

# NACADA QUARTERLY

JANUARY 2021



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Jepherson Mwamburi

# Message from The CEO



Happy New Year dear readers!

The past year, 2020, has been a challenging one marked by historical events and sudden disruptions to our work and social lives. It has been a year of learning for all of us, either at the team or individual level. In January, we had no idea of what was to come. By March, we were all consumed by COVID-19 and our world has not been the same since. We found ourselves talking about “lock down” and working remotely.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic it's in the characteristic human nature, we adopted new ways of offering our services. So far, we have done our best in responding to the unprecedented challenges which we have encountered in the campaign against alcohol and drug abuse in the country. In the midst of dealing with a global viral pandemic, we commemorated the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Trafficking (IDADA) by successfully implementing the first ever NACADA National Art and Essay Writing Competition targeting pupils and students that saw a total of forty-six winners get shopping vouchers and cash prizes.

As a country, we are also at the verge of amending the Narcotics, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act, of 1994 to among others enhance penalties on the offences relating to possession and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances, prescribing offences for law enforcement officer who aid or collude with suspects and enhance effective prosecution of offences.

We saw an upsurge in online sales of alcoholic drinks and drugs but we were equal to the task as we partnered with various Government and Non-Governmental agencies to conduct crackdowns on drug dealers and illicit alcohol merchants some of whom have been apprehended and arraigned in courts.

As an Authority, we are looking forward to 2021 with hope and great enthusiasm. We endeavor to continue to explore relevant collaborations in order to play our effective role in the campaign against alcohol abuse even in the midst of the raging Covid-19 pandemic. We are also confident that the vaccines, which continue to be unveiled globally, will help us restore our lives back to what was considered as normal.

As you enjoy this read, I urge all of us to stay safe, wash and sanitize our hands, maintain physical distance and observe health guidelines and protocols.

**Victor G. Okioma, EBS**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

# Editorial Note



**Enjoy a mind-blowing account of how some human bodies convert well intentioned food into alcohol through a rare condition known as Auto-Brewery Syndrome (ABS).**

Happy new year readers. This edition of the NACADA Quarterly is special and unique in that it captures the sojourn we have travelled in what can be termed as a tumultuous journey in the last half of 2020. This is mainly because of the various containment measures against COVID-19 announced by government which had an impact on our work.

In this edition, read all about the connection between disability, drug use and abuse. This is one area that has not been very well understood but we have tried to demystify the connection between the two.

Enjoy a mind-blowing account of how some human bodies convert well intentioned food into alcohol through a rare condition known as Auto-Brewery Syndrome (ABS). This might well be an eye opener since you may know someone suffering the symptoms but they have never ascertained where the problem lies.

Kenyans were treated to a level of excitement from a section of the population after word went round that the World Health Organization (WHO) had reclassified the use of Marijuana. Some youths misinterpreted this to mean that the drug was now legal in Kenya and we had to move with speed and state the correct position. In this edition we also have the big interview with our CEO on the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Amendment Bill, 2020. There are other interesting stories in this edition as well as introduction of a new Board Member.

Enjoy the read.

## NACADA QUARTERLY



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# THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION: SKILLS TO BUILD TRUST, INSPIRE LOYALTY AND LEAD EFFECTIVELY

by Simon Mwangi



**Board Chair Prof. Mabel Imbuga (front row in Green) together with some members of the Board and Management who attended the Power of Communication training in Mombasa in November 2020.**

A section of Members of the Board, led by the Chairperson, and some members of the Authority's Management Team underwent a training on communications which was designed to, among other things, highlight the role of communication in building trust, improving branding, enhancing decision-making and protecting the organization's reputation. Speaking during the event which was held in Mombasa November last year, the Board Chair, Prof. Mabel Imbuga, lauded the skills acquired during the training as an important component of promoting the Authority's mandate especially given that it is involved in behavior change communication.

"Communication skills are an essential tool in achieving productivity, building effective teams in organizations and are important to the achievement of the organizational mandate. They help companies to be productive and function effectively. Employees who possess these skills can sustain healthy work relations and are able to produce good performance. Since communication takes place in three directions: upward, downward and lateral,

communication skill is the ability to carry out communication in all these directions effectively," said the Chair. Facilitating the three-day training the Chief Executive Officer at Peterson Communications underscored the need for leaders to control the communication agenda in their organizations. He also added that it is critical for organizations to position communications as a deliberate undertaking with a view to achieve strategic objectives.

"Training in communication skills is important to all organizations. Trainers of communication skills develop communication skills employees already have, rather than focusing on what is absent, while trainees try to alter their communication style to be more efficient and productive.

As a market leader in this business, we understand deeply what our clients require by thoroughly embedding ourselves in their organizations and looking at things from an internal perspective. This gives us a good understanding of the communication needs and thus enables us to tailor-make training to suit their requirements," said Peter Mutie the consulting CEO.

Designed as "The Power of Communication: skills to build trust, inspire loyalty and lead effectively" the training was delivered through key thematic areas which focused on, among other areas, connecting with the audience, media relations, crisis communications and public speaking.

