



Reducing Alcohol-related Harm in a Global Context: Implications of industry actions in developing countries

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From Beer Street to Priority Lane



Regional Situations in Africa, Asia and Latin America

- Lack of effective policies in most countries
- Lack of technical capacity and a strong voice from civil society
- Minimum capacity of health system to respond to alcohol problems
- Multinational alcohol industry already influencing policy-making and pressing to participate in the development of alcohol policies
- Situation constitutes a “perfect storm” that is conducive to increased alcohol availability and alcohol-related harm

Availability Theory

Physical availability
= accessibility

Economic availability
= affordability

Social availability
= acceptability

Psychological availability
= desirability

Age restrictions, controls on
time, place, density affect
access, convenience

Alcohol taxes, price controls
limit affordability

Restrictions on drinking
context, drink driving
measures, brief interventions,
treatment

Marketing campaigns, religious
norms, affect psychological
attractiveness



What are the alcohol industry's actions that may either increase or decrease alcohol availability?

Industry actions in Africa, Latin America and Asia can be described in terms of two major initiatives and a variety of smaller but related activities. The major initiatives are:

- Increasing concentration of major producers
- Delegation of policy activities to social aspects organizations and trade associations.



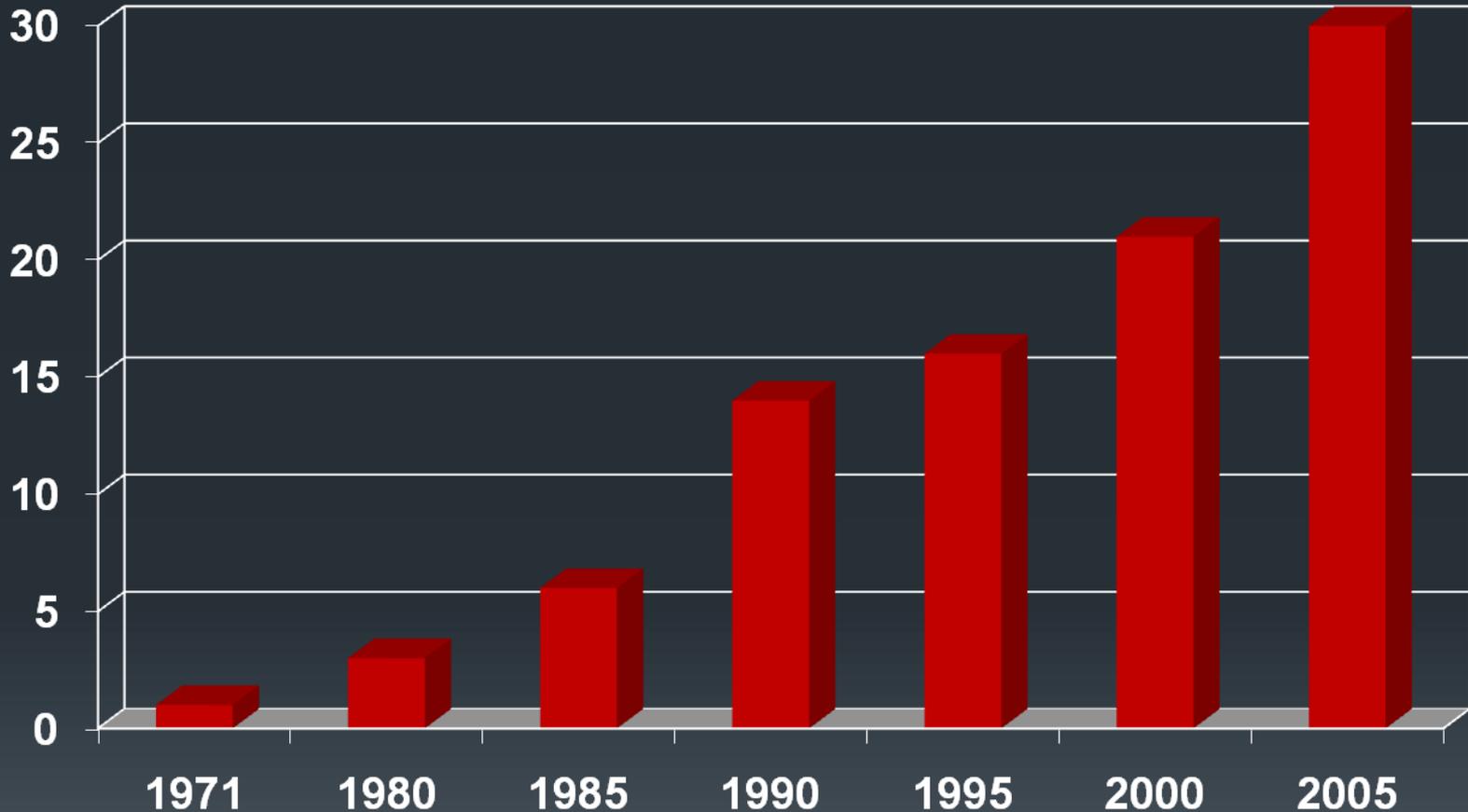
Increasing concentration of major producers

