

NACADA QUARTERLY

A Publication of the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse



Kenya Joins the World in Commemorating the World Drug Day 2022

**Concerted
Effort to
Counter the
'Shashamane'
Marijuana
Menace**

**We need to
see past the
tobacco
industry
"GREEN" PR**

**Uniting the
global
community to
face the
challenge of
addiction**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1



Concerted Effort to Counter the
'Shashamane' Marijuana Menace

Loneliness; A threat to mental health

2

Kenya Joins the World in
Commemorating the World Drug
Day 2022

4

3



Why policing the marijuana debate could be
disastrous

The Truth Is: No one is immune to
the effects of alcohol

5

Our service delivery charter in
braille, voice and sign language

8

7



Medical Camp at the Miritini Treatment and
Rehabilitation Center to promote wellness

We need to see past the tobacco
industry "GREEN" PR

10

Big interview with Roy S. Telewa

11

9



Uniting the global community to face the
challenge of addiction

Félicitations

13

Message from the CEO



We have just concluded what I would term as a very successful year for the Authority, and I am proud to tell you all about it in this newsletter.

We are very excited about what the new financial year has in store for all of us. This will be a year of growth and new opportunities for everyone at NACADA. We appreciate your continued commitment to the Authority and our achievements this far. We are confident we can make this mutually rewarding.

The Authority recognize that alcohol and drug abuse has greater negative impact on young people, particularly children and adolescents, given their developmental stage. It is for this reason that we continue to review and align our programs to respond to the dynamism of the fight against alcohol and drug abuse in the country.

As we get into the new financial year, we look at the opportunities it presents to us with a lot of optimism. We are looking at forging more invaluable partnerships with stakeholders. We are also keen to further buttress the existing collaborations and ensure that every actor within our space plays their rightful role in fighting the drug menace.

This final edition of our quarterly newsletter highlights some of the key activities undertaken in the last quarter. We welcome you, our reader, to appraise yourself with these and give us feedback on how to improve so as to serve you better.

To stay abreast of all the exciting news, information and opportunities available at NACADA, connect with us on our social media platforms: follow us on Twitter, like us on Facebook and Instagram or visit our website. Alternatively email us as we are always pleased to hear from you.

Editor's Note



Welcome to the final edition of this financial year's newsletter.

We have exciting articles on the various issues related to our mandate, chiefly being how the Authority celebrated the International Day Against Drug Abuse (IDADA). The theme was "Addressing drug challenges in health and humanitarian crises". Read about the activities that characterized this important day in our calendar.

The Authority has also been at the forefront in coordinating efforts aimed at completely sealing the loopholes exploited by cannabis traffickers from Ethiopia. In the last quarter of the year, the Authority hosted senior security chiefs from various counties afflicted by the 'shashamane' marijuana. In this edition, we explain to you how far the trade has gone.

Being an electioneering year, politicians in their usual style and fashion have hijacked the marijuana

debate and fronted volumes of disinformation. In this edition we unmask some of the falsehoods being peddled about the narcotic and lay bare our position on the issue.

When the world was converging in Abu-Dhabi for the International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) Conference in May, the Authority was ably represented. Read all about the event whose theme was 'Uniting the global community to face the challenge of addiction'.

There are a few other interesting articles in the newsletter which are aimed at keeping you, our valued stakeholder, well briefed about the various happenings within the Authority.

Enjoy the reading!!!

Simon Mwangi
MANAGER, CORPORATE
COMMUNICATIONS

Concerted Effort to Counter the ‘Shashamane’ Marijuana Menace



By Simon Mwangi

The Authority has rolled out measures to combat cross-border drug trafficking in counties that border Ethiopia, the main source of marijuana consumed in the country.

Speaking during a press conference on the sidelines of a meeting for regional security heads held in one of the hotels in Meru, NACADA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Victor Okioma said forum was specifically convened to address the challenges of trafficking of Marijuana.

“We have the regional commissioners and their teams from Eastern and North-Eastern, as well as the Central region which is basically a route and consumer of the most trafficked Marijuana from Ethiopia,” said Mr. Okioma.