This training combined the most effective delivery methodologies that comprised presentations, audio-visuals materials, open discussions, practical sessions and best practice cases. Practical sessions took a significant portion of the training to give participants enough drill on handling media. Simulations covering live media interviews, hostile media situations as well as crisis communication to reflect potential media situations were conducted, with a view to infuse media relations skills to the programme participants.

**Simon Mwangi** is an accomplished development communication specialist with over ten years' experience in the communication field having practiced in the public and private sectors. He is currently the Manager Corporate Communications, NACADA.



# VOICES FROM THE CHILDREN COMPETITION

by Medina Ibrahim

On March 15 2020, His Excellency the President Uhuru Kenyatta issued a directive after Kenya confirmed the presence of COVID-19 virus in Kenya. Among precautionary measures instituted by the President are downscaling of operations at workplaces as well as banning of all public gatherings to contain the spread of the virus. The Directive also compelled all educational institutions to shut down and send all learners in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions to their homes.

As a way of engaging the pupils from lower, upper primary and secondary school students, we at NACADA implemented a two-month programme to profile the experiences of children on alcohol, drug and substance abuse issues during COVID-19 using creative expression such as essays, artworks, drawings, paintings, etc.

The winners were identified and announced through the Daily Nation and The Standard newspapers of June 26, 2020. We sampled some of the winners and here are their thoughts regarding drug and substance abuse and their aspirations for the future.

**Nancy Mbova**



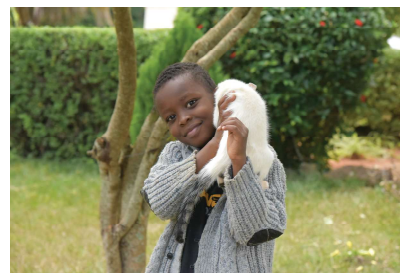
Nancy Mbova | Machakos county

"I am happy to have participated in the competition. I didn't know about it. It was brought to my attention by my elder sister who encouraged me to participate. I am happy that I emerged as one of the winners. It feels good to win because it has opened a big opportunity for me. I must thank NACADA for this opportunity and remind them that it is a good idea that they must encourage.

I know drugs but I have never tested. Tusker, White Cup and Vodka are some of the brands I know to be as alcoholic. I personally have never had an experience with alcohol. I have never tested alcohol, and none of my parents or teachers consume these drinks. We should ban the consumption of alcohol if we must have a good country.

It was good to be among the winners because it has opened many doors of opportunity for me. I see a bright future ahead and I want to thank NACADA because this is one good idea. When I grow up I want to become an architect. During my free time I draw cartoons to enjoy myself. My dad taught me art. He is my inspiration."

**Leroy Zuriel**



Leroy Zuriel Wambua Mulusya  
Machakos county

"I participated in the competition because my grandmother told me about it. My aunt then explained to me what it was all about. I feel very

nice because I am one of the winners. I know nothing about alcohol. But I know that my aunt used to take wine when I lived with her in Mombasa. That is all I know.

When I grow up I want to be a chef because I feel good when I cook for other people. My aunt is a chef and she has inspired me to follow in her footsteps. I like dogs and cats and my worst moment was when I lost my first cat.

I love drawing, an inspiration I get from father. I want to use my drawing skills to entertain people."



### Mike Munuve



Mike Munuve  
Machakos County

"I am 10-year old left-handed boy. I participated in the competition because of Covid -19 I love reading novels and with the restriction on movement

I have not had access to the books I want.

Alcohol is bad and smoking is disgusting. I don't know why people consume them. Bhang is illegal and I know it make people kill or commit crimes, that is why they should be banned. The government should talk to consumers to stop these habits. I have never tested any drug. I only read about their effects in books and if I got myself in position of authority I will ensure that alcohol and cigarettes consumption is banned.

I will personally talk to those who abuse drugs as a way of ensuring there is a lasting solution against drug abuse.

The first time I had about NACADA is during the competition. But I know it influences people to achieve their dream and stop drug abuse."

### Allana Grace Nduta



Allana Grace Nduta  
Kiambu county

"I participated in the competition because I was bored of sitting at home after schools were closed because of coronavirus disease. It has been difficult sitting at home during this time.

We can't visit friends and relatives or

move around because of the fear of spreading the disease.

Alcohol is not good and makes me sick. It's bad. People behave in a way that cannot be understood once they consume alcohol. If one is drunk, it is never easy for them to understand what is happening around them or even to know what they are saying.

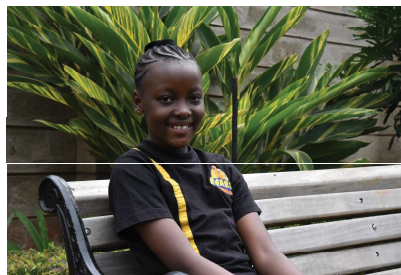
My view is that the selling and consumption of alcohol should be discouraged, except where it is used to make hand sanitizers.

Alcohol makes people sick and no one should be allowed to consume it. Those who use it always look confused because they never know what is happening around them, what they say or how to behave. None of my parents or friends consume alcohol but I have seen its bad sides on TV investigative series.

My hobbies include dancing, gymnastics, swimming, cooking and drawing. Drawing is fun and creative because I always draw what I want. When I get hold of a pen, I draw anything."