- Globalization of production, trade and marketing of alcohol products
- SAB Miller, Heineken, Diageo and Carlsberg have targeted sub-Saharan Africa as an emerging market
- Other multinational producers have targeted Asia and Latin America

Analysis of impact

- With increased industry concentration comes increased profits and political influence.
- The size and profitability of these companies help to finance aggressive marketing on a global scale.
- Size also allows resources to be devoted to promoting the policy interests of the industry.
- Increased marketing and industry-favorable policies likely to increase availability, decrease abstinence rates, and generate harm
- SABMiller claims that infrastructure investments and “*our significant tax (excise) contribution gives us a place at the table*” (SABMiller, 2012).

Growth in Industry-funded Social Aspect/Public Relations Organizations



Sources: Witheridge (2003), Anderson (2005), ICAP (2006)



Key SAPRO messages that align with industry interests

- Alcohol confers net benefits on society.
- Alcohol problems are caused by a small number of excessive drinkers, rather than be a consequence of the total consumption levels in a community or a nation.
- The cornerstone of alcohol policy should be to encourage responsible drinking.
- Alcohol marketing should be self-regulated by the industry itself.
- Industry representatives should have an equal place at the policy table with other 'stakeholders'.



Social Aspect Organizations: Ostensible Role

- **Support prevention activities**
- **Support scientific research**
- **Promote road safety, responsible drinking, etc.**

Actual Role of Social Aspect Organizations

- **Public relations rather than corporate social responsibility**
- **Neutralize opposing views**
- **Oppose unpopular but effective policies**
- **Support ineffective but popular policies**
- **Many of ICAP's recent activities have focused on countering the influence of the World Health Organization**

(Bakke and Endal, 2010; Jernigan, 2012; Babor and Robaina, in press)



Related actions by alcohol industry that could increase alcohol availability rather than reduce harm

- Marketing activities
- Product design
- Partnerships
- Conferences and scientific publications
- Use of legal action to stop public health measures
- Promotion of self-regulation
- “Global actions” to support WHO’s Global Strategy
- Research activities
- Water quality projects

Marketing Activities

Issue

- The leading companies or their subsidiaries are among the largest advertisers in many developing nations
- Brewers & distillers like SABMiller, Diageo, and Heineken are increasingly targeting emerging markets, offering “traditional” cultural beverages, sponsoring football matches and game shows, and running ads promoting “female empowerment.”

Impact

- Speeds up the onset of drinking and increases the amount consumed by those already drinking,
- Contributes to the on-going recruitment of young people to replace older drinkers and expands the drinking population in emerging markets,
- Compete with the non-commercial alcohols,
- Increase per capita alcohol consumption.