He revealed that the forum was a follow-up of another meeting held in November last year in the county, where they identified some of the routes the traffickers are using.

“We agreed on actionable points during the previous meeting, where we left relevant county and sub-county security committees to implement,” he said adding that they were coming together to review the progress made from the previous meeting and to track progress made in sealing up identified routes.

The Chief Executive Officer further reiterated that the Authority’s main responsibility was to enhance partnerships and coordinating activities so as to counter the menace. Apart from patrolling the

routes. The CEO observed that the fight against marijuana was getting tougher since dealers were combining the substance with commodities like sweets, candies, and cookies among others in their latest innovations.

“We recently conducted a survey on emerging substances of abuse and the innovations around the products used, and we found out that the peddlers have invented ways of using marijuana in other substances that make it hard to identify,” he said.

He however added that NACADA’s main strategy to counter this innovative move is through information sharing so that the forms in which the drug is dispensed are revealed, which is critical in helping counter the menace. Mr. Okioma further added that Marijuana is the most abused narcotic in the country and added the drug is responsible for a number of mental illnesses.

Central Regional Coordinator, Esther Maina, said security teams have put in place a multi-agency approach to apprehend the traffickers in the area, which acts as a transit route to Nairobi and the coastal region.

“The issue of drug trafficking is a complex one and nobody has a monopoly of ideas on how to eradicate the menace,” she said.

She added that some of the marijuana consumed in her region is cultivated internally and added these were some of the issues being addressed.

Loneliness; A threat to mental health



By Caroline Kahiu

As the world celebrated mental health month in May, there was a reminder about individual habits that contribute to mental health. Some of the reminders included- eating well, reaching out to friends, exercise, putting your phone down and seeking help if you are struggling with a mental health issue.

Regrettably, despite all the reminders, so many people are suffering, if not from depression, then from low self-worth, unhappiness and emptiness. The on-going global pandemic has also not spared us. It has kept loved ones apart and made it potentially unsafe to socialize in many ways we are accustomed to doing, loneliness becoming salient.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), loneliness is cognitive discomfort or uneasiness from being or perceiving oneself to be alone. It can be either an objective or subjective state, says Jacqueline Olds, MD, a psychiatry consultant at Massachusetts General Hospital and coauthor of *The Lonely American and Overcoming Loneliness in Everyday Life*. You could, for example, live alone and crave companionship. But loneliness also describes what you feel when you're in a crowded room and aren't connecting with the people around you as much as you'd like to be, she says.

How do we prevent and cope with loneliness?

Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits all solution to help people manage feelings of loneliness, but it's worth experimenting to see what makes you feel better connected to the people around you. However, some of the tactics include:

Acknowledge How You're Feeling: - While

feelings of loneliness may be alarming, they're a signal for you to take action. says Jeremy Nobel, MD, a lecturer on global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School. "Just like thirst is a signal that you need more hydration, loneliness can be viewed as a signal that you need more human connection," he explains.

Practice Gratitude: - Borland often advises his patients to take a moment each day to think of three things they're thankful for in their lives, however big or small. This daily habit can help to undo some of the pessimism and negativity that can be linked to feeling lonely, he says.

Make Time for Family and Friends: - Take time to foster your existing relationships, and be proactive about it, Olds suggests. Don't shy away from picking up the phone to catch up with an old friend or asking your family to get together on the weekend.

Try Volunteering or Helping Your Community
Acts of kindness go a long way in reducing loneliness and fostering social connection, according to Holt-Lunstad.

Seek Help Whether you choose to confide in a loved one or prefer to sign up for group therapy or individual counseling sessions (more on when to get professional help below), there are resources available to you, Borland says. Nobel says that people who have used his organization's intensive programs that provide support groups reported feeling better about their confidence and managing their loneliness within just a few sessions.

Everyone encounters loneliness at some point in their lives, so you are not alone.

Why politicizing the marijuana debate could be disastrous



Stock photo

By Simon Mwangi

The Authority is urging politicians in the country to desist from misinforming the public about Marijuana.

Facts and scientific research point to the reality that the effects of Cannabis Sativa, popularly known as bhang, cannot be overlooked and thus remains prohibited in the country and should not be used.

