



25 November 2013

Press release

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women:

Addressing the impact of alcohol-related gender-based violence

The Southern African Alcohol Policy Alliance (SAAPA) welcomes initiative by IOGT to strengthen partnerships to bring awareness to this issue but also put into action proposed strategies to minimize the risk of alcohol related gender-based crimes in society.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a persistent international public health problem that is very common yet not fully acknowledged. Although the association of alcohol abuse and GBV has been found, more efforts must be taken in decreasing the risk of alcohol related GBV. Sub-Saharan Africa displays patterns of hazardous drinking. South Africa contains the highest level of alcohol consumption per adult at 9-12 litres of pure alcohol consumed per adult.

The SADC region is not immune to the widespread problem of violence against women. A study conducted in Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, find that well over 50 per cent of women reported incidences of GBV and that individual factors such as alcohol abuse exacerbated the perpetuation of gender-based violence. In South Africa, between 67 to 76% of reported cases of domestic violence are alcohol related. Furthermore, men who admitted to heavy problem drinking with twice more likely to have a history of violent acts committed against their partner.

We support this initiative of increasing awareness of alcohol-related gender-based violence. Primary strategies to curb the misuse of alcohol can be utilised through the promotion of evidence-based alcohol policies to influence individual behaviours and risk producing environments. SAAPA is primarily committed to voicing strong alcohol policies and build an effective advocacy network to influence the Southern African region.

By supporting policies that promote the restriction of the physical availability of alcohol, that promote retail responsibility as well as alcohol marketing counter-strategies. Growing interests around alcohol advertising has been generated in South Africa following the approval of draft policy to ban alcohol advertising. This is a progressive move by the South African National Department of

Health which is in line with international best practice which recommends the banning of alcohol advertising as one of several evidence-based measures needed to deal with the devastating health, social and economic impact of alcohol-related harm. For more information or comment feel free to contact:

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