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SOCIETY OF
SUBSTANCE USE
PROFESSIONALS

NIGERIA chapter



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NIGERIAN SOCIETY OF SUBSTANCE USE
PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROFESSIONALS

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE / GENERAL MEETING OF THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY OF SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROFESSIONALS (ISSUP NIGERIA CHAPTER)

Theme
**SUBSTANCE ABUSE: RE-AWAKENING
NIGERIANS TO ITS REALITY**

Venue
Chelsea Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria



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On the 26th of October 2021, the Nigerian Society of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment professionals (ISSUP Nigeria Chapter) held her 3rd Annual Conference and General Meeting. This august event brought together practitioners, experts, stakeholders, and advocates of drug control for a critical examination of drug demand reduction efforts in Nigeria. The conference combined expert lectures by specialists, with panel discussion on the challenges and opportunities Nigeria drug demand reduction effort is currently grappling with.

The objectives of this conference were threefold:

1. To bring awareness to both the magnitude and the dimensions of substance use in Nigeria and to mobilize both the government and the citizens to take action;
2. To foster discussion and strengthen connections between experts, stakeholders and policymakers in Nigeria in order to provide sustainable solutions to the problems of substance use;
3. To promote and encourage the importance of effective system of drug demand reduction in sustaining Nigeria's human capital, social and economic development.

The conference was structured to foster discussion between participants around the core theme of Substance Abuse: Re-Awakening Nigerians to Its Reality.

The conference had local and international dignitaries which included the First lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs) Aisha M. Buhari who was the Special Guest of Honour and represented by Her Excellency Haj. Mrs. Mairo Almakura; The honourable Minister of Health, Dr. Osagie E. Ehanire, represented by Farida Tukur, Assistant Director, Narcotics and Drug Abuse, Federal Ministry of Health; The Chairman/CEO, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Brig. Gen. Mohammed B. Marwa (Rtd), OFR represented by the Director, Drug Demand Reduction, Dr. Ngozi Anthonia Madubuiké; Her Excellency Amira Elfadil Mohammed, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, Africa Union Commission, virtually represented by Dr. Abel Basutu, Senior Drug Control Officer, African Union Commission; Dr. Sigar Fatima Jange, the Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender represented by Dr. Olubusayo Akinila, Program Officer DDR, ECOWAS Commission; The Country Director, INL in Nigeria, Jason Smith; William J. McGlynn, INL United States, attended virtually from the United States; Joanna Travis-Roberts, Chief Executive ISSUP Global, attended virtually from United Kingdom; Dr. Ahmed Abubakar Audi, Commandant General Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), represented by CNDT. Janet Elor; Dr. Boboye Oyeyemi MFR, mni, The Corp Marshal Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) represented by DCC A. N. Uzor; CP Babaji Sunday, The FCT Commissioner of Police represented by CSP Abdulahi Abubakar Hassan among other dignitaries. All the dignitaries presented remarks, goodwill messages and commitment to collaboration with ISSUP in the area of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery and research.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, NIGERIAN SOCIETY OF SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROFESSIONALS (ISSUP NIGERIA CHAPTER) AT THE 3RD CONFERENCE/ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION – OCTOBER 26, 2021, ABUJA

I am delighted to welcome you all to the third conference/annual general meeting of the Nigerian Society of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Professionals (ISSUP Nigeria Chapter). This noble Association was formally inaugurated on the 17th of October, 2019. With just two years of its existence, the Association has become a body to reckon with in the field of drug demand reduction in Nigeria. This recognition is not unconnected with the professionalism with which ISSUP discharge its responsibilities, collaboration across board, and nondiscriminatory membership criteria; bearing in mind that everyone has a role to play in addressing the issues of substance use and abuse. It is in recognition of this broad involvement in drug control efforts that we carefully chose the theme for this conference which is “Substance Abuse: Re-awakening Nigerians to its reality”.

The choice of this theme is also another way of sending a very strong message that Nigeria is in crisis of substance use and abuse, which is threatening the fabrics of the nation. Thus, the society needs to be awakened to this stark reality. We are aware of the Federal Government initiative in this direction with the recent launch of War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) by the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR and being championed by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). This initiative by the Federal Government is highly commendable. Therefore, on behalf of ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, I formally declare our support for WADA. This declaration is based on our understanding that the mandate of WADA is not a declaration of war against persons who use drugs but a

collective resolve to frontally address the issue of substance use and abuse in our dear nation. A clarion call to everyone to join the crusade to wage war against the impending dangers of substance abuse and a call to promote a culture of substance use prevention through family engagement, community coalitions and stakeholders' collaboration.



