



INTERNATIONAL AID SERVICES

'Creating a positive reaction'

THE JOURNEY

An Account of Successes and Lessons Learnt
From Action Against Alcohol



About the photos

In 2012, IAS launched a campaign against alcohol in Adilang Sub County, Agago district in Uganda. The photos in this report show what is at stake and suggested better alternatives for the future of those affected.

Front cover

A husband of a former alcohol addict blushes at the memory of his wife's turning point

Father and child enjoy a happy moment

Mother and child sorting seeds

A teacher shares experiences on alcoholism in school

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Who we are

International Aid Services (IAS) is a Christian non-political and non-profitable humanitarian Relief and Development Organization. Founded in 1989 IAS continues with its passion of assisting people in need. IAS operates and implements projects in Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Somaliland, Tanzania, Puntland, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Chad. Our projects are in the following areas:

- Integrated Water Resource Management which comprises of : Water and Sanitation, Health, Food Security and Livelihoods, Community Empowerment, Micro finance, Peace building, Emergency Response and Health
- Inclusive Education: Special needs Education, Formal Education, Non formal Education and Community Empowerment
- Civil Society Development.

IAS has its Head Office in Sweden and other offices in Denmark, Germany, Norway and USA

IAS Core Values and Beliefs

IAS is guided by five set of core values:

Missions:

Our biblical understanding of missions motivates everything we do. The un-reached and under privileged people's groups is our major focus in spreading the good news

Integrity:

We believe that integrity is the foundation of our Christian character. Character is not inherited but built daily by the way one thinks and acts, thought by thought, action by action.

Relational leadership and Teamwork:

We believe in a team based approach to leadership. We invest in leaders and train them to realize their full potential as well as giving them tools and opportunities to be effective leaders. We believe health leaders produce health communities.

Empathy (compassion):

We show compassion to a hurting and broken world-feeling the feelings and emotions of others and being motivated to act.

Equality:

We believe in treating all people as we would like to be treated. We believe that people will feel valued and appreciated when we regard them with dignity and respect. IAS is a signatory to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) code of conduct, adheres to and seeks to follow the Sphere standards. IAS is a member of People in Aid (PIA) and Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP). IAS is a member of several international relief- and development networks, such as EU-CORD and NGO VOICE, in order to streamline, enhance quality and coordinate relief- and development assistance across the globe.

IAS Vision

A godly transformed society

IAS Mission Statement

To save lives, promote self-reliance and dignity through human transformation, going beyond relief and development.

CONTENTS

Who We Are	3
IAS in Uganda	5
Preface	8
Overview Of the Action against Alcohol Intervention	11
Case for Adilang	12
Project Objectives	13
Fighting Alcoholism in Schools	14
Drunk and Wasting Away	17
The Bitter-Sweet of Alcohol	18
Rescued From the 'Paws' Of Alcohol	19
Alcohol a Silent Destroyer	20
The Role of Leaders in Curbing Alcohol Abuse	24
It Was Worth Every Effort	27
Lessons Learnt	29

ACRONYMS

AAA	Action Against Alcohol
CCF	Christian Counseling Fellowship
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
IAS	International Aid Services
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced People's
LC	Local Council
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PIA	People in Aid
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
SMC	Swedish Mission Council
SU	Scripture Union
VAI	Value Added Intervention
WEDA	Wera Development Association
YCS	Young Christian Students





Livelihoods Restored

Mr. Odong Bosco is one of the people who restored his gardens after he stopped consuming alcohol. Sustainable enterprises like farming offer better opportunities for local people than production of alcohol