### Judith Atieno Onyango Maina

"I participated in the competition because I thought that I can help raise awareness on the dangers of alcohol consumption and drug abuse. I felt happy and confident because I



Judith Atieno Onyango Maina  
Kiambu county

was able to bring out my thoughts about drug abuse. I have related with people who take alcohol. If as they say 14 per cent of wine is alcohol, then I have related with them. My dad and aunt take alcohol, but not that much. In particular, my dad likes taking wine when visitors are around. Because of this, I can say I have come into contact with people who consume alcohol.

Alcohol should be banned and all schools made to teach the harmful effects of alcohol and its consumption. All advertisements in the media concerning alcohol should also be banned, too.

I love reading novels and I am currently reading book one of Chronicles of Nania, and it's interesting. I have also read Doctors' Diaries but I must admit I am unable to understand the story line because the author focuses on many things. It would have been good if he focused on one thing."

For a Nation free from  
Alcohol and Drug abuse.  
Get Involved







# ADDICTION IS A SOCIETAL ISSUE AND NOT AN INDIVIDUAL PROBLEM

*by Judith Twala*



**Ms. Judith Twala** is a dedicated Psychologist and a certified counselors' supervisor. She is currently the Manager, Counselling and Rehabilitation at NACADA.



Drug and alcohol addictions are devastating and dangerous for everyone who is involved. Even when one family member is abusing, the entire family and society will feel the impact. Addiction is so common these days; and those who experienced the effects of addiction at an early age understand how difficult such an upbringing can be. When people talk about addiction, you can clearly pick the condemning approach that many take. Some of us would not ever want to be associated with 'addicts'. To demonstrate how bad the situation is, people do not want to be anywhere close to a family who has a person suffering with substance use disorders. You will hear them say 'that family is bewitched, dysfunctional or in disciplined.'

Addiction according to many is a vice that cannot be tolerated in any community hence many get dismissed from the workplace or expelled from institutions of learning. In the neighborhood, a family that has a relative with substance use disorders is ignored and isolated.

Which parent among us would want their children to get into addiction? Are we fair then to blame and accuse them for not bringing up their children in a moral manner? Addiction like any other terminal diseases is not a respecter of education, age, class or religion.

On the other hand, when a family member is diagnosed with hypertension and diabetes, all the family members and society at large want to show compassion and empathy. They are committed to assist the hypertensive person to watch on their diets, exercise and ensure they take their medication.

**S**cientists define addiction as complex condition, a brain disease that is manifested by compulsive substance use despite harmful consequence.

It is very easy to perceive addiction as a point of weakness or a personality flaw, after all what is so difficult to stop taking alcohol and drugs? In reality the answer is more complex than we perceive. People with severe substance use disorders have an intense focus on using certain substances, to the point that it takes over their lives. Those of us interacting with these persons know very well how hard they struggle to stop their addiction.

Negative coping mechanisms that involve abusing substances to address life stressors can lead to addiction. Individuals need to learn and be taught healthy coping and life skills that are very critical for any individual in making safe and healthy decisions.

Addiction is a family and societal disease at large; the only question is when it will catch up with us. As a nation we need to get to a level where we recognize addiction as a complex health and social issue rather than a moral issue.

Consequently, the government is doing so much through the proposed Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Control Act (Amendment) Bill 2020 to reduce accessibility and minimize availability by extension and make it very expensive to trade in narcotics. I am happy that the proposed bill seeks to deal with the root of the problem; traffickers who do not care about human life as long as they make money. The bill is also considerate that the users access treatment and rehabilitation and not the expensive cost of incarceration.

Policy makers, religious leaders, and all sectors including but not limited to security and education have a big role to play. If we give addiction treatment and rehabilitation the attention we give to HIV/AIDS, we will reduce stigma among individuals and families suffering from this disease hence support them to seek the available interventions.



# MARIJUANA NOT LEGALIZED IN KENYA, TO BE ONLY ACCESSED FOR MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES

by Caroline Kahiu



On 2nd December 2020, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs voted to reschedule the cannabis plant and the cannabis resin by removing it from the strictest schedule (Schedule IV) of the 1961 Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs. This move shall allow Member States such as Kenya to access cannabis for medical and scientific purposes only but does not legalize access for recreational purposes.

Kenya took a position based on the decision of a Multi-Sectoral Committee that comprises of key Government agencies that noted that cannabis is still under international control and Kenya will still adhere to the rules and procedures set by the International Narcotic Control Board. The Committee also noted and appreciated that Kenya is at liberty to tighten cannabis control or any other substances despite the global vote to delete cannabis from Schedule IV of the Convention.

According to the World Health Organisation, cannabis is globally the most commonly used psychoactive substance under international control. In 2013, an estimated 18.1 million people aged 15-64 years used cannabis for nonmedical purposes globally (UNODC, 2015). There is a worrying increase in demand for treatment of cannabis use

disorders and associated health conditions in high and middle-income countries, and there has been increased attention to the public health impacts of cannabis use and related disorders in international policy dialogues. In Kenya, bhang is the most abused narcotic drug with prevalence stabilizing at 1.0% from 2007 to 2017 (NACADA, 2017). Coast region is leading in the current usage of bhang, followed by Nyanza and Nairobi regions. Data also showed that 1.1 per cent of respondents aged 15-35 years were currently using bhang.