Product Design:

- Specially sized, smaller 200-milliliter bottles of spirits for the “cash-strapped”
- Sale and distribution of small alcohol sachets
- Targeting female consumers with new products



The “Snapp Sisters” in the ads embody a growing wave of independent women, Diageo says, with their own decisions to make—and money to spend.



Lobbying Activities: Lower Taxes

- Industry representatives argue that increased taxes will be more damaging to the health of African drinkers
 - A presentation by the Uganda Alcohol Industry Association (UAIA) pressed for lower tax rates for alcohol so that it is affordable and attracts consumers away from illicit alcohol—calling it a “win-win situation.”
 - *“The alternative is that lower income people who wish to consume liquor will buy illicit and potentially dangerous alcohol”*
Vincent Maphai, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs, SABMiller's South African unit

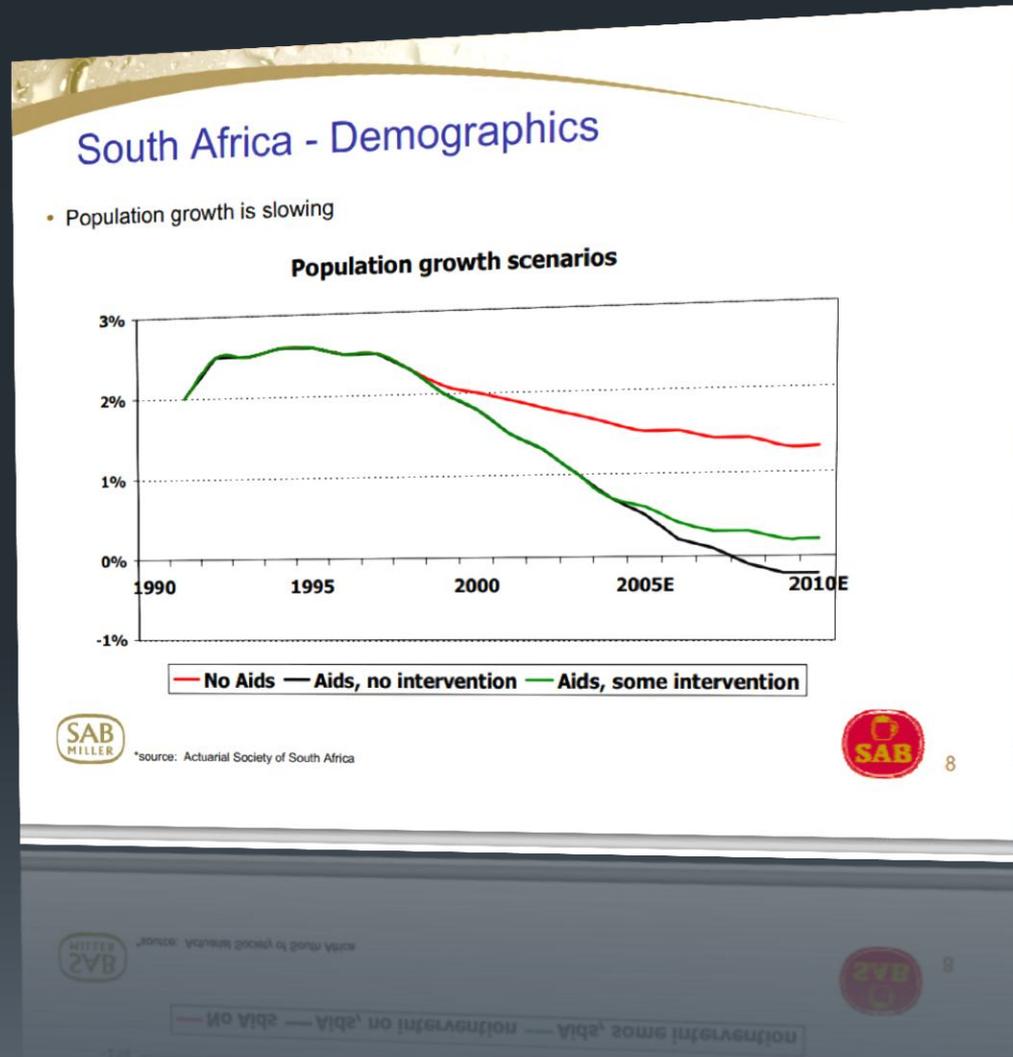


Partnerships: SABMiller, South African Business Coalition on HIV/Aids and the Global Fund