Preface



Juliet Namukasa
Country Director
IAS Uganda

‘Although most people abuse alcohol with a belief that it makes them feel better about them, the truth is that over-use of alcohol negatively impacts the abuser’s personality. Increased irritability, poor judgment and reasoning are just a couple of ways that alcohol damages personality and relationships by extension. Some studies have suggested that the abuse of alcohol is behind as much as 40 percent of instances of domestic violence. Alcoholism is attributable to verbal and physical abuse of spouses and children and carries a great responsibility for the breakup of marriages. Children living in homes with an alcoholic have lower grades, higher rates of depression and frequently feel socially

isolated.’¹

It is this background that led to eighteen months of IAS’s engagement with targeted communities in Adilang Sub County. The interventions have offered insights on the challenges that are encountered in achieving development in contexts where alcohol abuse exists. Although some families have been able to raise school fees for their children for example, communities remain oblivious of the bigger picture; characterized by a blurred focus of the genuine effects of alcohol on their own development. The stories documented provide insight in to a cost and benefit analysis on the alcohol industry and lay bare the fact that the price of a well-built alcohol industry outweigh the social and economic impact on development benefits at family and national level. For example, while the national development plan 2011-2014 prioritizes poverty eradication and infrastructural development, the most energetic segment of the workforce – men remain disengaged because of addiction to alcohol. This leaves women and girls to work on the farm and in many rural cases underutilizing their own economic assets. Government efforts toward Universal Primary Education have been frustrated often because parents cannot make their contributions to Parents Teachers Association (PTA). For example a parent would be unwilling or unable to avail UGX 3000 PTA contribution for a term and yet willing and able to spend much more on alcohol for self and friends in a week! Alcohol has contributed to HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies especially among


the youth. Unprotected sex is a common risk unintentionally undertaken particularly under the influence of alcohol.

While IAS affirms commitment in supporting development initiatives in Uganda, government ought to take a firm stand on the regulation of production and consumption of alcohol in order to support achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in communities prone to alcohol abuse. It will be worthwhile to see smiles of affirmation on children and women’s faces for the hope they envisage and testimonies they experience as their sons and fathers learn to refrain from alcohol abuse.

“...efforts toward Universal Primary Education have been frustrated often because parents cannot make their contributions...”

¹ The social effects of alcoholism (March 2012) - Promises Treatment Center

International Aid Services in Uganda



IAS in Uganda has its country office in Kampala with field offices in Pader and Abim. IAS directly implements projects in Pader, Agago and Abim. IAS also partners with Wera Development Agency (WEDA) to implement projects in Amuria and Katakwi districts and Christian Counseling Fellowship (CCF) supporting formerly abducted girls, child mothers and girls with various vulnerabilities to access formal education

through Pader Girls Academy IAS Implements an Integrated Community Empowerment and Development Program in the above mentioned districts. The major areas of focus are increasing access to safe water for both human and animal use, improving hygiene and sanitation at household level, improving food security and livelihood conditions. Under Inclusive education, IAS Uganda aims at ensuring equal access and sustainable

provision of quality learning opportunities for children, youth and women from disadvantaged backgrounds with diverse learning abilities. Special attention is given to ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders in the education sector, and motivating learners. In partnership with Christian Counseling Fellowship (CCF) IAS supports formerly and girls with various vulnerabilities to access formal education abducted girls, child

mothers through Pader Girls Academy.

Other aspects of intervention include advocacy and governance matters. Gender equality, HIV and AIDS and environmental protection are addressed as cross cutting issues.

Of special interest is Action against Alcohol (AAA) pilot ed in 2012 seeks to mitigate the negative effects of alcohol abuse and production on

development and specifically in regard to the attainment of various Millennium Goals (MDGs). AAA has now become a cross cutting issue in all IAS Uganda interventions.





Overview of the Action Against Alcohol Intervention

Action against Alcohol (AAA) is a Value Added Intervention (VAI) funded by the Swedish Mission Council (SMC) piloted in Adilang Sub County, Agago district, in northern Uganda. It was birthed after observing that the high level of drunkenness in northern Uganda was making it difficult to achieve objectives of the various projects implemented by International Aid Services. The project that started in 2012 targeted 450 households in 9 villages in Adilang Sub County. Today, the project approach has been integrated in all IAS programme activities.

