

# Fact sheet // Alcohol and the SGD:s

**Efforts to prevent alcohol problems contribute to the achievement of 13 of the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals. Without action, there is a risk that alcohol prevents positive development.**

The goals in Agenda 2030 are integrated and indivisible. No goal can be achieved at the expense of another and many of the goals are dependent on progress in other target areas. There are risk factors that can adversely affect many of the goals: alcohol is such a risk factor.

This factsheet only mentions some of the links that exist between alcohol and Agenda 2030. For a more complete analysis, 'Alcohol and the Sustainable Development Goals', a report published by IOGT International, is recommended.<sup>1</sup>

## Health and well-being

According to the WHO, 3.3 million people die annually because of alcohol. Many more suffer from various degrees of ill health. In the age group 15-49, the time in life when we are expected to be the most productive, alcohol is the foremost risk factor for ill-health globally.<sup>2</sup>

Alcohol can adversely affect children's health in several ways. In Europe, it is estimated that 60,000 children are born underweight because of alcohol.<sup>3</sup> Alcohol consumption during pregnancy increases the risk of foetal alcohol syndrome.<sup>4</sup>

Non-communicable diseases are a rapidly growing problem, in recent years also in low- and middle-income countries. Alcohol

## In brief:

// 13 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are adversely affected by alcohol.

// The connection between alcohol and various forms of health problems is well known but **alcohol also affects many other areas**: poverty, economic development and gender equality are some examples.

// **The negative impact of alcohol** on the Sustainable Development Goals can be reduced by implementing evidence-based alcohol policies, both locally and nationally.

is one of the main risk factors and the link between alcohol and cancer is particularly clear.<sup>5</sup>

Alcohol also affects communicable diseases such as HIV/Aids and tuberculosis. A large study published in The Lancet shows that about 10 percent of all deaths due to tuberculosis can be directly attributed to alcohol.<sup>6</sup>

## Poverty and development

In some of the places in the world where the IOGT-NTO Movement carries out its international work, a large proportion of people's income is spent on alcohol.

At the tea plantation in Matale, Sri Lanka, three quarters of the men spend at least half the day's salary at the bar after work every day.

A study from Sri Lanka shows that the poorest spend the highest proportion of their income on alcohol and tobacco, over 40 percent.<sup>8</sup>

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With the addition of the connection between alcohol and various health problems, this can lead to a significantly deteriorated family economy and even greater difficulties in overcoming poverty.

Alcohol also affects the economy negatively at the societal level. A global overview found the costs to be between 0.45 and 5.44 percent of GDP, which is fully sufficient to affect national economic development, especially in low- and middle-income countries.<sup>9</sup>

### Violence in close relationships

Many studies show a clear connection between alcohol and the prevalence of violence.<sup>10</sup> Estimates of the proportion of partner violence that is alcohol-related varies between countries, from 48 to 87 percent.<sup>11</sup>

Other studies show that the prevalence of violence is significantly lower in households where nobody drinks alcohol.<sup>12</sup>

### References

1. IOGT International (2017), Alcohol and the Sustainable Development Goals. Major Obstacle to Development, [http://iogt.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Alcohol-and-SDGs\\_new.pdf](http://iogt.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Alcohol-and-SDGs_new.pdf) (Accessed 13/12/2017).
2. WHO, Alcohol Fact Sheet, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs349/en/> (Accessed 13/12/2017).
3. Anderson, P, Baumberg, B, Alcohol in Europe – Public Health Perspective: Report summary, Informa Healthcare, 2006, p. 486.
4. Robinson, Monique, How the First Nine Months Shape the Rest of Our Lives, Australian Psychologist, Vol. 48, 2013, p. 241.
5. Room R, Rehm J, Alcohol and non-communicable diseases – cancer, heart disease and more. *Addiction* 2011; 106: 1–2.

### Recommendations

// **The most effective strategy** to reduce alcohol's negative impact on the Sustainable Development Goals is evidence-based policy at the population level. Measures such as increased prices, limited availability and strong regulations on alcohol marketing find the greatest support in the available research.

// **Prevention projects at local or national level** should include policy measures, for example through local by-laws.

// **The impact of alcohol** should be analysed and addressed in most development projects. This will often lead to better results in the project as a whole.

6. Kyu, H. H. et al. (2017), The global burden of tuberculosis: results from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2015, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

7. World Bank, Public Health at a Glance, <http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/IMAGES/AAGALCOH.PDF> (Accessed 13/12/2017).

8. De Silva, V et al., Association between concurrent alcohol and tobacco use and poverty, *Drug and Alcohol Review*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2011, p. 71-72.

9. Thavorncharoensap, M et al., The economic impact of alcohol consumption: a systematic review, *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, vol. 4, no. 20, 2009, p. 10.

10. Andreasson, S. et al. (2017). Alkohol och våld, en översikt av internationell och svensk forskning, Rapportserien Alkoholen och samhället 2017/2018. Stockholm: Göteborgs Universitet, IOGT-NTO, Svenska Läkaresällskapet.

11. WHO (2006), Intimate Partner Violence and Alcohol, WHO Factsheet, Geneva: World Health Organization.

12. Saffitz (2010), Understanding Gender-based Violence: Evidence from Kilimanjaro, *African Sociological Review* 14(1) 2010.

### About us

The international work of the IOGT-NTO Movement takes place in 14 countries in East Africa, Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka and the Balkans. Our focus is on alcohol as an obstacle to development.

Read more at [www.iogtntororelsen.se/internationellt/](http://www.iogtntororelsen.se/internationellt/) or contact us at [info@iogtntororelsen.se](mailto:info@iogtntororelsen.se).

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