In recognition of cannabis potential for abuse and the obvious health risks, Kenya did not support any recommendations but advocated for the retention of cannabis plant and cannabis resin in both Schedule I and IV of the 1961 Convention. While presenting the Kenyan position, Mr. Victor Okioma, NACADA Chief Executive Officer reiterated that,

***"The vote to delete cannabis plant and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the 1961 convention is not an endorsement of recreational use of cannabis or a recognition of cannabis as less harmful".***

Speaking in a separate meeting with stakeholders and partners from the Coastal region, Mr. Okioma said that he has seen the impact of untrained cannabis use, "the evidence for public health risk is clear. Regardless of difference in opinions on legalization of cannabis, there is no disputing that cannabis is not a harmless substance and can lead to severe health effects. This includes increased impaired judgement, adverse effects among pregnant/ nursing mothers, increase in acute mental and cardiovascular illnesses".

It is clear that all hope is not lost and Kenya is committed to adopt and implement evidence-based interventions and programs. As such, NACADA shall scale up public education and advocacy about the potential harm cannabis causes and amend laws were necessary.

# NACADA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER VICTOR OKIOMA'S INSIGHTS ON THE NARCOTICS, DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES (CONTROL) AMENDMENT BILL, 2020

*Big Interview with Caroline Kahiu*

The country is on the verge of amending the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act, of 1994 which provides a framework for combating trafficking, possession and abuse of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances in Kenya. Before the proposed amendments Kenya witnessed some of Africa's largest drug seizures and there was a general feeling that the law, as currently structured, was not punitive enough to traffickers. The Law provides the parameters on the control, possession, transportation trafficking and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Notwithstanding, narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances remain a huge menace and a major challenge with negative effects on the social, health, economic, governance and criminal sectors in Kenya.

Ms. Caroline Kahiu, the Communications Officer, delves into the amendments contained in the Bill through an interview with the Authority's CEO and shares the following highlights.

*How big is the problem of drugs and substance abuse in Kenya?*

First, Kenya is among the top most mentioned countries of origin, departure and transit for trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. You may also recall, in 2014, President Uhuru Kenyatta oversaw the destruction of narcotics worth 22Million shillings. Later in 2018, Kenya went down in history having recorded its largest the largest Heroin seizure after 1.5tonnes of the narcotic was captured. Second, drugs and substance abuse is one of the emerging security challenges that undermine our country's efforts towards realizing national

identity and sustainable development. Criminal gangs work hand-in-hand with drug traffickers to maintain the drug trade.

Third, surveys conducted by NACADA have shown gradual increase in the use and availability of



drugs to even school-going children from their caregivers and school environment.

Finally, statistics indicate that in 2019, there were increasing gang attacks in the Coastal region of Kenya which the National Police Service attributed links with drug cartels. These increasing criminal attacks have had an adverse impact on the tourism sector and somewhat dent Kenya's image in terms of safety and security.

### *Are there laws to curb the problems you have just mentioned?*

As a country, we have a number of laws and we are also signatories to United Nations Conventions on Drug Control. Specifically, we have the Narcotics, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act, No. 4 of 1994 that provides a framework for the control of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances in Kenya



Worth noting is that this law has several gaps and challenges which have made it difficult to curb the drugs menace in Kenya.

### *Why are the amendments necessary?*

1. Due to some ambiguity in the current law and discretion of the courts in imposing of sentences prescribed under the law, cases of convicted persons have successfully appealed against fines and imprisonment sentences.

2. The current law also has lenient penalties that do not deter drug traffickers who pay imposed fines and continue with their illicit activities while fighting it out in court.
3. The law currently lacks provisions to adequately punish the unlawful use of precursor chemicals for the manufacture of narcotic drugs.
4. In addition, it also lacks provisions for punishing law enforcement officers who aid or conceal drug trafficking
5. It does not have specific provisions to punish law enforcement officers who aid or conceal drug trafficking
6. It has no provisions for securing crucial evidence through interception of communications amongst traffickers
7. The current law is lenient on people who conceal information or fail to disclose information or fail to disclose information to aid in the investigation and prosecution of offences related to trafficking.

### *Based on the above gaps, what efforts are in place to mitigate drug and substance abuse in Kenya?*

As a nation, we have functional institutional, legal and policy frameworks that we operate within. However, with the dynamics in the illicit drug trade, there is need to align our current laws effectively prosecute and convict such cases. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic (Control) Amendment Bill, 2020 is timely as it will respond to governance, social, economic and criminal justice sector concerns.



This Bill has been developed through wide consultations with agencies within the criminal justice system to enable effective enforcement. In addition, research has stated that better policing is one of the measures that would deter criminal gangs following successful prosecution and sentencing of drug traffickers.

Finally, the Building Bridges Report recommends the appointment of special magistrates and judges to deal with the most grievous cases of drug trafficking.

