



2024

NARRATIVE REPORT

"ADVANCING
ALCOHOL POLICIES & LEGISLATIONS FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WEST
AFRICA"



January 2025

Contents

.....0

Abbreviations2

West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA)3

Partners and Collaborators5

National Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAPA's)6

Summary of results achieved7

Impact assessment and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).....8

Analysis of Country Situations9

Risk Analysis 10

Impact Story:..... 11

Linkage with Alcohol, Drugs and Development (ADD) 12

Reviews & Evaluations..... 12

Cost Efficiency 13

Technical Assistance 13

Staff..... 14

National Coordinators..... 14

Abbreviations

AFRO:	African Region
APABurkina:	Alcohol Policy Alliance Burkina Faso
APAG:	Alcohol Policy Alliance Gambia
ASAAHN:	Association of Advocates Against Alcohol Harm in Nigeria
BP:	Boundary Partners
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EAAPA:	East Africa Alcohol Policy Alliance
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
FADAB:	Food, Alcohol, Drugs and Addictive Behaviors
FCAC:	Framework Convention on Alcohol Control
FCTC:	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
FORUT:	FORUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE
GAPA:	Global Alcohol Policy Alliance
GhanAPA:	Alcohol Policy Alliance- Ghana
GUIAPA:	Alcohol Policy Alliance- Guinea Bissau
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IOGT:	IOGT International
LAPA:	Liberia Alcohol Policy Alliance
MOH:	Ministry of Health, Ghana
NAP:	National Alcohol Policy
NAPA:	National Alcohol Policy Alliance
NCDA:	Non-Communicable Disease Alliance
NCDs:	Non-Communicable Diseases
NORAD:	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OCAP:	Organizational Capacity Assessment Process
RAPA:	Regional Alcohol Policy Alliances
RCM	Regional Coordinating Mechanism
RFF:	Results Framework Format
RMP	Resource Mobilization Plan
RESECA:	Reseau Senegalais Contre La Cons Al /Senegalese Network Against the Consumption of Alcohol
SAAPA :	Southern Africa Alcohol Policy Alliance
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SenAPA:	Senegalese Alcohol Policy Alliance
SLAPA:	Sierra Leone Alcohol Policy Alliance
UHC:	Universal Health Coverage
UN:	United Nations
UNODC:	United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs
USAPA:	United States Alcohol Policy Alliance
WAAPA:	West African Alcohol Policy Alliance
WHA:	World Health Assembly
WAHO:	West African Health Organization
WHO:	World Health Organization

West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA)

Introduction:

The West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA) is a coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and public health practitioners with the goal of advocating and assisting in the development, implementation and enforcement of evidence-based alcohol policies, programmes and legislations in West Africa.

WAAPA is involved in the monitoring and sharing of information on alcohol and alcohol related issues among its member organizations, development and international partners.

WAAPA is currently operating in Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Burkina Faso and Benin.

Mission:

Coordinating, sharing and supporting members and CSOs working on alcohol prevention and control to influence governance, policies, legislations and programmes in West Africa and beyond.

Vision:

‘We envision healthy nations free from alcohol related harm and an empowered population’

Objectives:

1. To promote and facilitate information sharing on alcohol and alcohol related issues;
2. To initiate, facilitate and conduct research on alcohol prevention, policies and programmes;
3. To strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations and development professionals involved in alcohol policies and programmes;
4. To encourage, support and strengthen partnerships between member organizations and governments on the implementation of alcohol policies and programmes;
5. To promote and advocate for national, regional and continental policies, programmes and regulatory frameworks on alcohol and alcohol related issues and;
6. To mobilize and facilitate access to financial, human and technical assistance and resources required for the development, implementation and evaluation of alcohol policies and programmes.
7. To collaborate with regional and international Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) on alcohol policies and programmes.