- Global Fund will finance 5 initiatives relating to HIV/Aids through a contribution of over R36 million:
 1. Project Promote, a public private partnership to assist in reaching government condom distribution targets;
 2. BizAIDS, helping micro and small sized companies protect their businesses from threats such as HIV and AIDS;
 3. Peer Educator Training and Support;
 4. HIV and AIDS Counselling and Testing; and
 5. SAB's Tavern Intervention Programme for Men

SABMiller Report- Beer in South Africa: Overview and Prospects

- Page 8 of the report is titled “Population growth scenarios” and shows that population growth will drop drastically if there are no AIDS interventions.
- “HIV/Aids has the potential to affect our workforce, our customers, the supply of raw materials and the economic development of the communities in which we operate”





Partnerships: Impact

- *“Such partnerships lend legitimacy and provide a platform for the liquor industry to lobby against proposals to reduce the availability of alcohol, increase the price of alcohol through raising excise taxes and place restrictions on the marketing of alcohol, despite the global evidence that these measures are the most cost-effective way to decrease alcohol-related harm.”*
 - Bulletin of the WHO (Matzopoulos, et al., 2012)

Consensus conferences and scientific publications



Drinking in Context: Patterns, Interventions, and Partnerships

- Widely disseminated as a policy brief for policymakers in developing countries
- Promoted at conferences and government consultations in a number of countries in Africa, Asia and now Latin America
- Bakke & Endal (2010) discovered that the national plans designed to fit the specific needs of four African countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Uganda, and Botswana) were virtually identical
 - all documents originated from the Microsoft Word document of a senior executive of SABMiller, one of ICAP's funders.
- Subsequent to the publication of this analysis, one of ICAP's chief consultants was sanctioned by his employer, the government of New South Wales, for misrepresenting his government affiliation in helping to draft these policies.



Impact of industry-sponsored conferences and scientific publications

- Used to support industry-favorable policy initiatives
- In the case of ICAP in Africa, commercial alcohol products are promoted as an alternative to illicit brews.
 - emphasize the economic benefits of an expanded alcohol industry, and the value of allowing the alcohol industry to regulate their own marketing activities.
- Misrepresent the public health view on alcohol policies, advocate ineffective or inadequate policies, and create a situation of “moral jeopardy” for scientists who contribute to edited volumes the alcohol industry promotes (Jernigan, 2012)

Promotion of self-regulation

- ICAP's *Self-Regulation and Alcohol: A Toolkit for Emerging Markets and the Developing World*
- ICAP organized a regional workshop on self-regulation in Cape Town, South Africa in October 2006
 - Attended by over 60 participants from 13 countries in the African region
 - In the “final Declaration” of the meeting, commitments were endorsed unanimously by participants, who consisted mainly of industry representatives, government officials and academics paid consulting fees by ICAP
 - Declaration encouraged government, industry, and public health partnerships on alcohol policy development; alcohol companies and ICAP to support governments in the development of alcohol policies; addressing and engaging informal production; and affordable alternatives to illicit alcohol.
 - Draft of declaration delivered before 70 experts from governments, the alcohol industry, public health, and NGOs from 15 SSA countries at the ICAP Africa Region Conference in Dar es Salam, Tanzania in September 2008.