“Let be known that the law is still in force and that anyone contravening this law i.e. being in possession or trading in cannabis will be apprehended,” cautioned the Chief Executive Officer Victor Okioma.

During the electioneering period and prior, there have been calls for legalization of cannabis for recreational use. It is noted that some of the statements made in favor of legalization are misleading as they are intended to elicit excitements amongst the people, especially the youth.

While citing a study by World Drug Report released last year, the Authority noted that teenagers in the country are largely affected by the narcotic drug, which is widely abused and results in immense effects.

Data from a national survey conducted in 2017 showed that at least 1% of the country's population aged between 15-65 years are current users of cannabis. Kenya has continued to suffer the devastating effects of cannabis as its abuse is on

the rise, particularly amongst the youth.

A survey conducted in 2019 to assess emerging trends in the abuse of drugs and substances of abuse showed overwhelming evidence on the abuse of cannabis in the form of cookies, candies and other forms of confectioneries.

In the same light, NACADA underscored some of the negative health effects of bhang among them; vulnerability to addiction, respiratory diseases (lung cancer), cardiovascular conditions such as stroke, mental illnesses, impaired psychomotor skills and cognitive functions.

NACADA went on to highlight some of the key misleading statements that the Authority reiterates have led to increased cases of illicit trafficking and arrests. Among claims rubbished by the Authority include; that following the 2020 Voting, Cannabis is legalized, the majority of countries have legalized Cannabis and that there are only positive effects of its legalization.

Kenya Joins the World in Commemorating the World Drug Day 2022



By Tabitha Makori

The National Authority for the Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking also known as the World Drug Day. Ms. Winnie Guchu, Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS), Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government participated in the commemoration of this global event held on 26th June 2022 started with a 2 kilometer walk and participants converged at the Chancellor's Court, University of Nairobi.

Ms. Guchu, on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, said that the problem of drugs transcends all of Kenya's counties. Kenya has not only become a major transit route in the global trade of narcotics, but also a major consumer. To make matters worse, Kenya's growing youth population, coupled with high employment, has seen a surge in the number of young drug users.

"As we are in the midst of the electioneering period, we have already witnessed an upsurge on drug abuse attributed to campaign money being given to the youth by people seeking political seats. Regrettably, we have also observed leaders mobilizing the youth through misinformation and

false promises such as legalization of cannabis for commercial and recreational purposes if they are elected to office, emphasized Ms. Guchu. She added that, in Kenya cannabis remains a controlled substance with very clear penalties for any person who may be misled to violate the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act and any other legislation on drug control.

In order to care for those in crises, in line with World Drug Day 2022 theme "Addressing Drug Challenges in Health and Humanitarian Crises", NACADA takes cognizance of the current health and humanitarian emergencies that have rocked the world. These are series of events that disrupt and threaten the safety, health and wellbeing of the people. Persons affected by health and humanitarian are more vulnerable to alcohol and drug abuse and tend to find solace in drugs while others are taken advantage of by drug barons to peddle drugs with the risk of arrests and even death.

During the event, the Authority took the opportunity to launch the, "National Standards on Management of Substance Use Disorders, 2021" and the "Assessment On Emerging Trends of Drugs and Substance Abuse in Kenya, 2021. The Standards were developed in partnership with the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and they set the overall scene and provide the minimum requirements to be

met within treatment and rehabilitation centers in Kenya offering different levels of care for persons with substance use disorders. On the other hand, the Survey Report was necessitated by the rapid increase of new psychoactive substances (NPS) in the country and there is glaring evidence of emerging trends in the use of prescription drugs, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes or vaping devices, and cannabis edibles (cookies and sweets).

With the help of NACADA, Kenya is able to get statistics of people using drug and also those with drug use disorders. According to the UNODC, last year there were 275 million people who use drugs and 26 million people that suffer drug use disorders. As a nation we are able and have a chance to assist and reduce these numbers. Every year the UNODC issue a World Drug Report with key statistics, factual data and trends of drug abuse obtained through official sources, science-based approach and research.

The campaign tells people to help in caring even in times of crisis, ensure drug use is minimized as much as it can and to eliminate drug abuse. Also to mobilize support and inspire people to act against drug use.