Board of Directors (January 2024 – December 2025):

1. Mrs Boi-Jeneh Jalloh	Sierra Leone	- Chairperson
2. Mr Alagie Janneh	Gambia	- Vice chair
3. Mrs Roseline Thomas Richards	Liberia	- Treasurer
4. Dr. Franklin Chukwuma Umenze	Nigeria	- Member
5. Mr Djibril Wele	Senegal	- Member
6. Mr Benjamin Anabila	Ghana	- Member
7. Mr Anuar Djedjo	Guinea Bissau	- Member
8. Dr Mohamed Sidi Mohamed	Burkina Faso	- Member
9. Mr. Augustin Faton	Benin	- Member
10. Prof Isidore S. Obot	Nigeria	- Advisor
11. Prof Abdul-Rahman Adam Musah	USA	- Advisor/US Rep.
12. Mr Issah Ali		- Head of Secretariat

Affiliations/Membership/Interim Observer:

1. Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA)
2. Global NCDs Alliance (NCDA)
3. World Health Organization (WHO) Africa Region(AFRO)

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Partners and Collaborators



National Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAPA's)



Summary of results achieved

1. Liberia successfully developed a draft Alcohol Legislation, marking a crucial step toward stronger alcohol regulation in the country.
2. Sierra Leone is in consultation with stakeholders for the review of its liquor Ordinance Act 1924 and the Liquor Licensing Ordinance 1960 for the development of the countries Alcohol Legislation.
3. Sierra Leone developed a draft CSO Shadow Report assessing the country's implementation of five key priority intervention areas of the Regional Framework of the Global Alcohol Action Plan. Which will serve as an important advocacy tool for strengthening national alcohol policies and legislations.
4. At the regional level, WAAPA engaged on regional advocacy, capacity building and strengthening stakeholder engagement to push for alcohol policy reforms across West Africa and beyond. WAAPA participated in the 2024 WHO AFRO Regional Committee Meeting (RCM), advocating for stronger health policies, including integrating country and regional health data and improving food safety regulations.
5. WAAPA conducted social media advocacy campaigns on UN and International Observance Days to raise awareness on alcohol harm and the need for stricter alcohol control policies.
6. On capacity building for national stakeholders (NAPA's and Government Officials), WAAPA hosted bi-monthly Alcohol Policy Forums, creating a space for knowledge-sharing and strategy discussions. The Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) led a session on how to counter alcohol industry interference, while WHO AFRO impacted knowledge on implementing the Global Alcohol Action Plan (GAAP) at the national level. These sessions helped strengthen national alliances, government officials, etc, improve advocacy efforts, policy development and ensure stakeholders are equipped with the right information.
7. WAAPA signed a new non-financial partnership with Concentric Policies, a UK based non-profit organization focused on preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases. These partnership is focused on advancing alcohol control policy and legislation and alcohol implementation efforts in Liberia.
8. The involvement of WAAPA and NAPA board's in the overall operations of WAAPA has been strengthened through its board meetings, extraordinary meetings and annual general meetings (AGM) by making inputs, review, approval of all operational documents including the annual programme of work, annual narrative report, audited financial statement, management letter and providing feedback and recommendation for the consideration and adoption and implementation by the regional secretariat.

9. The Resource Mobilization Plan currently being developed when finalized and implemented would enable WAAPA identify other alternative sources of support to effectively implement WAAPA's Strategic Plan.
10. WAAPA has assessed the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities within some national alcohol policy alliances, this will further guide WAAPA Secretariat in the implementation of the project in the countries.
11. Overall, these efforts have reinforced WAAPA's advocacy efforts, strengthened partnerships, and positioned WAAPA and national alliances to keep pushing for alcohol control policy development, adoption and implementation.

Impact assessment and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

It has been outlined that alcohol is linked to over 13 of the 17 SDGs. The links are obvious, such as for target 3.4 regarding non-communicable diseases and mental health and 3.6 regarding road traffic safety. Targets 1.1 on poverty, 5.2 on gender based violence, and 16.2 on child rights are other targets where the link to alcohol is present. Alcohol policy is also relevant to SDGs that focus on international trade, which, for example, call for policy coherence (target 17.14) between sectors, such as public health and trade. Substance use problems have been recognised by the SDGs. SDG 3 "Good health and well-being" speaks directly to alcohol-related harms and has a target to reduce such harms (3.5): "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol".

The progress achieved in 2024 together with the previous year's changes will contribute greatly to the over-reaching project vision and the UN SDGs in several ways.