Promotion of Self-regulation: Impact

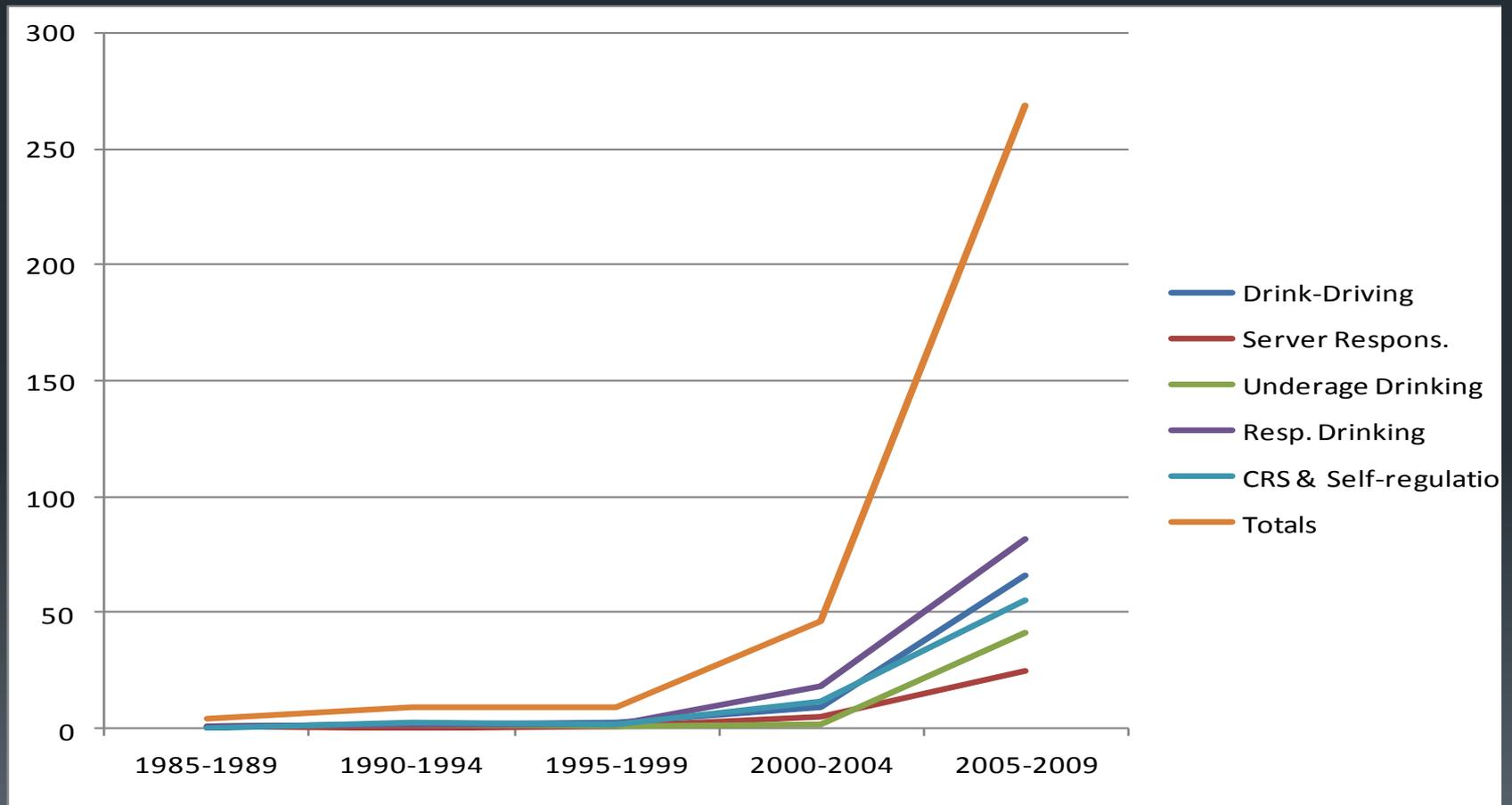
- There is strong evidence from a number of countries that self-regulation is ineffective in protecting vulnerable populations, particularly youth, from the negative effects of alcohol marketing.
- The likely impact of these activities is to create an environment where industry self-regulation codes are adopted but not enforced, leading to increased exposure of children and youth to alcohol marketing.

