

INFLUENCING NATIONAL ALCOHOL POLICY IN ZAMBIA_C4-3-4

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Presented

by

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TIME TO ACT IS NOW



Alcohol Consumption

- The issue of alcohol in Zambia has aroused national interest and debate.
- Zambia records more than 1,200 fatal accidents every year, most of which are associated with alcohol consumption.
- According to the ZDHS 2002, an estimated 76% of men and 23% of women consumed alcohol.

Alcohol Consumption

- The Zambian Global School Health Survey (2004) conducted on 2,257 pupils in grades 7-10, revealed that 42.6% participated in alcohol consumption.
- Zambia has seen an increase in the numbers of alcohol producers in the country some of which are illegally operating and do not meet standards and specification of the intoxicating liquor law.
- The issue of alcohol in Zambia has aroused national interest and debate.

Common Interest and Concern

- Civil Society Organizations including Faith Based Organizations raised their concerns over alcohol misuse.
- A loose network has mutually come together on areas of common interest and concern in order to achieve common goals instead of reduplicating activities.

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- The National Alcohol Policy making process begun in 2009.
 - A Network of concerned Civil society organizations with wide geographical coverage was formed after Ministry of Health engaged stakeholder in the formulation process of National Alcohol Policy.
 - **Zambian Network Against Harmful Use of Alcohol (ZNAHUA)** was formed in 2012.

Civil Society Organizations

Training

- Norwegian Church Aid in conjunction with other Civil Society Organisations organized a **“Training session for Evidence – based alcohol policies in developing countries”** facilitated by FORUT in Lusaka

Fifth Draft NAP

- In January 2012 the fifth draft Alcohol Policy for Zambia was presented by Ministry of Health
- The policy has eight guiding principles or thematic issues and objectives.
- Focus was on reduction of harmful use of alcohol but did not provide for interventions in skills training as coping strategies for poverty reduction.

Formulation of NAP

- Since then the network has contributed towards the formulation of the National Alcohol Policy (NAP) in Zambia .
- FORUT a Norwegian NGO focusing on social development has continued to support the Network.

National Alcohol Policy (NAP)

- National Alcohol Policy (NAP) provides a framework within which the Government of the Republic of Zambia in association with other key stakeholders wants to develop targeted alcohol action plans in the best interests of all the people of Zambia.
- The Policy strives to offset benefits against harmful use of alcohol, and protect individual freedoms, while at the same time safeguarding the public from health and social well being.
- A whole new section for a tougher use of alcohol taxation for additional income dedicated to alcohol prevention and treatment programmes was added after the discussions on the fifth draft.

National Alcohol Policy

- The policy does stress the need for bringing unrecorded production and sale of alcohol under regulation, both to prevent harm from such products and to prevent that the unrecorded market undermines regulations on sale of recorded alcohol.
- A public health approach is the main guiding principle throughout the NAP document.

National Alcohol Policy

- Draft 5 of the policy still had quite a few remnants of “Alcohol industry Tone”!
- A new draft 6 which was based on the discussions among the participants at the training suggested the following issues as your priorities:
- A new section addressing the need for regulation of alcohol advertising and promotion.
- A new section asking for a tougher use of alcohol taxation and that additional income from this should be dedicated to alcohol prevention and treatment programmes.

National Alcohol Policy

- The policy should make reference to the newly adopted Liquor Licensing Act, address the problems related to the implementation and enforcement of this Act and then suggest ways to a better enforcement.
- A ban of the production of “tujilijili” - Small Sachets and similar products.

Press Release

- ZNAHUA held a press brief / release whose theme was “Time to Act is Now!” on 20th April 2012.
- The press conference was aimed at provoking Public Debate and to give opportunity for continued dialogue with members of the Public and Government.
- A second press briefing /release was held on 15th May 2013 and was also well covered by local and international media.

Radio Programs

- Radio programs which featured Network members was aired for four weeks as an advocacy tool.
- The Radio program was a starting point for a mobilisation of the general public in support of practical steps to reduce the harm from alcohol use in their communities.

Strategic Planning Process

- ▶ ZNAHUA had prepared for the momentum that the new alcohol policy could generate approval by government.
- ▶ Held a strategic planning meeting to prepare for the outcome of the Policy once released by Government.
- ▶ The network meeting produced a document outlining a series of actions which was to be taken by the network on the principle objectives contained in the draft policy document. (Document is available on request).

Areas of Concern

- ▶ The number of mushrooming alcohol producers in the country is another area of concern because most of these companies are illegally operating and do not meet standards and specification of the intoxicating liquor law.
 - ▶ These factors are related to the poor economic circumstances of many people and the exposure of many, especially young people to influential advertising strategies and marketing strategies.
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Areas of Concern

- ▶ A new section addressing the need for regulation of alcohol advertising and promotion.
 - ▶ A new section asking for a tougher use of alcohol taxation and that additional income from this should be dedicated to alcohol prevention and treatment programmes.
 - ▶ The new Zambian Alcohol Policy should be ready for official launching within a few months' time.
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Inter-Ministerial Meeting

- Convened during 2nd Week of September 2013
- 7th Draft National Alcohol Policy Presented by Ministry of Health
- Makes the Final Recommendations to Cabinet Office
- Cabinet Approval of National Alcohol Policy
- *Government noted the concerns raised by ZNAHUA through concerted action in Media to act as noted above.*

Recommendations for Action

- Civil society organisations as well as government officials should prepare themselves in order to make the most out of the momentum that the new policy could generate.
- As soon as the policy is launched, there will most likely be a public debate where the basis for the policy will be questioned and criticised, prepare for this outcome.
- Public debate must be won, hopefully by civil society and government voices that are able to put forward clear and genuine arguments that the general public will recognise as the best ones on Alcohol Policy.

THANK YOU - ZIKOMO