Throughout the implementation of food security and enhancement of rural livelihoods initiatives in northern Uganda, it became evident to IAS that there were self-defeating enterprises that the communities were

engaging in. Such was the case for Alcohol production and consumption. Alcohol abuse affected allocation of economic assets at household level and impacted negatively on the social welfare of the community. Men at times sold off food stuff, household items and animals raised to buy alcohol. This limited the productive age groups of their ability to contribute to social welfare and ultimately the attainment of sustainable poverty reduction. As a major contributing factor to domestic and gender based violence, spread of HIV/AIDS, high school dropout rates and other social evils, alcohol abuse exerted unnecessary pressure and increased vulnerability on the elderly who took on responsibilities of looking after abandoned, abused or orphaned children. Revelers often celebrated with beer-parties, many

of which begun as early as 9.00 am while for others alcohol served as breakfast. Consequently, activities such as farming were disrupted or abandoned with changing individual priorities. While brewing and selling alcohol was a source of income on one hand, it largely hampered and threatened to reverse development efforts achieved.

“...alcohol abuse exerted unnecessary pressure and increased vulnerability on the elderly ...”



A Case for Adilang

‘Agago twins suckle dead mother’ was the title of an article that ran on 16th January 2012 by Daily Monitor, a newspaper in Uganda. The 20 year old mother lost her life following a fight with her husband as she attempted to protect their household items from being sold. The husband who was an alcohol addicted wanted to acquire money from the sale of the items in order to finance his alcohol addiction. The article reported that in 2011 alone, 250 cases of domestic violence relating to alcohol abuse had been reported to the police. This was one of the few cases reported. Many of the cases were not reported due to stigmatization of the victims mainly exacerbated by cultural beliefs that encouraged men’s violence toward women. At the inception of the AAA project, Adilang Sub County had the highest incidences of alcohol abuse in Agago district. Revelers mostly men left their homes as early as

6:00 am seeking for alcohol. Farming was left to women and children as men spent most of the day either consuming alcohol or drunk. This was hampering development efforts in the community. In the first month of the project intervention for example, there were 83 cases of alcohol related domestic violence cases (husbands and wives fights) reported at the Sub County Community Development Office. Child neglect and abuse cases alone engineered by alcohol abuse reported at Adilang sub county police post were ninety seven. A survey conducted by IAS in 5 select primary schools revealed that 114 pupils had dropped out of school due to alcohol related trends. The project was thus geared towards addressing alcohol abuse from the supply side by empowering women involved in the production and sale of alcohol with alternative means of livelihoods, on one hand and engag-

ing men as key actors in mitigation of violence. The youth were also targeted because they were the group most prone to alcohol abuse.

“...Farming was left to women and children as men spent most of the day either consuming alcohol or drunk....”

Project Objectives

1. Enhanced food and income security at household level through enterprise diversification in Agago and Abim Districts
2. Improved social welfare following behavioural change due to increased capacity of the community to critically analyse the impact of various commercial enterprises on their lives and taking corrective action.

A baseline survey was conducted in Adilang Sub County to determine the status of impact of alcohol production and consumption. This was followed by nine sensitization campaigns on the dangers of alcohol to human health, families and social life. Thirty six trigger¹ and dialogue meetings² were held in nine villages. Eighteen saving groups with twenty five members each were formed, supported with startup packages³ to simulate and facilitate alternative IGA's. The saving groups received training on record keeping and credit and saving to enhance effectiveness and performance. Training for group leaders on leadership and group dynamics were also conducted. Four advocacy meetings were held with community leaders and other development partners to rally their support against alcohol abuse and the passing of by-laws that prohibit the sale and drinking of alcohol during certain hours of the day.



¹ Trigger meetings were gatherings held to enhance understanding on how alcohol led to degeneration of lives, families and communities; and to develop direction and actions to mitigate the impacts of alcohol.

² Dialogue meetings were community gatherings held to educate participants to refrain from buying alcohol and to explore invest opportunities.