Dr. Martin. O. Agwogie, delivering the welcome address

community levels and across higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. This is not the time to sit on the fence. We must all take our destiny and the future of this nation in our hands. Permit me to add that this declaration is in line with one of our objectives, which is to collaborate, build positive relationship with government, local and international organisations towards effective drug control in Nigeria. Beyond this, let me also say that ISSUP is already collaborating with the NDLEA as members of the Special Purpose Committee of the Chairman/Chief Executive officer. We are also working with the Federal Ministry of Health to address the issue of underage and harmful consumption of alcohol. Similar collaboration is ongoing with other stakeholders in different areas.

Let me also place on record that the present crisis of substance use in Nigeria calls for sober reflection and as such not a time to call for the legalisation of cannabis. Therefore, we maintain our position of “No to cannabis legalisation in Nigeria”. We need not complicate an already bad situation with cannabis legalisation. No doubt, there are medicinal and economic values that can be extracted from the cannabis plant, but these are not without alternatives. Moreover, the economic benefits should not overshadow the health and social

consequences. This position, notwithstanding, the government should be open to discussions on cannabis issues, make all psychoactive substances, including cannabis plant, available for scientific purposes and continue with the drug use decriminalisation agenda.

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the past one year has been challenging. That notwithstanding, ISSUP Nigeria Chapter recorded some progress in line with its objectives. In my welcome address at the formal inauguration of the Association, I stated, "... we are in collaboration with relevant stakeholders towards the introduction of substance use prevention, treatment and policy as a standard international course of study in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. ... In few years from now, we shall have addiction studies being offered from first degree to doctoral levels. The resultant workforce will have sound theoretical and research background that would enhance evidence-based interventions to address the burden of drug issues that affect segments in our great nation". Just two years after this declaration, I am pleased to announce that two universities in Nigeria have approved post graduate courses in addiction studies. The benefits of this will begin to manifest in few years from now. It is our strong belief that this is one of the ways to go.

ISSUP's vision towards addressing the threat of substance abuse in Nigeria is to build a united, trained, skilled, knowledgeable, and effective multidisciplinary national network of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery professionals and researchers to undertake and promote high quality evidence-based interventions and policies. This is our call and collectively, we shall achieve this goal. I therefore call on everyone to support this vision, join stakeholders as we work together to find contextualized, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions to the menace of substance abuse and related problems in Nigeria. We also call for the professionalisation of drug demand reduction in Nigeria through comprehensive capacity building,

credentialing/certification and establishment of Drug Demand Reduction Regulatory Council to enhance evidence-based practices.

Ladies and gentlemen, at this conference we shall be listening to lectures from experts in this field, panel discussion, remarks/goodwill messages from some of our local and international partners and listen to our Guests of Honour. We will also recognise some of our colleagues who have done excellently well in the discharge of their responsibilities. In addition, we shall be presenting an award to Her Excellency, the First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari as "Amazon for a Drug Free Nigeria" in recognition of her contributions towards a drug free nation.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Executive Council and members of ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, I wish to express appreciation to our local and international partners and our sponsors for all the support. And to everyone, those who are here with us physically and those who joined online. Once again, I welcome you all to this conference.

Thank you

*Martin O. Agwogie, PhD, MBA, PGD (Hospt. Mgt.),
ICAP 11*

National President, ISSUP Nigeria Chapter


*Season's
Greetings*

*From all of us at
ISSUP Nigeria Chapter*

I am delighted to be invited to the 2021 Annual Conference / General meeting of the Nigerian Chapter of the International Society of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Professionals (ISSUP Nigeria). Let me use this opportunity to thank the National President, Dr Martin Agwogie, and his team for putting together this event that is geared towards creating awareness to the reality and dangers of substance abuse in Nigeria. This demonstrates a great example of the efforts of non-governmental organisations towards addressing the increasing menace of substance abuse in Nigeria.

As you all know, the theme for this year's conference is "Substance Abuse: Re-Awakening Nigerians to its Reality". This theme is timely as it underscores the importance of recognising and addressing the problem of substance abuse in our country. Indeed, substance abuse has become a public health problem



reality.

It is regrettable that the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use revealed that the prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria is about three times the global average. The report further revealed that majority of drug users who developed drug use disorders, were unable to access medical treatment largely due to stigma and unavailability of treatment facilities. This presents a challenge to Nigeria's already stressed healthcare system. Thus, while prevention and early detection strategies to curb the incidence of substance abuse is our first line of defence, there is an obvious need to strengthen our healthcare system to proactively respond and provide healthcare services to those in need of treatment.