### *What are some of the proposed amendments?*

To address the gaps and challenges we have discussed, the Bill shall:

1. Enhance penalties on the offenses relating to possession and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances such as possession of narcotic drugs a fine of between Ksh.5Million to Ksh.20Million from a fine of not less than Ksh.1Million. (Visit our website [www.nacada.go.ke](http://www.nacada.go.ke)) for an elaborate list of the proposed penalties)
2. Define precursors and chemical substances that could be used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs
3. Prescribe offences for law enforcement officers who aid or collude with suspects
4. Introduce the offence of conspiring with persons inside or outside Kenya to commit offences
5. Introduce the offence of collecting, generating, or transmitting information for use in committing an offence;
6. Enhance the effective prosecution of offences
7. Provide for the interception of communication production of that communication in court as evidence.

### *There have been arguments that the Act takes a punitive approach towards users of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances, what are your thoughts?*

Whilst the Act aims at punishing the possession of and trafficking in narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances, the use and dependency is also recognized. The Law provides the courts with discretion to commit a person found to be addicted/dependent on narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances to treatment and rehabilitation as part of the sentence for the offences committed.

The Court can further vary the sentence if it holds the view that the person has successfully been treated and rehabilitated.

### *How can one get a copy of the proposed Bill?*

Of course this is public information. A copy of the Bill is available in the NACADA ([www.nacada.go.ke](http://www.nacada.go.ke)) website. You can also access the Frequently Asked Questions and a Policy Brief on the Bill on our website. In case one needs more information, please contact us through [ceo@nacada.go.ke](mailto:ceo@nacada.go.ke) or call us through **0202721997/93**.





## **Congratulations Dr. Kepha Ombacho, EBS**



The Authority wishes to congratulate one of its Board Members, Dr. Kepha Ombacho, who was on Saturday December 12, 2020, during the Jamhuri Day National celebrations, conferred with a Presidential Award - the Elder of the Order of the Burning Spear (EBS) for his outstanding contribution in the fight against COVID-19 in Kenya. He is the Director Public Health, Head of the Special Programmes, Ministry of Health and serves as the alternate member to the Principal Secretary at the NACADA Board.

He is the Secretary to the Emergency Response COVID-19 Committee and a member of the Joint Secretary to the Inter-Faith Council for COVID-19. He has served as a member of several taskforces among them the Multi-Agency Committee on Elimination of Counterfeits, the Nairobi Regeneration

Committee, National Technical Committee on Drug Trafficking and Abuse among others.



## **Authority Welcomes Hon. Esther Gathogo**

The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Hon. Esther Nyambura Gathogo to its Board for a period of three years.

Hon. Gathogo was appointed vide a gazette notice dated 10th December 2020 (No. 10464) by Dr. Fred Matiang'i,

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government.

She is an accomplished and creative Business woman and leader possessing multifaceted experience and proven ability to re-energize and restructure organizations, develop strategic initiatives and capture emerging opportunities.

She is a results-oriented, decisive leader adept at forging lucrative relationships with key partners to achieve sustained growth.

# NACADA RESOURCE CENTRE: NATIONAL REPOSITORY ON ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

by *Twala Lemiso*

Situated at the headquarters, the Authority's resource centre hosts comprehensive, reliable and up-to-date information on NACADA's thematic areas: Public Education and Advocacy, Research, Policy and Planning, Compliance and Quality Risk Management.

In the centre the Authority acknowledges, respect and value all forms by which knowledge is communicated. It supports knowledge sharing and information dissemination since it is a factor of production in modern times.

In the centre the Authority acknowledges, respect and value all forms by which knowledge is communicated down the generational ladder as information is the precious heritage that society can pass down to generations. It supports knowledge sharing and information dissemination since it is a factor of production in modern times.

The resource centre has a variety of resources accessible freely in print and electronic formats, which guarantee every user access to information while saving time as the Authority remains open and committed to free provision of information as a fundamental right to all. Magazines, Journals, newspapers, published research findings, reports and policy documents are accessible for reference.

Additionally, the centre has an archive of newspaper articles on alcohol and drug related issues in society as well as government publications. An online database of electronic resources with which it is subscribed to through KLISC accessible by persons within the Authority.

The Authority has invested in diligent and intelligent use of technology to advance its agenda while acknowledging information as a critical tool in combating alcohol and substance abuse. Internet availability and supportive technological hardware is availed to support recreational learning.

The resource centre is open to members of the public and the Authority encourages researchers, teachers and learners of all cadres to visit between Monday to Friday from 08:00am to 5:00pm. The centre remains closed on week-ends and on Public Holidays, however, on special request the library can be opened to patrons even on weekends as the Authority seeks to respond to information needs.

The centre's library collection is described using Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme (DDC). It has a comprehensive classified catalogue with clear analytical entries that describes the hidden subjects.

Information and access to it is a fundamental human right. It's the role of libraries to ensure information is gathered, processed, organized, stored and properly retrieved for future.



**Twala Lemiso**, is an Information Science professional with skills in information organization, library instruction. Currently he is the Assistant Librarian at the NACADA Resource Centre.





# WHEN YOUR BODY NATURALLY TURNS INTO A BREWERY: THE VAGARIES OF GUT FERMENTATION SYNDROME

by Jepherson Mwamburi



Have you ever heard of someone getting drunk without drinking alcohol? In case you haven't and as strange as it sounds, it is a natural reality.