The additional development, further reviews of draft National Alcohol Policies and capacity building during WAAPA's site visit to NAPAs continued to facilitate interactions among government, NAPA's and development partners, this process is providing opportunities to CSOs to influence the scope of control and preventing alcohol harm by making the environment safe for humans within the global framework.

The acceptance and credibility of alcohol policy advocates in national alcohol policy dialogue will continue to afford NAPA's the opportunities to influence non-communicable disease prevention and control including alcohol control towards the achievement of the UN SDG 3.5.

Sustaining the interest and commitment of stakeholders in the initiation, development and implementation of alcohol policies and legislations will in the subsequent years help to domesticate SDG 3.5 which will also ensure a healthy generation which humans will realise the potentials. The necessary framework is currently being included in draft policies

Analysis of Country Situations

In 2024, alcohol policy alliances across West Africa continued efforts in advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and public awareness on alcohol harm reduction. Alliances worked toward policy reforms, institutional strengthening and regional collaboration.

LAPA (Liberia Alcohol Policy Alliance) has been active in promoting alcohol control in Liberia through several initiatives. These include holding a national high-level conference on alcohol policies, convening a sub-technical committee to review its draft national alcohol legislation, and launching public advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the dangers of alcohol abuse. Additionally, LAPA has gathered a group of prominent champions from various sectors to support and advocate for its work. These efforts aim to create stronger alcohol control policies and ensure their successful implementation in Liberia.

SLAPA (Sierra Leone Alcohol Policy Alliance) made significant progress in its advocacy efforts. The Alliance engaged key stakeholders, conducted public sensitization campaigns programs and developed a draft CSO shadow report. SLAPA is actively consulting with the government on drafting the countries comprehensive national alcohol legislation and identified key champions to support its advocacy campaign in Sierra Leone.

APAG (Alcohol Policy Alliance Gambia) is working and pushing for the adoption of its validated national alcohol policy by engaging various stakeholders, including policymakers, health professionals. The country has identified key "champions" to advocate for the policy's adoption and implementation. Additionally, Gambia has been focusing on sensitizing youth and the general public about the harms of alcohol abuse through public campaigns and educational programs. These efforts aim to promote awareness, reduce alcohol consumption, and encourage healthier lifestyles and ensuring stronger support for the policy.

GhanAPA (Alcohol Policy Alliance – Ghana) is actively engaging stakeholders to advance its national alcohol legislation by working towards presenting the validated legislation to parliament. This process involves consultations with policymakers, health professionals, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders to ensure broad support for the legislation.

In addition to these legislative efforts, Ghana is strengthening its advocacy work by educating the public about the dangers of alcohol abuse. Through public awareness campaigns, community outreach, and educational programs, the country aims to inform citizens about alcohol-related harm and promote responsible drinking habits. These combined efforts are geared toward ensuring the successful adoption of the legislation and fostering a healthier society.

ASAAHN (Association of Advocates Against Alcohol Harm in Nigeria) engaged the Federal Ministry of Health in redrafting its initially validated national alcohol policy. This process aimed to refine and strengthen the policy to ensure it effectively addresses alcohol-related harm and aligns with public health priorities. By involving

key stakeholders, Nigeria seeks to develop a more comprehensive and impactful framework for alcohol control.

BAPA (Benin Alcohol Policy Alliance) actively engaged its ministers to gather momentum for the development of the country's national alcohol policy. Alongside this, the country has also pushed for the institutional development of the national alcohol policy alliance. Strengthening the alliance aims to enhance coordination, advocacy, and policy implementation efforts, ensuring a more structured and sustainable approach to alcohol control in Benin.

Risk Analysis

External Risk: Prior to the 2024 project period, WAAPA identified a risk of alcohol industry interference in alcohol and public health policymaking process. This risk materialized as currently the Alcohol Industry is now involved in the policy redrafting process for Nigeria. To mitigate this WAAPA, would strengthen the institutional and advocacy capacity of ASAAHN as an efficient national alliance to effectively advocate against the involvement of the alcohol industry in the policy drafting process and raise public awareness through social media campaigns that highlight the harmful effects of alcohol use, by keeping key stakeholders and public empowered and informed. WAAPA is confident that, this initiative would generate pressure for policy progress while ensuring government remains committed to the alcohol control agenda and additionally take the industry off the drafting process.