³ Startup packages were funds given to VSLAs to boost their savings from group members could borrow at an interest.



Fighting Alcoholism in Schools

Many students in secondary schools and pupils in upper primary in Adilang Sub-county were consuming alcohol. This was affecting their academic performance and morals. Adilang secondary school's situation was worsened by the absence of perimeter fence and dormitories for the male students. These students often went to consume alcohol in guise of going to their rented rooms in neighboring communities. Since locally brewed alcohol was readily available and culturally acceptable, it was common for students to meet their alcohol needs after classes by placing their orders with the brewer before going for school. Drunken male students were often rowdy and would loiter around the compound and disturbing those that were studying in class. Mr Omara Radic Kwin-to a Biology and Chemistry teacher mentioned that time and again some boys would go to the girls' dormitory and harass them. 'Two students were expelled for the same reasons' he said. It is with this background

that IAS intervened in schools with the AAA project. IAS conducted sensitization campaigns on the dangers of alcohol consumption in Adilang Secondary School, Namabili Primary School and Ciga ciga P/S with 454 (260 Boys and 194 Girls) reached. With support from the Uganda police, these platforms were also used to address issues on sexuality, HIV/AIDS and crime prevention. As a result, of the intervention in Adilang school management at Adilang secondary was able to engage students in extra curricula activities such as sports, debating clubs, IGAs including vegetable gardening. Students' clubs like Patriotism club, Young Christian students (YCS), Scripture Union (SU), Young farmers, Holy family that mentors girls and Straight talk club were either initiated or revived as a means of keep students engaged. "Today all students know that consumption of alcohol in or outside the school is an offence. Teachers are also not allowed to come to school drunk or with

sachets of alcohol on them" Madam Aool Sarah the senior woman teacher from Adilang Secondary School mentioned. Much of the progress was registered among students whose parents were willing and able to accommodate their children within the school premises. This enhanced students' discipline at school curbed their frequent loitering in communities and possibilities of access to alcohol especially during the school term.

"...progress was registered among students whose parents were willing and able to accommodate their children within the school premises..."

Drawing the Line

Many residents living in Adilang Sub County are concerned about alcohol production and consumption putting their community cohesion at risk. Some have reported suffering from abuse and intimidation for speaking out, but they bravely continue to draw the line at alcohol in Adilang Sub County.







Drunk and Wasting Away

I wasted a lot of valuable time and money because of consuming alcohol. Now I know that it is possible to stop consuming alcohol when one works at it', says Odong Bosco a 30 year old resident of Lacek Kony Village, Kulaka parish. Bosco's saving culture had been stifled due to alcohol abuse. While he enjoyed alcohol, Mr. Okidi Timothy, was unhappy to see his son drunk most of the time and wasting away. 'It was sad to see him unable to support his family and incapable of meeting his obligations like his age-mates were doing'. Okidi said. "I had no time to work in my own garden as I would work in people's garden for money and later spend it on alcohol. Worse

still the hygiene and sanitation conditions around my household were very bad because I had no sanitation facilities, my children were not going to school and my food insecurity situation rendered me vulnerable. It was a miserable life for my family" Odong Bosco recalls.

It was after attending sensitization campaigns on the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption that change began to happen in Bosco's lifestyle. He soon joined a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) where his earnings (worth UGX 15,000 per day) gained from ploughing people's gardens where saved.

'When I finally stopped consuming alcohol, my biggest challenge was the loss of my friends and associates with

whom I used to meet in the drinking places; however, I hang in there'. Today life is a lot better. From my savings I have bought and stored 6 bags of sorghum waiting for prices to go up before I can sell. I hope to earn a profit of 50% per bag given the projected market rates. I am now able to plan and utilize my time well; attend church and prepare for the planting and harvesting seasons. My four children are able to go to school and the family as a whole is able to access medical care', said Bosco. Bosco was supported by IAS with startup capital that enabled him acquire a pair of oxen and an ox-plough that he uses on his farm and often hires out to other farmers in order to supplement his income.



