

The WHO Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol

Dr Vladimir Poznyak

**Coordinator, Management of Substance Abuse
Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse**

WHO National Counterparts for Alcohol Policy and AMPHORA
expert joint meeting, Madrid, 16 June 2010



**World Health
Organization**

**Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse
(Director – Dr Shekhar Saxena)**

Management of Substance Abuse

Dag Rekve

Nicolas Clark

Alexandra Fleischmann

Isy Vromans

Daniela Fuhr

Tess Narciso

Mylène Schreiber



**World Health
Organization**

63rd World Health Assembly (17-21 May, 2010)

Adopted the
resolution
WHA63.13
"Global strategy to
reduce the
harmful use of
alcohol"

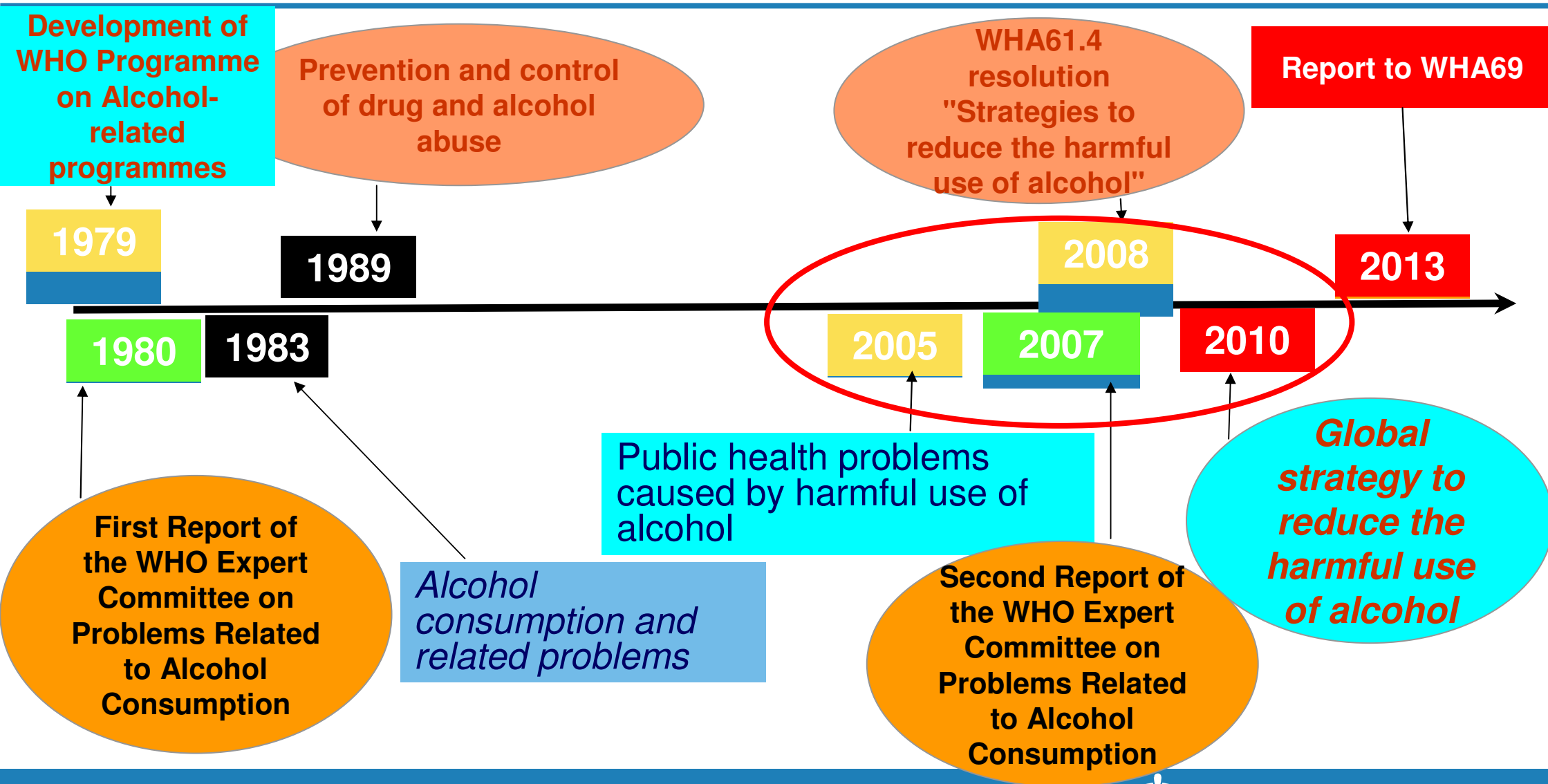


WHA63.13 resolution "Global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol"

