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Alcohol and Violence: No Simple Solutions

ICAP Seeks to Identify and Promote Good Practice in the Prevention of Violence

WASHINGTON, DC, 2 SEPTEMBER 2008 – The International Center for Alcohol Policies announces the release of, “Alcohol and Violence: Exploring Patterns and Responses,” a report that discusses the association between alcohol and violence.

Given that there is no simple causative relationship between alcohol consumption and violence, the report approaches this complex topic through the disciplines of anthropology, clinical psychology, human rights law, gender, and public health.

Patterns of violence at the societal level are explored in “Sociocultural Factors that Foster or Inhibit Alcohol-related Violence” and at the individual level in “The Role of Drinking Patterns and Acute Intoxication in Violent Interpersonal Behaviors.”

“Working with Culture to Prevent Violence and Reckless Drinking” looks at alcohol and violence from a gender perspective and identifies strategies used to respond to analogous social problems. This paper offers some promising opportunities for future action.

“Practical Responses: Communications Guidelines for First Responders in Cases of Alcohol-related Violence” presents international guidelines for enhanced communication among first responders (police, emergency room staff, social workers) to alcohol-related violence, particularly between the health and law enforcement sectors.

ICAP has been engaged in the relationship between alcohol and violence since 1998, including a literature review and a report on violence in licensed premises. The organization has engaged in discussions with a variety of international bodies, including the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the International Center for the Prevention of Crime, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women. In 2005, the World Bank hosted a meeting organized by ICAP and co-chaired by UNIFEM to discuss how best to move forward on the issue through some form of public-private cooperation. This report is a result of ongoing international collaboration to contribute to greater international understanding on the intersection between alcohol and violence.

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Alcohol and Violence: Exploring Patterns and Responses was commissioned by the International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP). ICAP is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote the understanding of the role of alcohol in society through dialogue and partnerships involving the beverage alcohol industry, the public health community, and others interested in alcohol policy, and to help reduce the abuse of alcohol worldwide. ICAP is supported by major international producers of beverage alcohol. The views expressed in this book are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of ICAP or of its sponsoring companies.

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