According to NACADA statistics, alcohol abuse has increased among teenagers aged 15-17 at an alarming rate. Alcohol and miraa are the most abused drugs among teenagers in Kenya.

In addition, they reported a crackdown on illegal rehabilitation centers claiming to offer counseling service to drug addicts. On the other hand, the CAS Ministry of Interior Winnie Guchu, reminded Kenyans that it is still unlawful according to the Constitution to use marijuana and its edible.

The Authority also took the opportunity to recognize and appreciate the efforts of individuals and institutions that have worked tirelessly to address the persons affected by substance use. This year the Authority recognized Fr. Lawrence Nyaanga Atamo, Chaplain Kisii University, Blue Cross Kisumu and Mrs. Nazi Kivutha, the First Lady Makueni County towards the contribution in alcohol and drug abuse prevention and management.

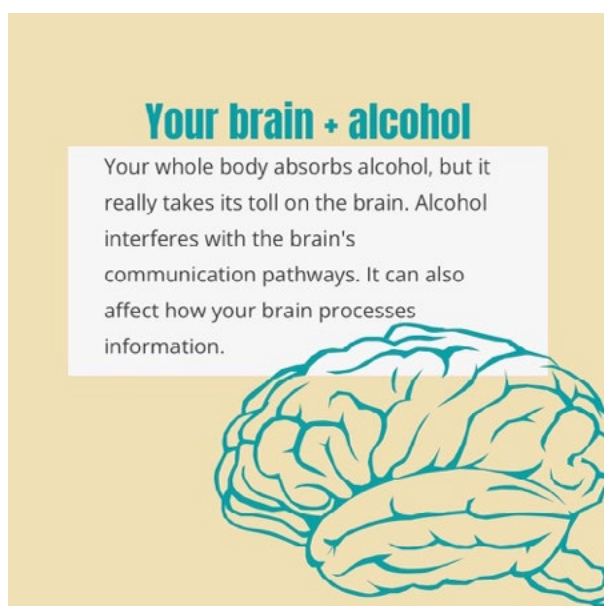
The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is marked on 26 June every year to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse. And each year, individuals like yourself, entire communities, and various organizations all over the world join in to observe World Drug Day to help raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs pose to society. The event was commemorated in partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the University of Nairobi, Tobacco Control Board, Blue Cross Kisumu, ISSUP Kenya, Kenya Red Cross, Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO) amongst other key stakeholders from Government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

WORLD DRUG DAY 2022 IN PICTURES





The Truth Is: No one is immune to the effects of alcohol



Essentially loved

Public campaigns against drinking and driving have done an excellent job of raising our awareness about the dangers of this behavior. Unfortunately, far too many people still don't have a real understanding of how alcohol can affect their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. They may feel like they have a higher tolerance or know how to quickly sober up. They may think they are just a little buzzed or tipsy, but not too drunk to drive. Getting behind the wheel after drinking is a dangerous and potentially deadly decision.

Alcohol is a depressant drug. It slows the activity of the central nervous system, including the brain. This can have a huge impact on your ability to drive safely. Alcohol can affect your driving by causing:

- feelings of relaxation and drowsiness, which may cause you to fall asleep at the wheel
- impaired vision
- reduced reaction times
- reduced concentration and vigilance
- difficulty in understanding what's happening around you
- difficulty doing several tasks at once (e.g. keeping in your lane and avoiding other traffic)
- failure to obey road rules
- over-confidence, which may lead to risk-taking

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), road traffic crashes are a major source of injury, disability, and death throughout the world, and road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among people aged 15-29 years. Road users who are impaired by alcohol have a significantly higher

risk of being involved in a crash.

Driving under the influence of alcohol, or drink-driving, is a key risk factor for 27% of all road injuries. Thus, drink-driving is a significant public health problem that affects not only the alcohol user but also, in many cases, innocent parties such as passengers and pedestrians.

Raising awareness of drug driving and its impact on road safety – including deaths, injuries, property damage, and harm to other road users – among the general public and policy-makers can reduce drug driving and create a climate in which legislation and enforcement will be supported.