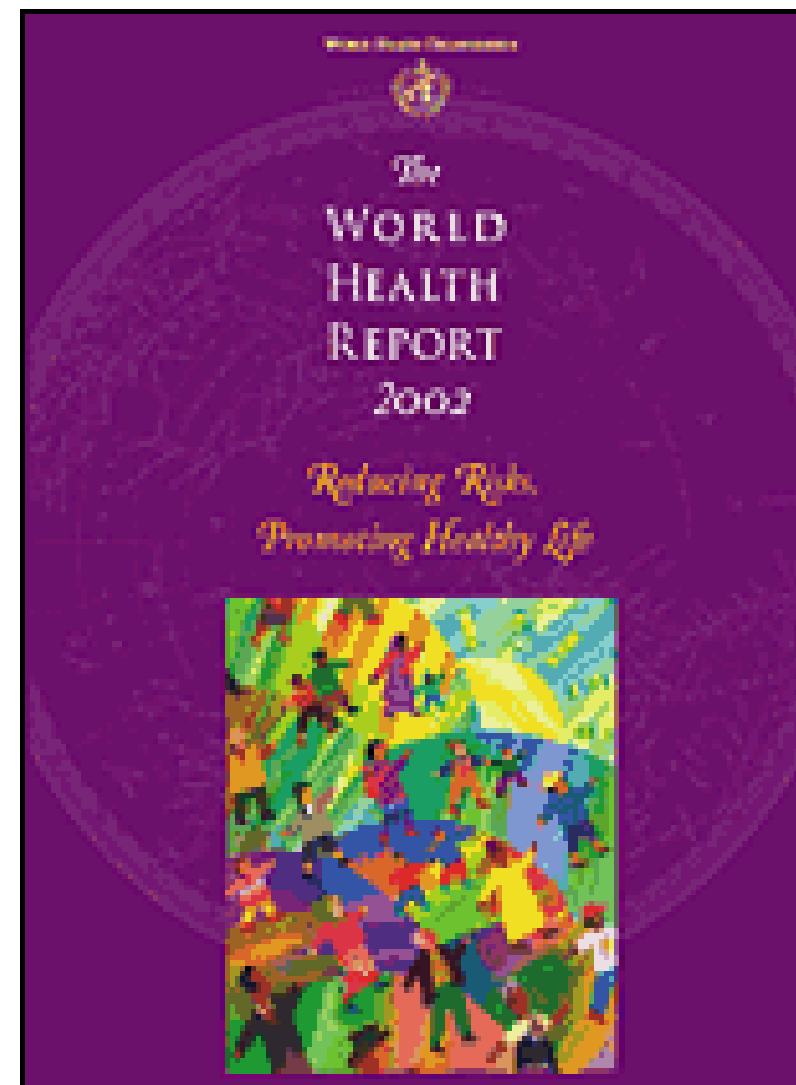
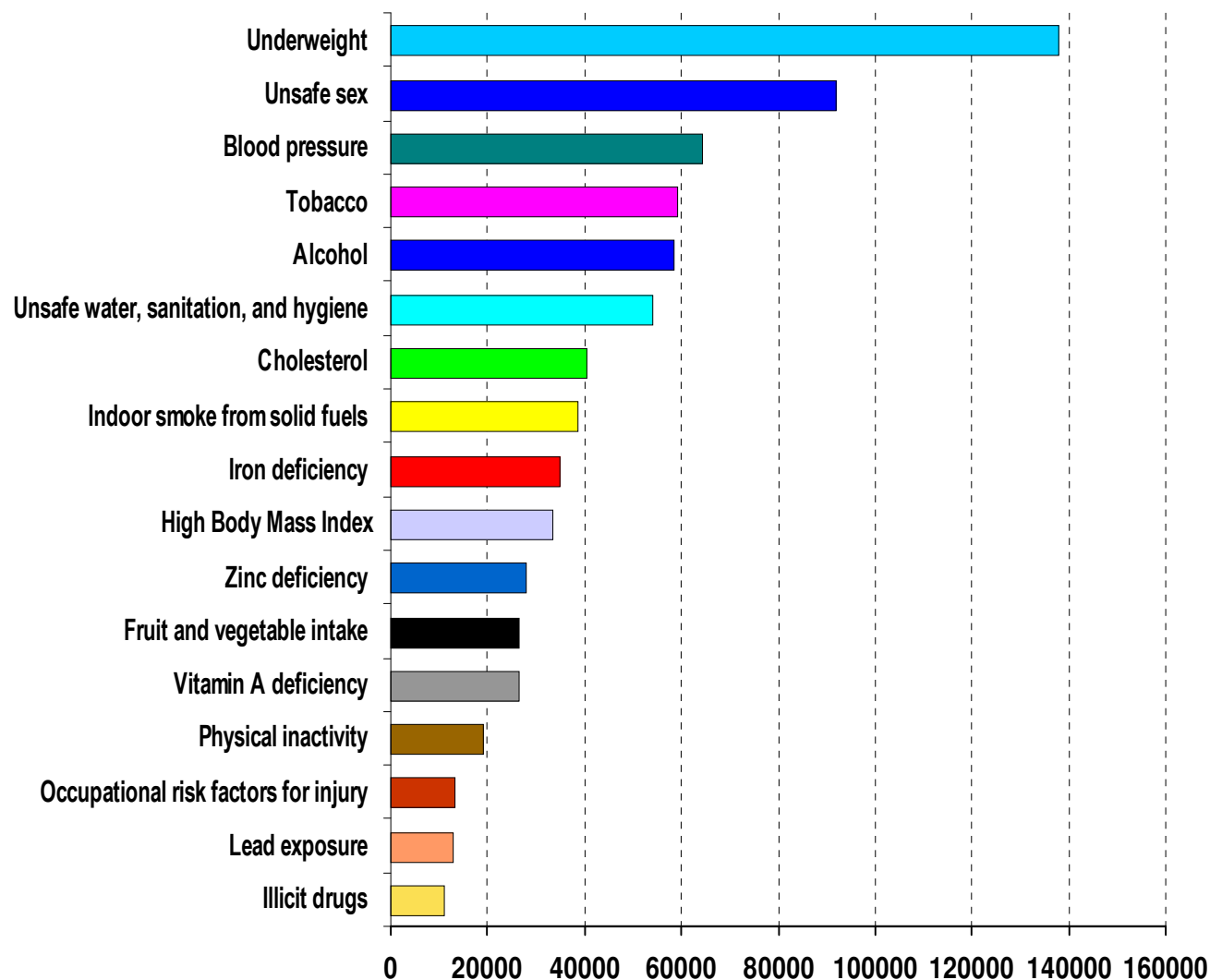
1. ENDORSES the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;
2. AFFIRMS that the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol aims to give guidance for action at all levels and to set priority areas for global action, and that it is a portfolio of policy options and measures...



World Health Assembly resolutions and WHO EC Reports addressing alcohol-related problems



A bit of history: World Health Report 2002



WHA resolutions preceding development of WHO global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol

- 2004: Health promotion and healthy lifestyles (WHA57.16)
 - Requested a report on the Organization's future work on alcohol consumption
- 2005 (58th WHA): Public health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol (WHA58.26)
 - Requested:
 - to report to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly on evidence-based strategies and interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm...;
 - to draw up recommendations for effective policies and interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm... .