In addition, we must also continue to recognise that drug abuse is a public health problem not necessarily a criminal justice problem. Decriminalising drug use while implementing strict laws on drug trafficking is the way to go.

The increasing cases of drug abuse has always been a source of great concern to me. Drug abuse hurts relationships, families, and communities. No mother will want to see her children suffer from the various health consequences of substance abuse such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, addiction, or even untimely death. Every mother will want their children to attain high educational status, secure and keep great jobs as well as overcome financial instability and poverty and live their lives free of violence and

crime.

Similarly, Nigeria cannot afford to keep losing its teeming youth to such a menace and expect the younger generation to provide quality leadership and excel in innovative enterprises that will advance our society for the better. As such, I call on all parents across the country to support and promote the implementation of policies and programmes that focus on strengthening strong family values that represent the moral foundation needed to nurture our children through proper parental guidance, attending to their needs and guiding them properly to adulthood. Irrespective of our economic pursuits, as parents and as community members, we have fundamental roles to play; fathers and mothers must create time and opportunities to take care of their children, communities should take back their responsibilities where every other member is his brothers' keeper.

Furthermore, we must continue to create an environment that discourages people from seeing drug abuse as an alternative or as a solution. As stakeholders, we must continue to call for the provision of quality and affordable free education at an early age to at least secondary school level for every child. We also must call on our political leaders, key opinion leaders as well as our celebrities to be mindful of the dangers of substance abuse and abstain from promoting activities and contents that suggest the abuse of drugs as an acceptable practice as against the reality that they are unsafe and unhealthy. We must also create the needed environment that promotes productivity and job opportunities in order to effectively engage our young ones and set them on a part towards prosperity.

It is my understanding that these recommendations are in line with internationally recognised evidence-based drug abuse prevention strategies that focus on reducing risk factors and enhance protective factors to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

My office has also been leading the campaign against substance abuse including other forms of abuses that seek to destroy the very fabrics of our society.

Therefore, I call on well-meaning Nigerians to support the campaign against drug abuse and also join to create awareness of the health and socio-economic consequences of substance abuse. Let me also use this opportunity to call on our law makers to also recognise that decriminalising drug use while enacting stricter sanctions on drug dealers will go a long way to increase access to treatment for many drug users who need medical attention.

While thanking the organisers for inviting me to speak, I wish to reiterate my commitment towards advocating for a holistic approach in addressing the problem of substance abuse in Nigeria.

Thank you and God Bless.

Dr. Mrs. Aisha Buhari
First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
26 October 2021.



Her Excellency Haj. Mrs. Mairo Almakura delivering the speech of the First lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs) Aisha M. Buhari



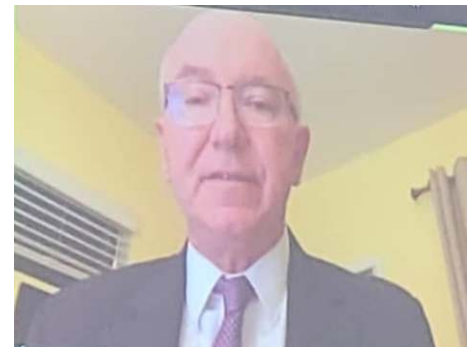
Farida Tukur representing The Honourable Minister of Health



Dr. Abel Basutu, African Union Commission. Joined from Addis Ababa



Joanna Travis-Roberts, Chief Executive ISSUP making her remarks



William J. McGlynn, INL United States, attended virtually from the United States



Dr. Olubusayo Akinila, ECOWAS Commission



The Country Director, INL in Nigeria, Mr. Jason Smith making his remarks



CNDT Janet Elor of the NSCDC



Dr. Ngozi A. Madubuiké representing the Chairman/ Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA



Prof. Michael Ezenwa

Lecture 1 - Substance abuse and the current social and economic situation in Nigeria, was presented by Prof. Michael Ezenwa of the department of Clinical Psychology, Nnamdi Azikiwe, University, Awka



Dr. Shehu Musa Dandaura

Lecture 2 – “Substance abuse: A silent catalyst to doom; Reawakening Nigerians to its doom” was presented by Dr. Shehu Musa Dandaura, CEO SMD Clinical Hypno Therapy and Consultancy.