In addition, it is not only important not only to enforce drug-driving laws but also to counsel and, when appropriate, treat drivers found to be impaired by drugs – especially those who are repeat offenders or those with drug use.

Finally, there is a need to integrate drug-driving policies with drug policy frameworks oriented to public health. Drug-driving laws and programs should be integrated into the overall drug policy frameworks.

Successful implementation of integrated policies and programs requires effective multisector collaboration with the involvement of different sectors such as transport, police, health, drug control, and education.

Medical Camp at the Miritini Treatment and Rehabilitation Center to promote wellness



The Authority organized a four-day medical camp for persons using drugs and the community in Miritini area of Mombasa County. The medical camp, which took place between **Monday 23rd and Friday 27th May 2022**, involved screening of clients at the Miritini Treatment and Rehabilitation centre for Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV and referring them to healthcare centres for treatment.

It was organized in collaboration with the Centre for Health Solutions-Kenya, a local not-for-profit organization that utilizes 100% local expertise as well as strategic partnerships to implement evidence informed solutions and interventions to existing and emerging public health concerns.

NACADA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Victor Okioma said the medical camp was organized as cognizance of the co-relation between drug abuse, TB and HIV.

He revealed that persons with drug use disorders continue to be categorized among the high-risk groups for tuberculosis, HIV and other diseases.

“The screening and identification of TB among drug users is very important. The camp will also offer mental health support (screening and counselling), nutrition counselling and Covid 19 vaccination,” added the CEO.

Speaking during the same event the Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) in the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Winnie Guchu, added that the government is pursuing possible partnerships to enable the

Authority puts up 1.2 billion shillings’ model drug rehabilitation center at Miritini that will include a modern hospital, a training wing and a multi-purpose hall to cater for the reformed drug addicts.

“NACADA’s dream is to put up a model center of excellence for the management of substance use disorders and the training of addiction prevention professionals in the country. The government is currently pursuing some partnerships that will make this possible so that the programs being offered here can be up-scaled” she added.

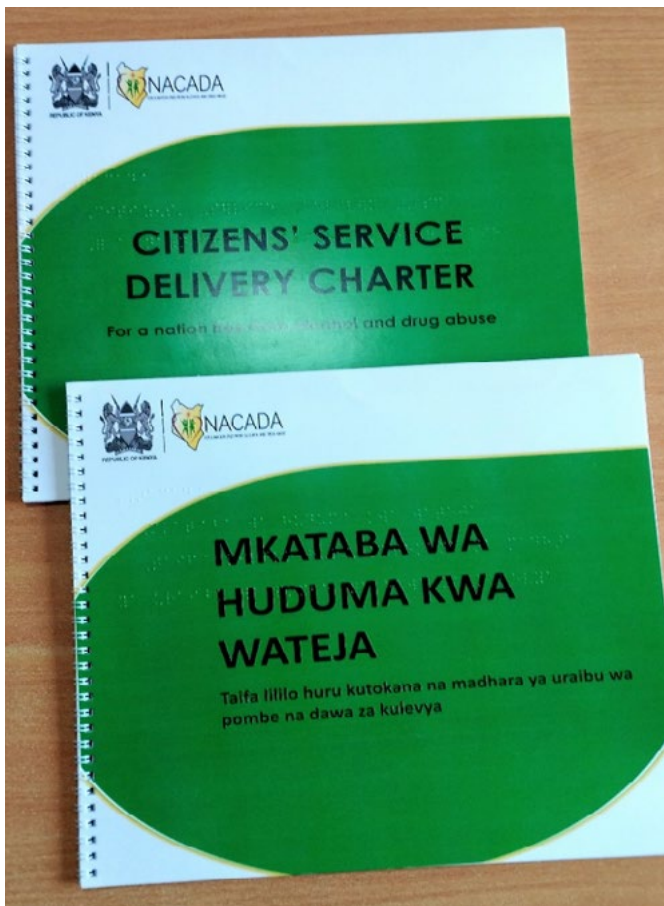
The centre is currently treating 37 in-patients and 300 out-patients who are receiving a wide range of treatment including counselling and medically assisted therapy commonly known as Methadone.