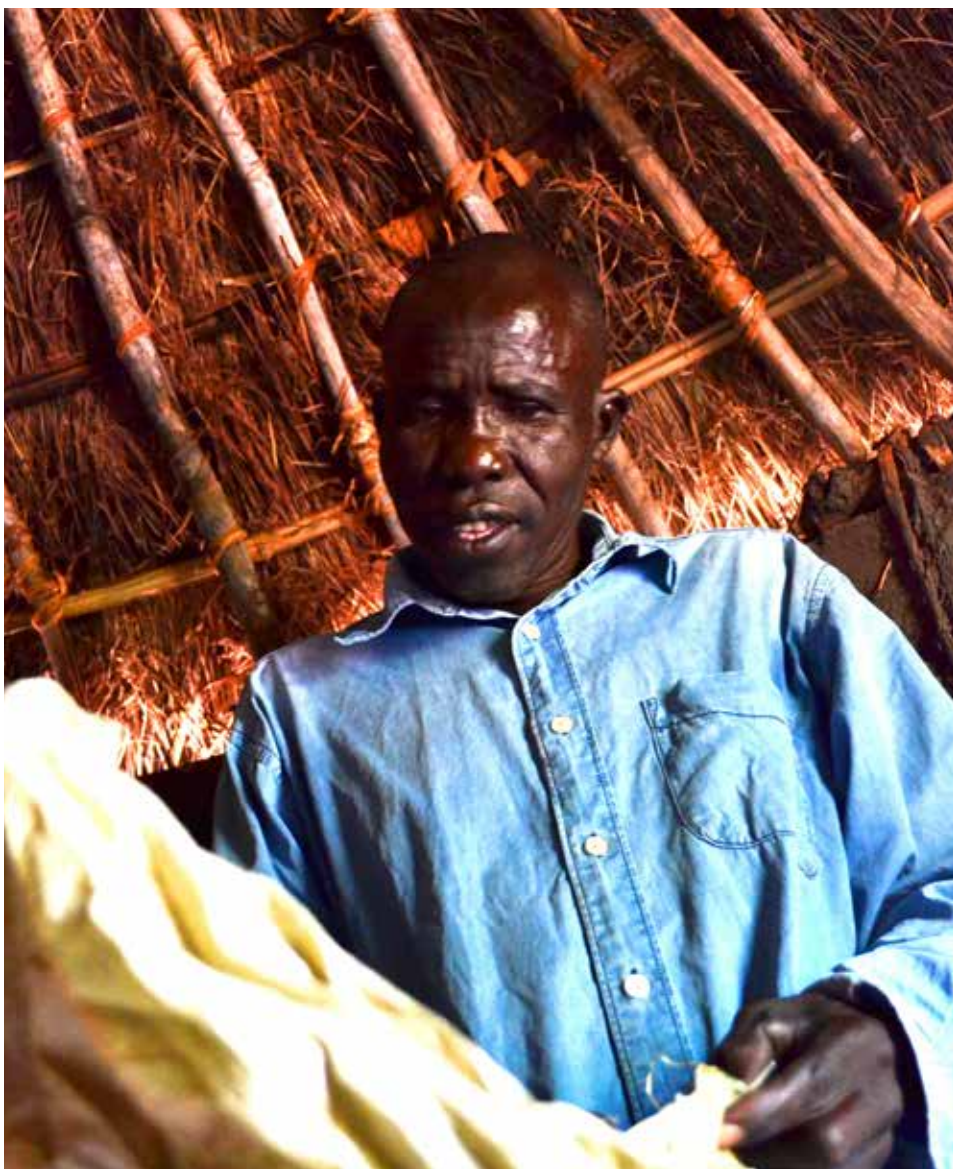
The Bitter-Sweet of Alcohol

Acen Nighty is a 48 year old mother of eight children, married to Mr Obura George and a member of Loyo Amata community group located at Okuduteyaa Village, Kulaka Parish, Adilang Sub County in Agago District. Acen used to earn her income from brewing alcohol. “My village was known for brewing alcohol in Kulaka Parish and I was among the women recognized for brewing” Nighty remembers. “As a member of a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) I would borrow money to run my brewing business. In the beginning, I borrowed UGX 30,000/= and earned about UGX 35,000/=. I continued borrowing and paying back the loans for about one year. Whereas the income earned from brewing enabled me to pay

school fees and buy clothes for my children and cater for their medical bills, my customers on the other hand could not meet their obligations! It was their children dropping out of school!” She added.

