

Regulating alcohol availability to reduce the harm: Effective licensing and enforcement measures

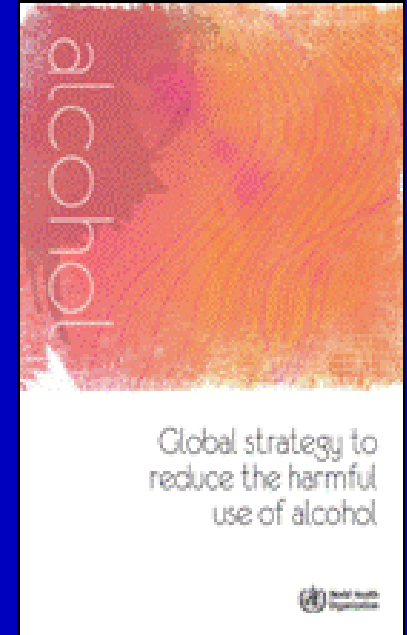
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Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol, 2010

- Ten areas for national action:
 - leadership, awareness and commitment;
 - health services' response;
 - community action;
 - drink-driving policies and countermeasures;
 - **availability of alcohol;**
 - marketing of alcoholic beverages;
 - pricing policies;
 - reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication;
 - reducing the public health impact of illicit alcohol and informally produced alcohol;
 - monitoring and surveillance.



http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/activities/gsrhua/en/

Alcohol control

(liquor control; controlling the market; regulating availability)

- Price/tax; times of sale; number of outlets...
- Context & conditions of sale; strength, content, labels;
- Licensing producers & sellers; age limits etc. controlling purchasers

- In *anciens régimes* & now: a diversity of motives
- Public health motivation only since 1800s
- c. 1900: “liquor control” as the alternative to prohibition – inherently harm reductionist

Liquor licensing or state monopoly?

- Monopoly: state runs part/all of alcohol market
 - Direct control of market
 - Holds down “ratcheting up” of market
 - Fewer in the era of the “Washington consensus”
 - Retail monopolies in Canada, US, Nordic states
- Licensing system
 - Permit to sell/serve conditioned on following rules
 - Works best if licenses fewer than what market would bear: partial monopoly conditioned on compliance
 - Active enforcement of compliance needed

Counterforces to alcohol controls

- The “Washington consensus”: ideology of free trade and markets, competition, privatisation
- Large private interests (Diageo: US \$15.7 billion in 2011)
- Smaller interests, often with a minor stake – corner stores, restaurants, taverns
- Black and grey markets, outside state control

A WHO “tool” for alcohol control

- Emphasis on implementation & enforcement, not just on policy and regulations
 - Control systems usually outside health departments
 - Not enough formal studies of effects of implementation
 - How to set up control systems and get them functioning has been a matter of local craft knowledge rather than evidence-based practice
 - Case studies and vignettes where no formal evidence
 - The tool as a basis for developing cumulated knowledge cross-nationally
- The outline of topics and case studies in the draft tool
 - Contributions warmly welcomed!

Topics in the draft tool: 1

Alcoholic beverages as commodities and consumer products

Industrialisation, alcohol problems, and alcohol controls – a brief history

State control of the alcohol market

Case study – Objectives of the alcohol control system in Kenya

Counterforces to state control of the alcohol market

Establishing, operating and enforcing an appropriate system to regulate production, wholesaling and serving of alcoholic beverages

The need for a lead alcohol control agency, and its location in government

Case study – Adoption & implementation of a new alcohol control system in Kenya

Government monopolisation of part or the whole of the alcohol market

Case study – Effects of partial demonopolization in British Columbia, CA

Licensing producers and wholesalers

Licensing retail sales

Regulating the number of on- and off-premise alcohol outlets

Topics in the draft tool: 2

Regulating modes of retail sales of alcohol

Type of alcohol sales outlet

Design of on-premise and off-premise alcohol outlets

Location of on-premise and off-premise outlets

Case study: Forbidding alcohol sales along state highways in Brazil

Days and hours of sale

Case study – a successful intervention for reducing harm from alcohol use at funerals in Thailand

Case study – no alcohol sales before 4pm, work days in Mbale, Uganda

Case study – earlier closing times and reductions of homicide rates in Diadema, Brazil

Regulations concerning the strength, content and packaging of alcoholic beverages

Packaging

Case study – Ban on the sale of alcohol in sachets in Malawi

Case study – Effective warning labels – large and rotating – opposed by alcohol producers

Differential availability of different alcoholic beverages

Case study – Permitting only ½ strength beer during the European soccer championship in Eindhoven

Establishing an appropriate minimum age for purchase & consumption & limiting secondary supply

Topics in the draft tool: 3

Enforcement of liquor licence regulations and conditions

Case study – licensing enforcement in Victoria, Australia

Policies to prevent sales to intoxicated person

Policies to prevent sales to minor

Case study -- Compliance with Minimum Purchase Age in Thailand

Individual bans or limits on purchase or drinking

Case study – Alcohol rationing in Greenland

Bans on drinking in public places

Community management of alcohol availability

Case study – Local Option in northern Canadian communities

Controlling illicit production, sale and distribution of alcohol

Case study – Steps in bringing traditional brewers and

The draft tool as just a beginning

- To be field-tested and improved
- Case studies and vignettes to be added
 - Can become their own publication or series
- Need to develop ways in which knowledge and experience can be pooled internationally
 - International clearinghouse for technical information on alcohol control?
 - Such consultations as a likely by-product if alcohol covered in international treaties
- Learning effects of strategies of implementation and enforcement in a variety of societies & cultures
 - in interaction with effectiveness of policies
- Opinions here and in the tool are the author's, not WHO's.

.. responders in the first try-out



Bi-Regional Workshop on Building Capacity for Reducing the Harmful Use of Alcohol at Country Level in Coordination with NCD Prevention and Control
22-24 October 2012, Holiday Inn Silom, Bangkok Thailand