Auto-brewery syndrome (ABS) is a medical condition caused by an imbalance of yeast and bacteria in the digestive system. It is also known as Gut Fermentation Syndrome and Endogenous Ethanol Fermentation and was first reported in the 1950s in Japan. According to research patients with ABS have significant differences in their lifestyles and health compared to patients with alcohol use disorders.

The condition, ABS, causes the body to ferment foods-especially sugars and starches-into alcohol in the stomach. The alcohol is then absorbed into the bloodstream and will cause the person to feel and act drunk - because they actually are! Certain medical conditions and factors can increase a person's chances of developing auto-brewery syndrome. These include Crohn's disease, short bowel syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth, diabetes, obesity and a weak immune system.

Symptoms of ABS include elevated blood alcohol levels as well as symptoms consistent with alcohol intoxication such as slurred speech, brain fog, fatigue, deliri-um, stumbling, loss of motor functions, dizziness, and belch-ing. Mood changes and other neurological problems have also been reported. It can also cause headache, nausea, vomiting, loss of coordination, memory problems and difficulty concentrating.

Patients suffering from ABS should seek a coordinated treatment program starting with being treated for acute alcohol poisoning, drug therapy, diet therapy and supplements. The risk of relapse is lessened by avoiding carbohy-drates and general antibiotics avoidance.

## Case study

Nick Hess, 39 of Columbus, Ohio said his auto-brewery syndrome makes him oscillate each day between intoxica-tion and a hangover. He said he had to drop out of college, quit work and did nothing but literally sit on the couch. This is because he could not figure out what was going on. His wife even accused him of hiding a drinking problem. Like many others with the condition, Hess was convicted of driv-ing under the influence before he received his diagnosis.

When he was charged, despite his insistence that he hadn't had an alcoholic beverage, his blood alcohol level at the police station was 0.236% percent- nearly three times the level at which a driver is considered impaired in Ohio. Most people begin to experience blackouts at a blood alco-hol level of 0.2%, and many people lose consciousness at 0.3%. However, Hess was still walking and talking at just under that level, which puzzled police officers, he said.

To learn more about Auto Brewery Syndrome, please get in touch with our counselors through our toll-free helpline 1192 from 8:00am to 5:00pm.



**Jepherson Mkaya** holds a Bachelor's Degree in Cooperative Management from Chuka University. He is currently supports the Coast Regional Office in the Administration Department.

# DISABILITY AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

by Medina Ibrahim



From left: Ms. Blaise-Ann from NCPWD, Mr. Robert Olweny, Ms. Medina Ibrahim, Ms. Evelyn Kangogo, Mr. Muriithi, Ms. Joyce Lisanza, Ms. Diana Ouma, Mr. Duncan Muriithi and Director Patrick Obura. Members of NACADA Disability Mainstreaming Committee during the annual sensitization by the National Council of Persons with Disabilities held from December 16-18, 2020 at Machakos University.

Almost everyone is likely to experience some form of disability whether temporary or permanent at some point in life. According to the World Health Organization, over 1 billion people are estimated to live with a form of disability. Ageing populations, an increase in chronic health conditions among other reasons has seen a dramatic increase in the number of people with disability.

Disabilities and substance abuse are strongly linked because one of the major causes of disability is substance and drug abuse. Studies have found that those with a disability are statistically more likely to abuse many types of substances. It is estimated that people with disabilities are 2 to 4 times more likely to struggle with substance abuse than the general population.

Those with a severe disability are much more likely to abuse illicit drugs such as heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine.

## **Factors that drive PWDs towards substance abuse**

Various reasons drive PWDs to abuse drugs and alcohol. In the case of someone who has recently acquired a disability, he or she may

look to drugs or alcohol as a way to cope with negative feelings arising from the loss of his previous good health. The “new” reality that comes with a physical disability can mean having to accept some major limitations, especially for a person who was used to enjoying a very active lifestyle before illness or injury. Drugs may also be a way to cope with chronic pain and feelings of depression.

It’s easy for a physically disabled person to feel isolated from peers, physically and emotionally. Going out to do everyday activities such as errands or shopping is much more challenging, and over time it can become easier to just get into a pattern of staying home. In addition, not all friends and family members will be supportive of a person who is or becomes physically disabled.

## **Why Disability Mainstreaming Matters**

The process of recovering from addiction for people experiencing forms of disabilities is complicated by barriers that simply do not exist for others. Currently, it is difficult to find alcohol or drug treatment programs that cater for persons with disabilities. While NACADA is established to coordinate multi-sectoral effort aimed at preventing, controlling and mitigating the effects of alcohol and drug abuse in Kenya, drug/substance abuse and disability are intertwined because alcohol and drug abuse is a precursor to disability.

As part of efforts to incorporate the needs and priorities of persons with disabilities in the built environment, the Authority’s disability mainstreaming efforts will ensure accessible infrastructural support within its offices for PWDS. As construction work at the Miritini Rehabilitation Centre in Mombasa commences, incorporation of specialized counseling and psycho-social support services for PWDs are just some of the Authority’s interventions on disability mainstreaming.