External Risk: WAAPA identified the risk of replacement or reshuffling of Health Ministers, or changes in governments, could disrupt the development and implementation of National Alcohol Policies and legislation. This risk materialized in Ghana where political transitions posed a significant challenge to the continuity of alcohol control policy coupled with GhanAPA's limited capacity to effectively engage the Ministry of Health and Attorney General's office have stalled the validated National Alcohol Policy, delaying its submission to Parliament. To address this, WAAPA is strengthening GhanAPA's advocacy capacity through engagement with the Minister of Health. These efforts will ensure that the new minister and officials are well-informed about the project's goals and progress, allowing the alcohol control policy process to continue.

Internal Risk: At the start of the 2024 program year, WAAPA identified administrative capacity gaps, that could impact the effective implementation of project activities. To address this, WAAPA procured an office workstation for its regional secretariat, improving operational efficiency and coordination.

Internal Risk: In 2024, WAAPA identified governance and accountability gaps in NAPAs. To address this, WAAPA will implement reforms, strengthen financial oversight and provide governance training to ensure transparency and efficiency across alliance structures.

Internal Risk: one of the key internal risks identified in 2024 is the limited technical capacity and advocacy skills within some National Alcohol Policy Alliances

(NAPAs) needed at the policy/legislation development phase, example Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria. To mitigate this WAAPA would provide technical, coaching or peer support to capacitate the national alliances for effective alcohol control policy development.

Impact Story:

a. **Title:** National authorities have passed evidence-based alcohol policies in selected countries.

b. **Description:** At the end of 2024 WAAPA and its partner in Liberia have successfully developed a draft Alcohol Legislation.

Why: In 2018 SAFER Initiative reported that ‘Every 10 seconds a person dies from alcohol-related causes including cancers, heart diseases, traffic crashes and violence’ other harm includes liver diseases and mental disorders. The lack of a comprehensive National Alcohol Control Policies and regulatory systems in the West African region to address the above harm has resulted in relatively high levels of alcohol consumption among the vulnerable population. However, many countries in the region also have high proportions of non-drinkers, and some countries even have low consumption levels, due mainly to religious and cultural influences. This therefore makes it important to protect the abstainers and reduce the number of harms associated with alcohol.

What: The purpose of this project is to address alcohol as a developmental issue from a regional perspective and with the expected impact of ‘A low level of alcohol related harms in selected countries in West Africa, especially with regard to alcohol related diseases, mental disorders, gender-based violence and road accidents’.

c. **Result(s):** In 2024 LAPA successfully developed a draft National Alcohol Legislation, SLAPA is in consultations with its national allies in drafting its National Alcohol Legislation, GhanAPA’s validated National Alcohol Legislative Instrument is still with the Attorney General awaiting its presentation at the parliament of Ghana. Gambia and stakeholders also produced a draft National Alcohol Policy in 2021 and validated it in 2023 and was revalidated in 2024 and still await its adoption. Nigeria’s validated National Alcohol Policy is being redrafted at the Federal Ministry of Health.

d. **Lessons Learnt/assessments:** The 2024 progress marked an important step toward strengthening national alliances, advancing comprehensive national alcohol policies and legislation, and enhancing regional collaboration. WAAPA’s 2024–2028 outcomes align well with its theory of change, demonstrated by the establishment of a new national alliance in Benin (BAPA), legislation drafting processes underway in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana and strengthened partnerships with regional and stakeholders WAHO).

However, challenges such as political transitions and instability in Ghana and Burkina Faso disrupted the continuity of alcohol policy discussions. New political administrations often require time to be briefed, reassess ongoing projects, or may shift priorities, delaying policy adoption and implementation. Additionally, instability in Burkina Faso has made consistent advocacy efforts difficult, as

government focus is often diverted to security and other urgent national concerns. In Nigeria, the alcohol industry continues to influence policymaking, weakening government commitment to evidence-based alcohol control policies.

e. Sources: Two confidential copies of the draft National Alcohol Policy and Legislation are available as outcomes of the policy and legislation development processes.

