

# EU-USA CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE: ADVOCATING FOR EFFECTIVE ALCOHOL POLICY

Katherine Brown  
Director of Policy

Institute of Alcohol Studies, UK

and

Thomas Babor,  
Professor at the University of Connecticut, USA

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# EU-USA Dialogue on underage drinking

- **Aim:** To develop transatlantic ties between civil society organisations in US and EU, leading to increased understanding of underage drinking and harm to adolescents.
- **Output:** A practical “how to” toolkit to facilitate implementation of evidence-informed alcohol policy at the local, national and international levels.
- **Rationale:** An advocacy training package could help to build a global health policy network designed to implement effective, evidence-based policies, as described in the book, *Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity*.

# Training Package: Overview

- ANOC User's Manual designed to provide guidance for persons interested in developing skills in advocacy for evidence-informed alcohol policy.
- Facilitator's Workshop Guide shows how to conduct workshops using learning materials that can be tailored to suit a range of audiences from academic researchers to youth groups.
- Four training modules:
  - 1) Why be an alcohol control advocate
  - 2) The evidence base to support effective alcohol policy
  - 3) Key elements of a successful advocacy campaign
  - 4) Enforcement and evaluation

# Module 1. Why be an alcohol control advocate?

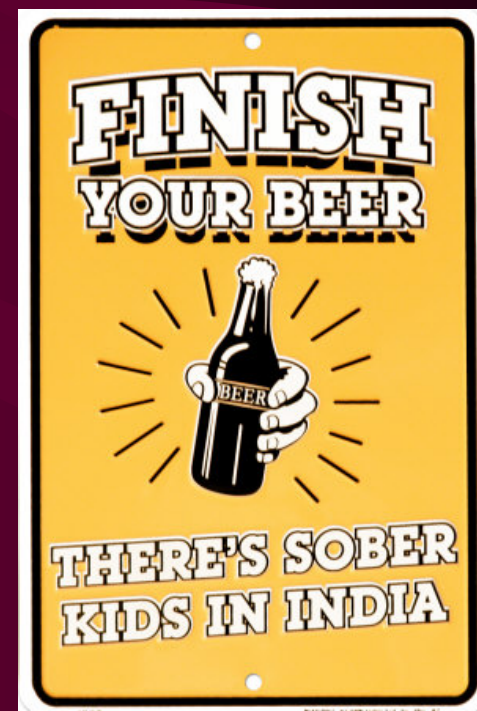
## The global burden of alcohol harms

- Globally 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of ill health & premature death
- Harm to individual health includes increased risk of cancer (liver, breast, mouth, larynx...), ischemic heart disease, liver cirrhosis, poisoning, mental health
- Harm to society includes: violent crime, social disorder, domestic abuse, rape, suicide, accidents, homicides, RTAs...
- Harm throughout the lifecourse: exposure during pregnancy can impair brain development of foetus, adolescent exposure increases risk of dependence in later life, elderly drinkers at increased risk of illness & injury
- Major determinant of health inequalities
- Costs to society are high: Total tangible cost of alcohol to the EU is estimated at €156 billion

# Module 1. Why be an alcohol control advocate?

## The alcohol industry needs to be tamed

- Changing nature of alcohol industry – alcohol is a global commodity
- Mass marketing and global brands
- ‘Emerging markets’ targeted
- Increasing affordability
- Increasing availability
- Change in social perceptions



# Module 1: Industry activities and tactics

- Profits from concentration reinvested in marketing , lobbying and “corporate social responsibility” activities
- Social Aspect Organisations actively oppose effective policies
- Promote ineffective measures and oppose effective measures - eg. voluntary codes on advertising (‘self regulation’)
- Active engagement in alcohol policy arena - lobbying, political donations, publishing, sponsoring conferences, research, policy development (especially in emerging markets), support for NGOs
- Promote ‘drink responsibly’ messages – to put focus and responsibility for harm on the drinker, not the product
- Discredit academic research into effective policies

# McCambridge et al: Industry 'distorted evidence' on minimum pricing

Examined industry submissions made to the Scottish Government's consultation on minimum pricing:

- Industry actors consistently oppose the approaches found in research to be most likely to be effective at a population level without actually engaging with the research literature in any depth.
- Strong evidence is misrepresented and weak evidence is promoted.
- Unsubstantiated claims are made about the adverse effects of unfavoured policy proposals and advocacy of policies favoured by industry is not supported by the presentation of evidence.