A total number of **496** clients were attended to during the five-day activity out of which **409** were males and **86** females. All clients were screened for TB out of which **106** were tested and **2** tested positive.

A total of **224** clients were also tested for HIV/AIDS. **152** clients were treated for other ailments and out of the **17** females screened for cervical cancer, all returned negative results. Another **34** were vaccinated against Covid-19.

The Miritini Rehabilitation Centre was established following Presidential directive in 2015 to transform the former National Youth Service (NYS) camp into a drug rehabilitation centre to provide care and support to affected youth.

Our service delivery charter in braille, voice and sign language



the standards of service expected from the public service in Articles 10, 232 and Chapter 6. Among the Principles of Public service are, high standards of professional ethics; responsive, prompt, effective, impartial and equitable provision of services; and transparency and provision to the public of timely, accurate information among others.

A key characteristic of public goods and services is that they are directed at all members of society rather than just those who can afford to purchase them. They are also expected to be accessible in an equitable manner to all members of the society. The NACADA Braille version of the Customer Service Delivery Charter in both English and Swahili can be accessed at all service points at the Authority's Headquarters while plans are underway to distribute the same to all the nine Regional offices.

NACADA in collaboration with the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) has translated its Customer Service Delivery Charter into braille, voice and sign language as part of its efforts to reach persons living with visual and hearing disabilities.

In Kenya, the public service has been undergoing reforms since the early 1990s with a view to improving the way public organizations operate, to increase their effectiveness and encourage accountability. All over the world, governments are established by society in order to deliver public goods and services and to administer the policies and laws that are beneficial to society.

One way in which public institutions foster accountability is through the display of institutional Customer Service Delivery Charters at all its service points so that the public's expectations can be managed. Public institutions are required to display a list of all their services, cost and timelines of obtaining the service as well as requirements from the customer to obtain services.

The Constitution and the laws of Kenya provide for the right to public services. It also sets out guidelines on the conduct of public and state officers and for

Uniting the global community to face the challenge of addiction



NACADA team during the ISSUP Conference in Abu, Dhabi from 12th – 16th May 2022

The International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) Conference on Drug Demand Reduction took place in Abu Dhabi, UAE on 12-16 May 2022. The overall theme was “Uniting the Global Community to face the challenge of Addiction” highlighting the latest learning from the fields of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery support and allowed the global workforce to meet and exchange.

It was an opportunity for professionals to share best practices for prevention, treatment and recovery support. It aimed to create a momentum for government and non-governmental organisations to build and catalyze the impact of collaborative efforts to achieve healthy outcomes and lifestyles away from substance use disorders.

During the conference, the Kenyan delegation was led by Prof. Mabel Imbuga, Chairperson, NACADA Board of Directors. She was accompanied by Ms. Esther Okenye, Regional Manager Nyanza and Ms.

Sarah Koske, Regional Manager Western and Ms. Pauline Maina, Office of the Chief

Executive. In addition, a number of staff attended various targeting women, families, people in recovery and youth.



Speaking in one of the evening roundtable events, Prof. Imbuga was pleased by the number of staff that attending the event. “I am pleased that

NACADA and Kenya at large has one of the largest delegation in this event. It is also worth noting the number of staff that went out of their way and applied for sponsorship from various international events. This indeed continues to put NACADA in the international map on drug demand reduction interventions.” She said

“Kenya is at the forefront of implementing prevention and treatment curriculums in Africa and the world at large. This is encouraging as the world is shifting from one off activities to evidence-based programs.” Noted George Murimi, Program Manager, Colombo Plan.

Throughout the discussions and interactions, there was shared appreciation for NACADA's contribution in the drug demand reduction programming to the global community and for strong collaboration with other organisations in promoting a world free from substance use.

ISSUP is a membership organisation that connects, unites, and provides knowledge to the global substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery support workforce.

It's to have a connected, trained, knowledgeable, and effective international network of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery professionals undertaking and promoting high-quality, evidence based, and ethical substance use prevention, treatment and recovery support.

The conference was organized by ISSUP in partnership with the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (DAP), the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime amongst other partners.

