducing a price floor, yet the biggest of them all – Tesco – is broadly in favour.

Observer 4 November 2012

Dr Anarfi Asamoah – Baah, Deputy Director -General WHO

We must not underestimate the alcohol industry. They will hit back, attack our evidence, attack our science and attack our policies. Resistance will come from well financed lobby groups.

February 2012 GAPA Conference Bangkok



**“ Either we will
control alcohol or
alcohol will control
us”.**

Dr E M Jellinek

WHO

‘To Your Health’ 1956