60th WHA: no consensus among MS on a global strategy to reduce harmful use of alcohol

- April 2007: Report by the Secretariat "Evidence-based and interventions to reduced alcohol-related harm" with addendum "Global assessment of public health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol" submitted to the 60th WHA through the EB.
- May 2007: 60th WHA considered the report of the Secretariat and the drafts of a resolution proposed by Member States. Without a consensus on the texts it was decided that an item entitled "Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol" and related documents discussed at the Health Assembly should be included in the agenda of the Executive Board at its 122nd session to be held in January 2008, and requested the Director-General, in the interim, to continue her work on this matter.
- May 2007: 121st Executive Board considered and noted the Second Report of the WHO Expert Committee on Problems Related to Alcohol Consumption



Request for a draft global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol

- January 2008: 122nd EB considered the report of the Secretariat "Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol" and recommends to the 61st WHA adoption of the resolution calling for preparing the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol (resolution EB122.R2)
- March 2008: Report of the Secretariat "Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol" and the draft resolution submitted to the 61st WHA 122nd EB
- May 2008: 61st WHA considered the report of the Secretariat and adopted the resolution calling for preparing the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol (resolution WHA61.4)



Process for implementing the WHA 61.4 resolution and preparing a draft global strategy

Stage I. Broad consultation process (October – December 2008)

- Web-based consultation (WHO public hearings) with Member States and other stakeholders on ways of reducing harmful use of alcohol (3 October 2008 till 15 November 2008)
- Round table meeting with economic operators on ways they could contribute to reducing harmful use of alcohol (6 November 2008)
- Round table meeting with NGOs and health professionals on ways they could contribute to reducing harmful use of alcohol (24-25 November 2008)
- Consultation with intergovernmental organizations (8 September 2009)



Stage II. Draft strategy development

- Discussion paper "Towards a global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol" (December 2008)
- Regional technical consultations with Member States (February – April 2009) in 6 WHO regions
- Working document for developing a draft global strategy to reduce harmful use of alcohol (August 2009, in 6 languages)
- Feedback on the working document from MS (September 2009) and informal consultation with Member States (8 October 2009)
- Development of a draft global strategy (October-November 2009) and its submission to the Sixty-third World Health Assembly through the EB (December 2009, in 6 languages)



126th Executive Board Meeting

Discussions on the draft global strategy were pursued in an open-ended informal working group (co-chaired by Cuba and Sweden) during the Board session, and consensus was reached on a revised text. The Board adopted resolution EB126.R11 where it recommends the World Health Assembly to endorse the draft global strategy.



Global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol: content

- Setting the scene
- Challenges and opportunities
- Aims and objectives
- Guiding principles
- National policies and measures
- Policy options and interventions
- Global action: key roles and components
- Implementing the strategy



Global strategy: vision and aims

- **Vision:** improved health and social outcomes for individuals, families and communities, with considerably reduced morbidity and mortality *due to harmful use of alcohol* and their ensuing social consequences.
- The global strategy **aims** to give guidance for action at all levels; to set priority areas for global action; and to recommend a portfolio of policy options and measures *that could be considered for implementation* and adjusted as appropriate at the national level, taking into account national circumstances, such as religious and cultural contexts, national public health priorities, as well as resources, capacities and capabilities.



Global strategy: objectives

- (a) raised global awareness of the magnitude and nature of the health, social and economic problems caused by harmful use of alcohol, and increased commitment by governments to act to address the harmful use of alcohol;
- (b) strengthened knowledge base on the magnitude and determinants of alcohol-related harm and on effective interventions to reduce and prevent such harm;
- (c) increased technical support to, and enhanced capacity of, Member States for preventing the harmful use of alcohol and managing alcohol-use disorders and associated health conditions;
- (d) strengthened partnerships and better coordination among stakeholders and increased mobilization of resources required for appropriate and concerted action to prevent the harmful use of alcohol;
- (e) improved systems for monitoring and surveillance at different levels, and more effective dissemination and application of information for advocacy, policy development and evaluation purposes.