We need to see past the tobacco industry “GREEN” PR



Economic Times

By Caroline Kahiu

Whilst we have known for decades that tobacco is harmful to health, the ecological impact of the tobacco industry is often overlooked. Tobacco also causes significant environmental impact along the whole lifecycle of a cigarette from deforestation to water usage to disposal. At every step of production, the tobacco industry has an impact on the environment.

For decades, the tobacco industry has sought to greenwash its reputation and portray itself as an environmentally-friendly industry. Nonetheless, a mountain of evidence indicates that tobacco harms our planet throughout its entire lifecycle – from cultivation, to manufacture, distribution, consumption, and disposal.

Let's start with the most visible damage: Cigarette butts are the most littered item on the planet. And then there's the damage we can't see, like the more than 80 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emitted into the atmosphere every year to produce some six trillion cigarettes.

So, exactly what is, “greenwashing”? According to the Oxford English Dictionary definition of greenwashing, is, “Disinformation disseminated by

an organization as to present an environmentally responsible image.” In other words, greenwashing is a tactic used by controversial industries around the world to misleadingly represent their environmentally destructive products and practices as sustainable.

Greenwashing by any industry is deceitful, creating an inaccurate representation of an industry's impact on the environment. But when carried out by the tobacco industry, it also contravenes the global treaty to reduce tobacco use. It allows the industry to continue with business as usual, including contributing to deforestation, water contamination, air pollution and litter. Calling out and prohibiting the industry's greenwashing attempts will help the world see the industry for the major polluter that it is.

Governments and the public around the world should be aware that greenwashing by the tobacco industry is increasing and needs to be countered. Governments that are Parties to the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) also have an obligation to exclude the industry from engagement or influence over health policy, no matter how hard the industry attempts to greenwash its image.

Big interview with Roy S. Telewa



National Youth Council CEO and NACADA Board Director, Roy Sassaka, (right) during the interview being conducted by the Manager, Corporate Communications, Simon Mwangi.

Today's young persons are undeniably an integral part of society. At times, they seem to possess boundless energy and enthusiasm, and they often offer fresh perspectives on relevant issues. With their unique experiences, viewpoints, and vitality, young people are capable of making extremely important contributions to society.

Young people also face a variety of challenges. They are growing up in a rapidly changing environment that continually offers them new knowledge and discoveries. They must make sense of this dynamic environment while at the same time establishing their own unique identity.

These days, alcohol and drug abuse is becoming an increasing trend and playing a larger role in youth culture. Normally associated with economic and social factors, drug abuse has become more prominent among youth, as drugs have become increasingly varied and accessible. Today, there is a clear need for effective drug prevention programs directed toward youth.

Simon Mwangi, our Manager of Corporate Communication sat down with the Chief Executive Officer, National Youth Council, and NACADA Board Member, Mr. Roy Telewa, to discuss youth leadership and participation in the prevention and management of alcohol and abuse in Kenya

1. In your own words, who is Roy S. Telewa?

Professionally I am the Chief Executive Officer at

the National Youth Council and Board Member at the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA).

In management, Roy is a twenty-first-century youth leader with a three hundred- and sixty-degrees approach to management. I consider myself a leader who reflects a shift from making money for the organization to an obsession with creating value for the client. Mine is to drive everyone in the organization to focus their work on delivering value for the stakeholder.

Academically, I hold an MBA in Operations Management, a Bachelor of Commerce in Procurement and Supply Chains Management, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Political Science, all from the University of Nairobi. I am currently pursuing my Ph.D., with a focus on Operations Optimization, also, from the University of Nairobi.

2. How is your day-to-day life in the office?

It's hard for me to describe a 'typical day being a CEO at National Youth Council.

Our key mandate is to ensure youth representation and inclusivity across all spheres of life be it political, economic, or social, and to act as a bridge between the youth and the policymakers.

We have achieved this by harnessing the voice of the youth to inform youth-friendly legislations and policies besides providing a framework for

co-creating youth interventions. We have further continuously increased our advocacy and lobbying activities through the implementation of our advocacy agenda, aligned to the Kenya Youth Development Policy 2019 (KYDP 2019) to achieve this. We have ensured that we provide a platform for the youth to have a voice in legislation and policies being formulated through our advocacy initiatives. So, you can only imagine what my 'typical day, would look like.