\*McCambridge J, Hawkins B, Holden C (2013) Industry Use of Evidence to Influence Alcohol Policy: A Case Study of Submissions to the 2008 Scottish Government Consultation. PLoS Med 10(4): e1001431. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001431

## Module 2: The evidence base to support effective alcohol policy

Translations:

Spanish

Thai

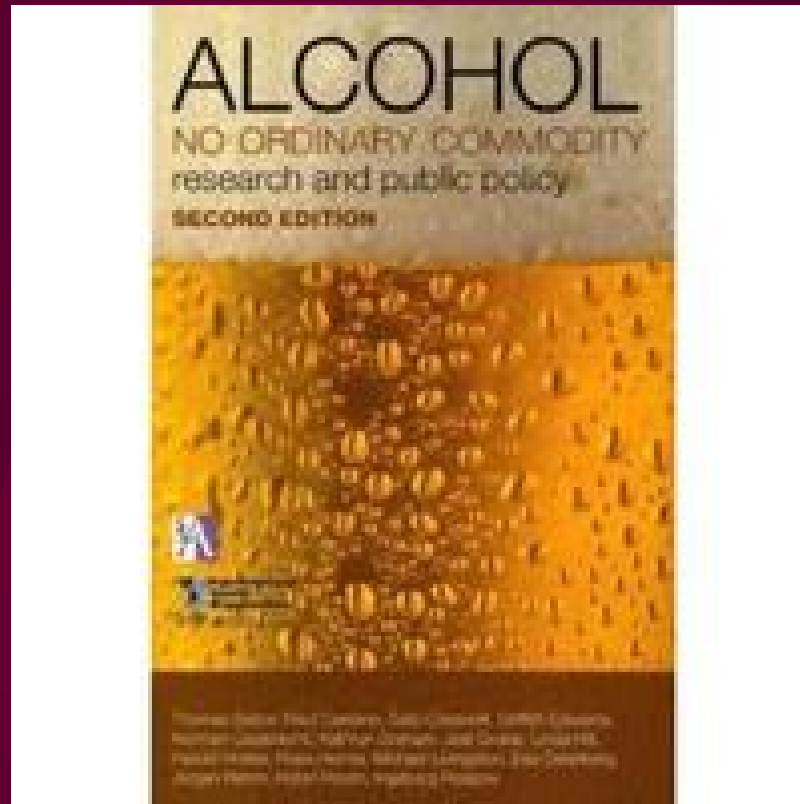
Korean

Chinese\*

Polish\*

Lithuanian\*

\**pending*





# Module 2. Seven policy areas for intervention

1. Price\*: Alcohol taxes and other price controls
2. Availability\*: Regulate physical availability through restrictions on time, place, and density of alcohol outlets
3. Promotion\*: Regulate alcohol advertising and other marketing
4. Alter the drinking context
5. Drink-driving countermeasures
6. Education and persuasion: provide information to adults and young people especially through mass media and school-based alcohol education programmes
7. Conduct screening and brief intervention in health care settings; increase availability of treatment programmes

\*WHO “best buy” policy option

\*WHO ‘best buy’ policy interventions



# Module 3: Key elements of a successful advocacy campaign

- 1) *Frame your issue*
- 2) *Engage supportive stakeholders*
- 3) *Include enforcement in the campaign*
- 4) *Build power to pass your policy*
- 5) *Influence policy makers*
- 6) *Evaluate the campaign and its outcomes*

# Step 1: Frame your issue and make your case

- *Framing = how different policy issues are described*
  - determines the policy solutions that are selected to deal with the problem
  - essential to being able to build support

# Two competing frames of the alcohol problem

## Alcohol industry

- Promotes the business interests of the alcohol beverage industry.
- Key messages are that alcohol consumption is normal, fun and healthy and that the majority of people drink responsibly with the damage caused by alcohol affecting only a small group of people who drink irresponsibly.
- Alcohol is not the problem- it's the irresponsible behaviour of a minority of drinkers.
- The policy solutions are education, self-regulation and partnership working

## Public Health

- Concerned with promoting the public health interest and protecting people from the risks associated with the consumption of a harmful and addictive product.
- Key messages are that alcohol is linked to over 60 diseases and health conditions, 2<sup>nd</sup> only to tobacco in the developed world as the key risk factor for death and disability.
- Alcohol is linked to a significant burden of social harm including crime, violence, child neglect, road traffic accidents, fire fatalities and lost productivity.
- Policy solutions based on evidence of effectiveness and most require legislation to implement.