“After a while I noticed that although brewing was enabling me to cater for our necessities, my family was food insecure; much of our family produce and time was used for brewing alcohol rather than farming” She remembered. “It was the sensitizations on the dangers of alcohol production and consumption by IAS that helped me to look at alcohol brewing differently. I noticed that whereas it appeared lucrative to me, there were other various aspects of the business I had not considered. So, I stopped brewing and got engaged in little

businesses where I now sell cooking oil, paraffin and buy and resale millet in Abim market. With this business I have more time to attend my agricultural activities. From the proceeds of the business, I have been able to buy two oxen, plant two acres of Millet, two acres of Simsim, one acre of Cassava, one acre of beans, one acre of ground nuts and one hundred and fifty stems of bananas. I am so happy to say my family is now food secure”. She said excitedly. “My vision is to own an iron sheet roofed house two years from now. I have bought iron sheets already and I am planning to lay bricks by the end of this year. I am now moving forward”. Nighty concluded with a cheerful laugh.



Rescued From the ‘Paws’ of Alcohol

“Twenty years ago I thought I had found a friend that would help me unwind, have fun with my peers, ease my worries and offer solutions to all problems. I was wrong! This friend deprived me of my dignity, my family, my health, my money and left me a poor and lonely man. I watched my body waste away and my life slowly coming to an end.

That was in 1990 when I started consuming alcohol. It all started when I took refuge in Gulu district from Karamojong cattle rustlers. While in Gulu I was lured into alcohol consumption. My peers and I perceived alcohol consumption as a form of

leisure and socialization”. Tookema recalls.

“I spent a lot of my money buying alcohol for my friends. Gradually, what had started as a source of pleasure and socialization became my addiction! All I cared about was consuming alcohol at whatever cost. My earnings from trade in charcoal dwindled and I stopped attending to my garden as well. Whenever I had no cash, I would sell some of my family’s harvest like beans, ground nuts and sorghum to buy alcohol. One day, I exchanged my bicycle for alcohol! I was enslaved.” Tookema pitifully remembers. “Whenever I was under the influence of alcohol,

I was irritable and would often torture my wife and children!” Tookema recalled. “My health and hygiene had deteriorated as well. My body had foul odor; a consequence of weeks without taking a bath and not washing my clothes”. He lamented.

“The sensitization campaigns organized by International Aid Services helped me understand the health implications of alcohol consumption. I learnt how alcohol could potentially destroy my liver and kidneys. My life was falling apart; I had started experiencing chest pain every time I consumed alcohol and my wives and children had abandoned me.” Tookema added. I had to stop consuming alcohol and I did. These days I sensitize other village members to stop excessive use of alcohol. I engage drunkards in one-on-one discussions to help them appreciate the dangers of alcohol consumption. I often refer to proverbs 20:1-5 when showing them how alcohol deprives its captives of their property leaving them in the hands of death.

Although my old friends left me when I stopped consuming alcohol, I found true friendship among my family members. Life is goody since I quit drinking, there are no more fights in my house, I feed well and my hygiene has improved. My 2 wives and children have come back, we share work in the gardens and my charcoal business has picked up. We are supplementing our income by buying grain locally and reselling it in Abim market. This has enabled me to pay school fees for my children. I am no longer a slave to alcohol. Certainly not! I am a free man”. He ended with a smile.