The Vice President ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, Prof. Ibrahim Wakawa Abdu making a remark at the conference

The two speakers took turn to analyse the substance use situation in the country, drew the nexus between substance use and criminal tendencies and calls for a collaborative effort towards addressing the trend.



The panel session was moderated by Fatima Abiola Popoola, a Deputy Commander of Narcotics, NDLEA, Kaduna Command and ISSUP Kaduna Branch Coordinator. The session included the following, as panelists: Dr. Ngozi Anthonia Madubuike, Director Drug Demand Reduction, NDLEA; Prof. Michael Ezenwa, a professor of Clinical Psychology at the Department of Psychology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and the South East coordinator of ISSUP, Nigeria Chapter, Dr. Bassey Edet, MD/CEO, Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Calabar, Cross River state and Ibe Christogonus Chidiebere, Founder and CEO, AYICRIP-NELIS, a crime prevention and youth development Foundation.



The panel unanimously calls for a public health approach towards addressing the issue of substance use in Nigeria, collaboration with the government drug control agencies, the need to properly engage the youth in drug control efforts. The panel also reiterated the need for capacity building among practitioners with a view to enhancing service delivery and better understanding of the limits of the respective disciplines in the field of drug control

Panelists. From L – R Ibe Christogonus Chidiebere, Dr. Bassey Edet, Prof. Michael Ezenwa and Dr. Ngozi N. Madubuike.

One of the highpoints of the conference was the award of “Amazon for a Drug Free Nigeria” to the First lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs) Aisha M. Buhari in recognition of her contributions towards a drug free nation. Similarly, two of our colleagues who distinguished themselves in their commitments and support to ISSUP Nigeria Chapter were appreciated with an award: Professor Michael Ezenwa as the best Zonal Coordinator for the year 2021 and Ms. Fatima Abiola Popoola as the best State Coordinator for the year 2021.



Her Excellency Haj. Mrs. Mairo Almakura receiving an award on behalf of the First lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs) Aisha M. Buhari



After receiving an award by Prof. Michael Ezenwa as the best Zonal Coordinator and Letter of appointment by Mrs. Maduka Ada as a member of the Alcohol Policy Committee.



Ms. Fatima Abiola Popoola receiving her awards



Ms. Fatima Abiola Popoola celebrating her award with Dr. Ngozi N. Madubuike

The conference was unique in that it was a hybrid, seen live around the world with participants from different countries. The conference had over 200 participants, including virtual audience. Attendance and registration were free for all participants. Attendees also included local and international practitioners in the field of drug demand reduction and other stakeholders.

As part of the Annual General Meeting, the Alcohol Policy Committee with the following members was inaugurated.

- i. Pharm. Hashim Ubale Yusufu - Chairman
- ii. Mr. Olugbenga Olusanu Mabo - Vice Chairman
- iii. Dr. Arit Esangbedo
- iv. Mrs. Ibiba Odili
- v. Dr. Gloria Kakuri
- vi. Dr. Umogbai John Obozokhai
- vii. Mrs. Maduka Ada
- viii. Dr. Nkemakolam Ndionuka
- ix. Mrs. Oluchi Owunwa
- x. Mr. Ejikeme M. Ogueji - Secretary

In his inaugural remarks, the president harps on the need to review existing policies on alcohol in Nigeria and charged the committee to identify risk factors to alcohol consumption in Nigeria, barriers to alcohol policy regulations and propose effective and sustainable alcohol use prevention for the under-age population and harmful consumption for the adult population. Also to develop a partnership framework with relevant stakeholders for effective alcohol use control in Nigeria among other charges. This is aimed at providing the necessary support to the government in addressing the issue of underage and harmful consumption of alcohol.

Some members of the committee receiving their letter of appointment from the President



**The Chairman of the Committee,
Pharm. Hashim Ubale Yusufu**



**The Secretary,
Mr. Ejikeme M. Ogueji**



**A member of the Committee,
Mrs. Maduka Ada**

One of the group photographs



The President and INL Country Director, Jason Smith.



The Vice President ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, Prof. Ibrahim Wakawa Abdu (I), and the Chairman Planning and Organising Committee, Mr. Muhammed Bashir Ibrahim



Dr. and Mrs. Martin Agwogie



Ms. Fatima Abiola Popoola (l) and Dr. Olajumoke Koyejo, South West Zonal Coordinator of ISSUP Nigeria Chapter (r)



Jonah Achema, Master of Ceremony





**The General Secretary ISSUP Nigeria Chapter
Prof. Gboyega E. Abikoye**



The President, Dr. Martin O. Agwogje, interview session