But I would say that, on a usual working day, I am up between 4 am – 5 am. I start by scanning mainstream and social media just to get a feel of what may have transpired overnight before I get ready for work.

Every day, I make it intentional to engage with the different heads of departments as they form an integral part of the organization. The rest of the day will be a mix of interactions with my top management. I don't micromanage, as my team is very capable, and I give them room to deliver.

Many times, my days will start with regional field engagements touching on youth matters. My role also involves a fair bit of travel, both nationally and internationally. But I'd also like to add that no two days are the same, but I like it that way!

3. What is your vision for NACADA as a Board Member representing the Youth?

According to various surveys conducted by the NACADA and also findings from the Kenya Youth Development Policy (KYDP) 2019, the level of drug use and substance abuse amongst our youth, is startling.

Despite the gravity of the situation and the need for services to address the same, it's been noted that very few drug rehabilitation programs, counseling, and re-integration centers are available and financially accessible, for our youth. The few that are available, tend to be located in urban areas.

For the youth, drug use and substance abuse is associated with increased risk for early sexual debut, multiple sexual partners, early childbearing, poor mental health, and an increased risk of aggressive behavior. A ripple effect of activities.

My vision would be for NACADA, through strategic partnerships and collaborations, whether locally or internationally, to be able to provide psychosocial interventions and initiatives to address issues of substance abuse, family/relationships problems, depression, and anxiety, for these, are some of the

main causes of drug use and substance abuse.

4. How has your wide experience shaped your approach to handling youth matters?

Youth aged 18-35 comprise three-quarters of the population in Kenya and are a great potential source of social and economic energy for the country. Yet, much of this energy is untapped.

In urban settings, the younger population has greater access to information than their rural-based colleagues and may be more engaged in decision-making processes. However, this largely depends on the modes of communication and engagement employed by the governments.

One of the challenges young people face in Kenya is the missing link between the aspirations they express and the way they can effectively materialize them. In my position, I represent the aspirations of this generation in government and it is, therefore, my fervent duty to ensure that there are sustainable programs that address their needs.

-

Touching one life at a time. Making one change at a time. Your effort is being felt, and celebrated, by beneficiaries. To me, this is fulfilling

6. Parting shot? What advice would you give to the youth?

'We cannot always build a future for our youth, but we can always build our youth for the future' Franklin Roosevelt. This is my all-time quote.

A Kenyan youth is the strongest, powerful, innovative, talented, and hardworking individual that God created. More so, in Kenya, 75.1% of the total population consists of those below the age of 35 years. Hence, the youth dividend factor to harness, for global action. We have the ability to achieve what we put our mind to, for sustainable development. So, what is limiting Me and You?

My challenge to my fellow youth is for us to take up the available opportunities such as the Affirmative Funds, Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO), Ajira and Talanta Mtaani platforms to create more value and opportunities for ourselves and others enabling us to earn decent and sustainable livelihoods. As NYC, we have made it our advocacy agenda, to sensitize on all the available opportunities, for the growth of our youth and economic development.

Félicitations Dr. Hamisi Massa



On behalf of the National Authority for the Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA), we are very pleased to congratulate you on your appointment as the Deputy Director of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI). As an Authority, we enthusiastically support and are privileged to have you as our Board of Directors

Best Wishes Medina



The Communication team is grateful for your immeasurable contributions to the Authority and the department. We wish you the best of luck and continued success in your new opportunity and future endeavors. May you carry forth and champion substance use evidence-based prevention and management interventions in your new space. Best Wishes!!!!

Need Help With Alcohol and Drug Abuse?

**OUR HELPLINE
NUMBER **1192** IS
AVAILABLE 24/7
FOR FREE**



P.O. Box 10774 00100 Nairobi
NSSF Building, Eastern Wing, 18th Floor
Bishops Road, Nairobi

 @NACADAKenya

 Nacada Kenya

 nacada.kenya

www.nacada.go.ke

 +254 (020) 2721997/93