“...I exchanged my bicycle for alcohol! I was enslaved...”



saying! For instance, all the examples the trainer made in reference to the dangers of alcohol abuse were characteristic of my family! I got so disappointed with myself and decided to stop drinking. When I stopped consuming alcohol I only realized later how productive and developmental I had become. My family and I are now working together on our farm. We are earning from our farm products especially from the sale of beans, sorghum, simsim, Chicken, ducks, goats, pigs and cows". She said with a sense of triumph.

"It was this transformation that I used to encourage my husband to quit alcohol consumption. My appeal to the people in my community is to renounce alcohol because it destroys families. I encourage them to invest in their children's education in order to secure bright futures for them. I implore married couples to desist from alcohol consumption because it destroys families. If this advice is acted upon, we will be able to develop our homes and our country at large". Margaret concluded.

Alcohol a Silent Destroyer

"When I find alcohol, I drink to finish and when I drink, I hate everyone including myself". Margaret Ajwang recalls her rhetoric when she was addicted to alcohol consumption. "I was once a very well thought-out woman and lived well with my husband and eight children. We enjoyed each other's company; planning and working together. We were able to meet our bills; pay school fees for our children and feed them." She recalled. This changed drastically when I started consuming alcohol in 2013. I no longer tilled the land and as a result we were unable to produce food, maintain children in school and

worst of all, my husband got involved in extra marital affairs. All these rendered our family hopeless. I often fought with my husband whenever we were drunk and the children were no longer attending school as we were unable to pay their school fees. We were becoming food insecure. Whenever we harvested, the food was little. My husband and I regularly fought over the harvest because we wanted to sell it in order to spend the money on alcohol". Margaret remembers. "When IAS organized sensitization meetings on the dangers of alcohol abuse in our village, I was surprised to hear what the trainers were

"...all the examples the trainer made in reference to the dangers of alcohol abuse were characteristic of my family! .."





Seeing the soils for the food

The soils in Adilang are rich in fertility, but alcohol production is a major threat. Agriculture accounts for over 80% household income. People are lured into alcohol production but this is not sustainable in many cases. Around Adilang, IAS is working with communities to establish gardens and small business as an alternative means to livelihood.

Consultations with Leaders

IAS staff meeting with the Local Council Chairperson in Adilang Sub County. The Sub County that is under threat from alcoholism passed an ordinance that seeks to regulate the production, transportation and consumption of alcohol.





Mr. Okot
LC 3 Chairman
Adilang Sub County

The Role of Leaders in Curbing Alcohol Abuse

Mr. Okot, the LC 3 chairman of Adilang sub county recognizes that the use and abuse of alcohol is a common phenomenon in the entire Acholi Sub region of Uganda that was largely worsened by Post war trauma. As the political head of Adilang sub county, Mr. Okot traces the surge of alcohol abuse to the insurgence period when people were concentrated in Internally Displaced People's (IDPs) Camps. "Most people started consuming alcohol to avert fear and suppress agony brought about by the war. However, it has taken eight years after the war to realize the magnitude and effects of alcohol abuse", he said.

While Adilang Sub County had benefited from interventions such as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Education, Food Security and Livelihood, progress on these interventions were faced with retardation in communities prone to

alcohol abuse. "Although the people of Adilang are farmers, men often sat in trading centers such as Adilang and Ligiligi, consuming alcohol. it is for this reason that mothers usually withdrew their children from schools to help in the gardens. This partly contributed to the low enrollment, attendance and completion rates of girls in Primary school as compared to the boys. Mr. Okot explained.

According to Mr. Okot there has been transformation especially in Loi village owing to reduction in alcohol production and consumption as a result of interventions by IAS. "The strategy that IAS used was to bring alcohol consumers and brewers together in groups and train them on enterprise selection. They later supported them with startup packages to venture into other alternative income generating activities like trading in

farm produce, selling of cooking oil, Kerosene, soap, sugar etc", he said.