# Framing your chosen policy

- Understand your audience and what they care about
- Identify and define the problem to be addressed
  - Use data from needs and resource assessment
  - Include data on populations, settings and availability
  - Link health and safety consequences
- Lay out policy solution
  - Define policy broadly and link to population-wide approach
  - Discuss how policy solutions are different and distinct from individual focused solutions
- Describe the risks or harms if the policy is not adopted
- Discuss the evidence behind the solution.

# Step 2: Engage stakeholders who are supportive of the policy goals

- *Transnational, national, state and local public health departments*
- *Community substance abuse prevention coalitions*
- *NGOs & Civil Society Organizations*
- *Medical community*
- *Children's advocacy groups*
- *Faith-based community*
- *Educational community*
- *Parent groups*
- *Small Business Organizations*
- *Employers*
- *Trade unions*
- *Law Enforcement*

# Step 3: Include enforcement organizations early in the campaign

- Enforcing policies is central to its effectiveness
- Including enforcement organizations early increases the likelihood that the policies, once adopted, will actually be enforced
- Additional benefits:
  - Collection of local data
  - *Selection of policy responses*
  - *Crafting policy language*



# Step 4: Build Power

- (1) Building a grass-roots base for the policy campaign – to establish “bottom up” support; and
- (2) Influencing key decision makers to support the policy – to establish “top down” support.

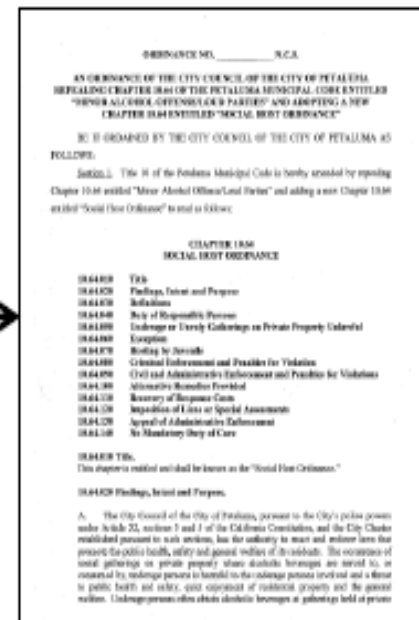
# Organizing to Support Policy Adoption

Who are the individuals who can influence decision makers one-on-one?

Coalition members identify and approach

Decision Makers

Who are the grassroots community members who will speak out on behalf of the policy?



# Step 5: Influence policy makers to support campaign

## *Power analysis*

Who has the power to adopt your policy? \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the most important individuals?	Who must you talk with before you approach the him/her?	How do you influence the them?	What is the self-interest of each?	Who will approach this person?

# Step 6: Evaluate efforts and campaign

- Engage the relevant agencies from outset in a discussion about what is needed for effective administration and enforcement.
- Integrate implementation and enforcement steps into the policy itself.
- Identify necessary data from health departments, law enforcement, and other organizations.
- Set up a mechanism for ongoing communication between the relevant organizations to promote cooperation and to establish a monitoring procedure.
- Use media contacts to regularly publicize results, enforcement and administrative efforts.

# Summary

- Key – effective advocacy needs good research at every stage of the process
- Evidence for policy need, solution and success is crucial
- Research is perhaps our best weapon against large, multinational corporate interests

There is no silver bullet....



A comprehensive framework of policies is needed to effectively tackle alcohol harm, adapted to the needs of each country.

# Next steps...

- “User manual” to be available in 2014
- Workshops to be held at relevant events
- Adaptations and translations encouraged to suit local needs and languages
- Resources to be made available online

# Any questions?

Katherine Brown,  
Director of Policy, Institute of Alcohol Studies, UK

[Kbrown@ias.org.uk](mailto:Kbrown@ias.org.uk)

Thomas Babor

Professor and Health Net, Inc. Endowed Chair in  
Community Medicine and Public Health, University of  
Connecticut, USA

[babor@nso.uhc.edu](mailto:babor@nso.uhc.edu)