# ARE YOU A DRIVER? HERE ARE SEVEN HABITS YOU SHOULD TAKE UP IN 2021

by Adrian Njeng'a

Many people mark the start of a new year by deciding to make some changes in their life. Unfortunately, road safety is usually not considered as a New Year's resolution. Road traffic injuries (RTIs) are ranked 9th among the major causes of death and disability globally. In Kenya, about 3,000 road deaths occur annually due to RTIs and cost the country up to Kshs. 300 Billion (about 5% of GDP). Statistics from the Department of Civil Registration show that about 6,500 persons die because of road traffic injuries annually. This means that every hour one person is either injured or is maimed due to a road traffic injury in Kenya.

Here is a list of resolutions that you can consider taking up in the new year.

## 1. Model good behavior

Don't doubt that your children are watching your driving habits. Children represent an important, yet vulnerable, road user group. Parents are therefore in a prime position to influence the behavior of children and teach them about road safety.

## 2. Always remember to wear your seat belt

The seat belt protects you and not the police. So if you see a police man before you begin putting on the seat belt, know that you're risking your own safety. Seat belts increase the likelihood of surviving a car crash.

## 3. Don't drink and drive

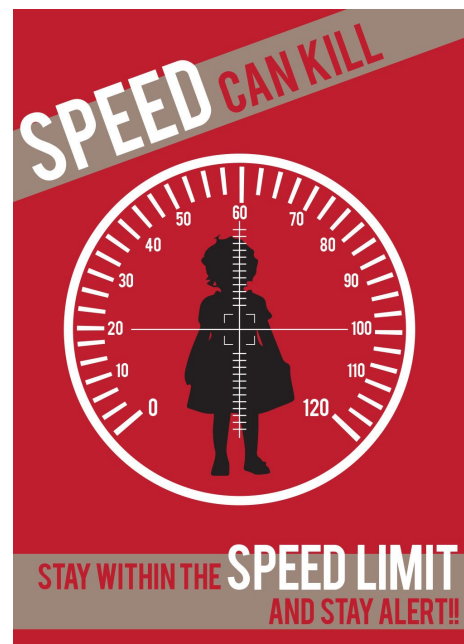
Driving after having even a few drinks increases your risk of causing an accident. If you plan to drink also make a plan to get home safely by calling a sober family member or taxi service.

It's easy to get distracted when you're driving, whether it's because your children are arguing in the back, or because you're trying to change the radio station. These distractions can lead to accidents. Here are some things that you can do to minimize on some of the common distractions.

- i. If you need to use a GPS or Google Maps to get around, set your destination before taking off and don't fiddle with the device while you're on the road.
- ii. No eating. Eating is a huge distraction. It takes more than just one of your senses away from driving. If you feel a snack attack coming on, at least wait until you have stopped.

## 4. Watch your speed

Exceeding the speed limit is an all too frequent habit for plenty of motorists. Speed limits are in place for very good reasons. Sticking to them is the easiest way to make sure you're driving at a safe speed for the conditions of that road.





# SENSITIZING YOUTH THROUGH THE KAZI MTAANI INITIATIVE

by Ken Marau

Over 2,000 youth from Kisumu County were sensitized on alcohol and drug abuse during the Kazi Mtaani program. This was aimed at equip-ping the youth with life skills on alcohol and drug abuse control and prevention.

The Kazi Mtaani program was rolled out by His Excellency the Pres-ident Uhuru Kenyatta to provide a form of social protection for workers whose prospects for daily or casual work was disrupted by the containment policies put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19 virus.

In Kisumu County, NACADA partnered with the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs Kisumu Regional Office to create awareness against alcohol and drug abuse (ADA) among the youth in various sub counties. Early morning sensitizations became the norm in a bid to reach out to the youth as they gathered for briefings every day at 7:00am before they could start their days' work.

Speaking during one of the sessions in Manyatta Sub-County, Ms. Esther Okenye, Regional Man-ager Nyanza encouraged the youth to practice positive lifestyles and shun away vices such as drug abuse that will not only affect them but also their families and the society . Alcohol and drug abuse has been on the rise during the Corona Virus pandemic as many of the youth have result-ed to consumption at home and as a recreational activity.

The youth were encouraged to seek free counsel-ing and referral services through the NACADA Helpline number 1192 and share the same with friends and relatives who might be having chal-enges on alcohol and drug abuse.

"The session was very informative and I have known the facts and myths about bhang which is commonly used by youths in this region", said Onyango, one of the beneficiaries of the Kazi Mtaani in Kisumu County



Creating awareness in Manyatta A Kisumu East County

In light with the rising cases of youth struggling with unem-ployment and substance use addiction issues, there is need to put in place more programs like the Kazi Mtaani that will help the youth are able to earn a livelihood as they make informed choices such as avoiding or delaying initiation into substance use.



**Ken Marau** is a self-motivated development work practitioner with over five years' experience from working in the government and non-governmental sector. Currently, he is a Public Education and Advocacy Officer, Nyanza Regional Office.

# THOUSANDS OF LITRES OF ILLICIT BREW DESTROYED BY NACADA IN NYANZA REGION

by Ken Marau

The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) seized and destroyed over 5,000 litres of illicit brew in Nyanza in an ongoing crackdown against the prohibited drinks and drugs. The illicit brew (locally known as chang'aa) business has gained a lot of popularity in the region because it's easily available, very potent and the demand is very high.