Due to the severity of alcohol abuse in Agago district an ordinance was passed to deter importation of potent gin commonly known as 'Lira- Lira'. The ordinance also provided for the levying of high taxes worth UGX 30,000/= per 20 Liter jerican of potent gin. It also regulated hours for consumption of alcohol, limiting it to five hours a day that is from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Even though the ordinance was welcomed by the community, it still faces implementation challenges. For example, there are no revenue collectors and by-law enforcers. Adilang Sub- County has 7 parishes with only 3 Parish chiefs, one police post with one Police officer! This makes law enforcement an overwhelming task. Even with these challenges, some progress is being registered. For example, there is growing understanding on the implications of alcohol abuse in the community and several individuals continue finding freedom from alcohol addiction. Some of these are voluntarily serving as change agents in their own communities.

"...Most people started consuming alcohol to avert fear and suppress agony brought about by the war. ..."





Visits of Encouragement

IAS staff share a light moment with community members in Adilang during a field visit. Community visits play a key role in the fight against alcoholism and are particularly important in encouraging people that have chosen to walk out of alcohol addiction to triumph.

It Was Worth Every Effort

Story as told by Abel Murungu - IAS
Community Development Officer

When I joined IAS two years ago, I was particularly excited because the move was a big leap in my career. From my first visit to the community, however, I quickly learnt that I had a challenge before me. The sight of drunken women zigzagging their way back home stained my memory. I later learnt that I was going to work in a community where alcohol was largely compared to food, a source of socialization and a culturally adored phenomenon! From the onset, it was understandable for me, why these communities considered this action against alcohol project as a mission impossible.

Their pessimism was justified indeed! Statistics from the baseline survey were alarming; two people had died because of alcohol. One of them committed suicide while the other was knocked down by a vehicle. There were sixteen cases of domestic violence and fifty four cases of child abuse reported to Adilang police post in one month alone as a result of alcoholism. It was common for people to start consumption alcohol as early as 7:00am in Adilang Sub County!

With constant sensitization campaigns on the dangers of alcohol abuse, coupled with testimonies from community members who had stopped consuming alcohol, some community members got to realize the threat of the vice on their families. Leaders like Area Councilors and the Police were involved in these community meetings and highlighted how alcohol had contributed to increased crime rates such as theft, assaults and sexual abuse. Although potent gin (Sachets) and Crude Waragi (Lira Lira) are still in circulation and remain readily and cheaply available today, change started happening but only in very small ways. Lives changing one at a time and soon families transformed one at a time.

When I see the progress attained to date; improved wellbeing of individuals and their households, I am filled with a lot of joy, fulfillment and hope. It was worth every effort! I am confident that with relevant legislation to control production and consumption of alcohol and improved attitude change in the community, tomorrow's generation will certainly be saved from alcohol abuse.





Abel Murungu
IAS Community
Development Officer



Lessons Learnt

- While sensitisation was critical in stimulating discussions and dialogue against alcohol abuse, these only serve as a starting point. The lesson learnt is that sensitisation interventions require action oriented follow up interventions to support the change in attitude and practice required of communities.
- Sustainability of actions against alcohol ultimately rest on the willingness and commitment of alcohol addicts and abusers to participate in their own transformation.
- Communities are willing to forsake alcohol production and consumption when they are knowledgeable of the real health, social and economic implications associated to the practice.
- Community buy-in of ordinances and by-laws that regulate production and consumption of alcohol is easily achieved when affected communities are consulted and participate in the formulation process.
- Incentives are critical in encouraging alcohol producers to seek alternative sources of income. Initiatives that yield quick or daily returns are more appealing and suitable especially in the beginning. Training, mentoring and coaching on managing these new initiatives is required to support business continuity.
- Establishment of methods to support persons walking out of alcohol addiction are necessary in sustaining their success. Initiatives such as mobilising them in groups or association for business or investment boosts their morale, self esteem and inspires them to explore opportunities for their own well-being.
- Enhancing the capacities of already existing community structures such as VSLAs is essential for building coherence and resilience in nurturing of IGAs for persons walking out of alcohol addiction.





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