



GAPA Gender and Diversity Policy – June 2020

Introduction

GAPA was established at the Global Alcohol Policy Conference in Syracuse, NY, USA, in 2000. Over the years, the board has been male dominated, but from 2015 it was chaired by a woman. Gender balance in GAPA governing bodies and its activities (Global Alcohol Policy Conferences, GAPA delegations etc.) has been a prime consideration. At GAPC 2020 in Dublin the list of plenary speakers and panellist showed an almost 50/50 division with a small majority of women.

From the outset the GAPA Objectives included a Low- and Middle-Income Countries perspective in that it expressed the ambition to:

- *Place priority on research and advocacy regarding those parts of the world where alcohol problems are increasing; and*
- *Ensure that member groups in those areas have the technology and support capacity to participate in a global network for communication and action.*

Further the GAPA By-Laws outline that

- *The Board of trustees shall consist of up to twenty members and shall be representative of all continents.*

This Gender and Diversity Policy was passed by the GAPA Executive Board in March 2020 and includes what in many instances has been emerging practice over the years.

Gender equality and Diversity

Perspectives

GAPA recognises that gender is more than women and men, and that not everyone enjoys the same status, power or access to and control over resources. This situation is unacceptable. Principles of equity and social justice require us to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity for expressing and using their potential, irrespective of sex, gender identity and gender expression, age, race, colour, class, caste, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation or disability. Likewise, there are great differences in the resources available around the world influencing to what extent voices and perspectives from these parts of the world come forward in the global arena such as the one GAPA is involved in.

Women are less likely than men to drink around the world. Still within this pattern there are big variations, and in some parts of the world the gender gap in the prevalence of alcohol

use and heavy episodic drinking has become small or non-existent. However, elsewhere persisting cultural values still contribute to a general pattern of drinking in which men consume more alcohol and cause more problems by doing so than women. Alcohol is a causal contributor to intimate partner violence with disagreements more likely to become violent and injury to be worse if alcohol is involved. For women and children living in poverty the alcohol use by the husband and father may represent additional problems related to taking unproportioned part of the household expenditures, result in lack of income or catastrophic health expenditures.

Rationale

GAPA recognises that by not equally involving every person or excluding certain groups in its work, talents will be underutilised, and important perspectives will be lost. GAPA's work in the Global Health arena will be strengthened by bringing in voices from different backgrounds; women and men; different parts of the world; different age and professions; different cultures and religions; minority groups etc. GAPA fully commits to channelling energy, effort and resources into processes that create an organisation that values all people equally and take this commitment also into the values for the society that GAPA is promoting through its advocacy.