The operation, which was conducted, brought together a multi-sectoral team drawn from the Ministry of Interior, National Police Service, Nyumba Kumi Committee members, NACADA staff and community members. The operation targeted hot spot areas identified by the community members and local administration officers which were identified as most afflicted by brewing and consumption of illicit brews and bhang within the region.

This follows a statement by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government Dr. Fred Matiang'i which indicated that a renewed war on drugs and illicit brews will take place across the country, with the government promising a tough approach and seeking to go after those aiding and abetting the trade.

Speaking after the exercise, NACADA Nyanza Regional Manager revealed that the Authority has been conducting sting operations across the region in a bid to stem the rising cases of consumption of illicit brews and drugs.

"Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck, there has been an upsurge in the brewing and consumption of illicit brews across the region.

This has been exacerbated by the decline in spending power among many people and as a result of loss of livelihoods. In addition, the closure of bars has seen other imbibers resort to illicit brews and this is what has necessitated these interventions by NACADA," said Ms. Okenye.

The crackdown saw several paraphernalia used in manufacturing of the unlawful beverages confiscated and others destroyed. The brewers were booked at various police stations and arraigned in court.

"We are working closely with NACADA and other arms of government and organized groups to smoke out brew-ers of illicit brews across the country. Our strategic approach to this issue is also informed by the knowledge that learning institutions are closed and if left unchecked, learners can easily sink into alcoholism and drug abuse. We call upon members of the public to always alert us on such illegal activities so that we can take action," added Ms. Okenye.

On the flip side, approximately 50 illicit brewers in Nyamira County through the office of the County Commissioner came out to show interest to stop the illicit business and be trained on alternative livelihoods a move highly welcomed by NACADA.



We managed to dig them out and poured 630ltrs of kangara

# SENSITIZING CLERICS IN KENYA'S NORTH EASTERN REGION TO HELP FIGHT DRUG ABUSE

by Caroline Kahiu



Over forty religious leaders from Wajir County were sensitized on alcohol and drug abuse in a program that is aimed at equipping them with skills related to drug use prevention and management. This is part of a series of a training program targeting religious leaders who are key community opinion leaders and behavior change agents.

Speaking during the event, the North Eastern Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) Coordinator, Dr. Aden Yunis said that drug use has hurt the performance of students and pupils in the region.

"When they perform poorly they don't get opportunities to join colleges and universities so they end up in that addiction, then into crime and this is what we need to break if we are to save our generation," he said.

Appreciating the vital role religious leaders play in shaping opinion, NACADA's North Eastern Regional Manager, Rev. Wangai Gachoka, observed that their inclusion in the campaign against substance abuse will tremendously boost the effort.

"Traditionally, community groups and religious leaders have played a vital role in guiding people and ensuring that they are morally upright and so the mission we are embarking on is perfectly in that line. It is for this reason that we have decided to partner with them in this region so that they can champion our cause within their respective religious spaces." He added.

The Regional Manager revealed that the Authority is concerned and closely monitoring the rate at which young boys are consuming bhang, which remains an illegal drug in Kenya. Reports shared during the sensitization indicated that the Police had intercepted a van loaded with over 200 kilograms of bhang in Wajir North which was suspected to be from the bordering countries.

Lauding the Authority for the sensitization, the clerics requested for translation of promotional and training material to local languages so as to address the language barriers.

"With this NACADA will easily disseminate the content through community and vernacular radio stations as well as use locals who can communicate in the local dialect," said Ahmed, a Development Worker based Wajir.

Wajir is among the counties where there is an increase in drug and substance use in the country and it was observed that with faith leaders utilizing their platforms to mobilize resources and professionals to educate and demystify societal issues such as substance use, the fight against drug abuse in the region will be won.



# Picturespeak

clicks by Sammie Kamau



NACADA Eastern Region Stakeholders Consultative Forum on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (ADA) in Machakos on 8th December 2020



NACADA Board Chair Prof. Mabel Imbuga (center) CEO Victor Okioma (right) and the Authority's Corporation Secretary Daniel Konyango during a presentation on Alcoholic Drinks Control Act (ADCA), 2010 amendment Bill with the Parliamentary Committee on Internal Security on 5th Oct. 2020



Ms. Judy Twala, Manager Conselling and Rehabilitation who was the Chief Guest during the Support for Addictions Prevention and Treatment in Africa (SAPTA) 14th Graduation Ceremony at ACK St. Marks-Westlands on 18th Dec 2020



Public Sector Alcohol and Drug Abuse Workplace Training at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in Nairobi on 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020



NACADA CEO Victor Okioma (center) addressing the media during a Regional Stakeholders Consultative Forum on alcohol and drug abuse (ADA) in Kisii on 20th Nov. 2020



Ms. Triza Mwangi,(center) Senior Public Education and Advo-cacy Officer, Nairobi Regional Office, during a forum at 36TV Dandora on 13th October 2020



# Need Help With Alcohol and Drug Abuse?

OUR **HELPLINE 1192** IS OPEN  
EVERYDAY **8AM TO 5PM**  
FOR **FREE**



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