Guiding principles (1)

- (a) Public policies and interventions to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm should be guided and formulated by public health interests and based on clear public health goals and the best available evidence.
- (b) Policies should be equitable and sensitive to national, religious and cultural contexts.
- (c) All involved parties have the responsibility to act in ways that do not undermine the implementation of public policies and interventions to prevent and reduce harmful use of alcohol.
- (d) Public health should be given proper deference in relation to competing interests and approaches that support that direction should be promoted.



Guiding principles (2)

- (e) Protection of populations at high risk of alcohol-attributable harm and those exposed to the effects of harmful drinking by others should be an integral part of policies addressing the harmful use of alcohol.
- (f) Individuals and families affected by the harmful use of alcohol should have access to affordable and effective prevention and care services.
- (g) Children, teenagers and adults who choose not to drink alcohol beverages have the right to be supported in their non-drinking behaviour and protected from pressures to drink.
- (h) *Public policies and interventions to prevent and reduce alcohol related harm should encompass all alcoholic beverages and surrogate alcohol.*



Global action: key components

- Public health advocacy and partnership
- Technical support and capacity building
- Production and dissemination of knowledge
- Resource mobilization



Recommended target areas for policy measures and interventions

1. Leadership, awareness and commitment
2. Health services' response
3. Community action
4. Drink-driving policies and countermeasures
5. Availability of alcohol
6. Marketing of alcoholic beverages
7. Pricing policies
8. Reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication
9. Reducing the public health impact of illicit alcohol and informally produced alcohol
10. Monitoring and surveillance



Implementing the strategy

- Concerted action by Member States
- Effective global governance
- Appropriate engagement of all relevant stakeholders



Links and interfaces with other strategies, plans and programmes

- Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region and other regional alcohol policy frameworks
- Global strategy for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases
- Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health
- Tobacco control
- Health promotion and healthy lifestyle
- Cancer prevention and control
- Mental Health Gap Action Programme...



Monitoring progress and reporting mechanisms

- Appropriate mechanisms at different levels for assessment, reporting and re-programming
- Impact-focused perspective
- Global Information System on Alcohol and Health (GISAH) and WHO's Global Survey on Alcohol and Health as important parts
- Regular meetings of global and regional networks of national counterparts
- Regular reports to WHO regional committees and the Health Assembly. Information about implementation and progress should also be presented at regional or international forums and appropriate intergovernmental meetings.



WHA63.13 URGES Member States*:

- (1) to adopt and implement the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol as appropriate in order to complement and support public health policies in Member States to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, and to mobilize political will and financial resources for that purpose;
- (2) to continue implementation of the resolutions WHA61.4 on the strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and WHA58.26 on public-health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol;

** And regional economic integration organizations, where applicable.*



WHA63.13 URGES Member States (continued):

- (3) to ensure that implementation of the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol strengthens the national efforts to protect at-risk populations, young people and those affected by harmful drinking of others;
- (4) to ensure that implementation of the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol is reflected in the national monitoring systems and reported regularly to WHO's information system on alcohol and health;



WHA63.13 REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to give sufficiently high organizational priority, ***and to assure adequate financial and human resources at all levels***, to the prevention and reduction of harmful use of alcohol and implementation of the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;



WHA63.13 REQUESTS the Director-General (continued):

- (2) to collaborate with and provide support to Member States, as appropriate, in implementing the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and strengthening national responses to public health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol;
- (3) to monitor progress in implementing the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and to report progress, through the Executive Board, to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly.



Do we have a quick and universal way of reducing the harmful use of alcohol globally?

"For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat..."



Do we have a quick and universal way of reducing the harmful use of alcohol globally?

"For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat and wrong."

(H.L. Menchen)



Will the strategy solve the global problem of the harmful use of alcohol?

"All the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insolvable. They can never be solved, but only outgrown."

Carl Jung

WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Management of Substance Abuse

Thank you!

http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/