f. Partners: Liberia Alcohol Policy Alliance (LAPA), Association of Advocates Against Alcohol Harm in Nigeria (ASAAHN), Alcohol Policy Alliance-Ghana (GhanAPA), Sierra Leone Alcohol Policy Alliance (SLAPA), Alcohol Policy Alliance Gambia (APAG), Senegalese Network Against Alcohol Harm (RESECA)/Senegalese Alcohol Policy Alliance (SENAPA), Benin Alcohol Policy Alliance (BAPA) and Burkina Faso Alcohol Policy Alliance (ApaBurkina)

Linkage with Alcohol, Drugs and Development (ADD)

1. The project is being implemented within the framework of ADD; Alcohol, Drugs and Development, at the regional level, WAAPA has been engaging stakeholders for the strengthening alcohol control in the West Africa Regional Mental Health Strategic Plan, WAAPA through its social media post, highlighted on the negative effect of alcohol intake and the effect it has on citizens and the country at large. At the national levels NAPA's are advocating for the development of national alcohol policies as a developmental tool to address alcohol related mortalities which includes cancers, heart diseases, road crashes and violence. WAAPA will continue strengthened NAPAs to advocate on ADD framework.

2. The project has made progress in the institutional changes in WAAPA's structure in a sense that, some NAPAs for instant in Gambia are invited to contribute to other developmental issues covering governance, health, etc and in Ghana.

3. Funding and staff time continues to be a challenge in the year under review, despite that, in the coming years, WAAPA is taking advantage of budget increase in 2025 to roll-out ADMD (Alcohol, Drugs, Mental Health and Development) activities, this will help address the challenges in implementing ADMA components.

Reviews & Evaluations

The internal review of 2023 reports from NAPAs, current policy documents as compared against the Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health has indicated some major progress. The current review confirmed that, two countries have successfully adopted their NAP's, one is at the ministerial level awaiting approval and the other two at the departmental levels awaiting finalization. During WAAPA's Regional advocacy tour on GAAP and technical assistant visit to Liberia and Sierra Leone, feedback from National Alliances and government officials indicated readiness towards the implementation of the NAP's through the development of the National

Alcohol Legislations for their countries with the support of WAAPA and other Stakeholders. Also Senegal and Burkina Faso are also working towards the drafting of their NAP's, these commitments will be followed-up and be pursued in the next phase (2024-2028). Partnership strengthening and technical assistance trips will be planned to cover priority countries and WAHO Headquarters.

At the 2023 WAAPA's Regional AGM, the operational, financial reports, program of work for 2024- 2025 were reviewed and approved by members. With the availability of resources, WAAPA will be hiring a Resource Mobilization Officer/consultant to assist in fund raising and an external Evaluator to evaluate the 5-Year project.

The previous recommendations such as the development of a 5-Year Strategic Plan and workshop on Anti-Corruption training has been completed. Resource Mobilisation Policy, Human Resource Policy, Code of Conducts, expanding NAPA's membership to include women groups, children serving organisations and disability groups are receiving serious attention.

In 2023 NAPA's program of work was aligned with WAAPA's 5-year Strategic Plan, which includes re-focusing on priority recommendation.

Cost Efficiency

WAAPA Secretariat has continued to implement the cost-saving measures while maintaining quality, through it's sub-granting process and ensuring funds are strictly aligned with deliverables, with budgets and concept notes reviewed and negotiated to prevent unnecessary expenses. Instead of a flat-rate budget allocation, funding is allocated based on opportunities and potential of achievement of results in the country, this has contributed to operational efficiency. Travel costs have been minimized by utilizing virtual meetings where possible. Additionally, local expertise has been prioritized over international consultants to reduce consultancy fees and strengthening local expertise. WAAPA and NAPA's have also pooled resources with partners and organizations by the share of office space or administrative resources which has lead to cutting down of operational costs and still maintaining efficiency.

Technical Assistance

WAAPA Secretariat continuous to support and guide NAPA's in their project implementation through regular technical assistance. The Head of WAAPA Secretariat work closely with National Coordinator's to redirect activities towards deliverables and this has help yield the needed results. Another factor facilitating results is the trust and cordial relationship among National Alcohol Focal Points, NAPAs and WAAPA Secretariat.

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