Global actions



- Without endorsement or approval from WHO, ICAP has undertaken the coordination of a variety of industry activities under the general label of Global Actions on Harmful Drinking.
- 1. Reducing Under-age Drinking
- 2. Strengthening and Expanding Marketing Codes of Practice
- 3. Providing Consumer Information and Responsible Product Innovation
- 4. Reducing Drinking and Driving
- 5. Enlisting the Support of Retailers to Reduce Harmful Drinking.

The Alcohol Industry's Global Actions on Harmful Drinking: (1985-2009)





Impact of global actions

- Not likely to reduce alcohol availability
 - Few of the industry-sponsored programs in developing countries devoted to the most effective alcohol control measures
- Confuse government officials and public health authorities
 - *“These interventions allow the industry to be seen to be fulfilling social and legal obligations to address alcohol abuse while simultaneously ensuring that sales and profits are maintained.”*
-Bulletin of WHO



Research activities

- Alcohol industry has provided direct funding to individual investigators, research centers and grant funding organizations since the 1980s.
- Funds several foundations that provide grants for scientific research on fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and other health-related topics.
- New sponsored research projects on drinking practices, noncommercial alcohol, self-regulation, economic benefits, etc.



Research activities

- ICAP contracted with Chanel Research to conduct research on noncommercial alcohol production and use in four developing countries.
 - ICAP funded study in Kenya on the extent of noncommercial alcohol production found that main reason for consumption of noncommercial alcohol is price.
 - The actual alcohol content of non-commercial alcohol is not referenced in the study report.
 - ICAP funded study in Botswana also found that financial considerations were paramount in driving consumers to these beverages.

FLASCO Survey (2012) of Drinking Practices in Latin America

- Large epidemiological study coordinated by FLACSO-Costa Rica (Facultad Latino Americana de Ciencias Sociales) on patterns of alcohol consumption in 9 LA countries
- Funded by the beer industry in each countries, but no acknowledgement of specific funders
- No ethical approval was sought in any country
- Numerous methodological problems in sampling and measurement
- Findings contradict the existing scientific literature
- Findings being presented at industry-sponsored meetings in Geneva and in Latin America

Impact of Research Activities



- Amounts given for industry-funded research in several critical areas are comparable to that produced by independent scientists working for government agencies, NGOs, universities and the WHO.
- The impact of research on noncommercial alcohol has not yet been determined, but the recent initiatives could create a situation wherein the only literature on the subject is funded by the industry and conducted by researchers who have a financial COI in the results.
- Industry-sponsored research can be seen as a form of “science capture” designed to skew the scientific evidence and manage the scientific enterprise
 - COI in health research associated with biased findings that favor commercial interests.
- Proprietary studies, which are not shared with the scientific community and public health authorities, raise ethical questions about motives and concerns.



Conclusions

- Alcohol industry has intensified its scientific and policy-related activities under the general framework of corporate social responsibility initiatives, most of which can be described as instrumental to the industry's economic interests.
- WHO Strategy does not give the producers a role in public health policy
 - They are only encouraged to “consider effective ways” to address alcohol problems within their core roles, rather than as public health professionals.
- 2007 WHO Expert Committee recommended that WHO continue its practice of no collaboration with the various sectors of the alcohol industry.

Conclusions



The following actions are warranted by the public health community:

- Insist on industry support for evidence-based policies, and cessation of anti-scientific lobbying activities, as a precondition for dialogue about partnerships with scientists and prevention professionals
- Monitor industry activities using advanced social science methods
- Conduct ethical hazard inventories before engaging in any partnerships, prevention initiatives, or mutual scientific activities
- Engage professional scientific organizations and NGOs in a critical review of industry-science –public health relationships
- Insist on rigorous adherence to Conflict of Interest principles
- Support research in developing countries on noncommercial alcohol, alcohol marketing and “corporation-induced disease”

Alcohol Use Disorders as a Corporation-induced Disease: The Epidemiologic Cascade

