KENYA

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)

Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Last year abstainers

A 1990 cross-sectional survey involving 15,324 household heads, reporting on a population of 68,487 people in Kisumu district in Kenya, revealed that the reported rate of alcohol use was 6.4 per 100 study population. Out of 6793 respondents who reported at least one drug user, 66.2% were concerned with the practice. Out of these, 51.5% were concerned about alcohol use in their households.2

Frequent drinkers (focal point data)

WHO focal point data. Frequent drinking was defined as drinking on five or more days per week.3
Youth drinking (lifetime abstainers among street children)

Based on the Nairobi Urban Slum Survey, adolescent males are five times more likely to consume alcohol than girls. In addition, being out-of-school increases the risk of alcohol abuse. The study also showed an effect of age on alcohol use – the older the adolescents, the more likely for them to have used alcohol. Age 14 seems to be the threshold, as a jump is observed at this age from 6.7 to 40.2% for boys and from 4.4 to 16.8% for girls. The jump for boys is more pronounced (about six times) than for girls (about four times).5

Alcohol dependence among patients attending health centres

Traditional alcoholic beverages

_Chang‘aa_ is the distilled beverage consumed in much of Kenya, including amongst the Samburu, pastoralists living in Northern Kenya. _Chang‘aa_ can be made from a variety of grains – malted millet and malted maize being the most common. Its alcoholic content ranges from 20 to 50%. This illegal traditional liquor is produced in clandestine distilleries and drunk by people who cannot afford beer.7

_Ceus_ is the traditional beer made from finger millet malt.8

_Palm wine_ is also consumed in Kenya, especially along the coastal areas.

_Muratina_ is an alcoholic drink made from sugar-cane and muratina fruit in Kenya. The fruit is cut in half, sun-dried and boiled in water. The water is removed and the fruit sun-dried again. The fruit is added to a small amount of sugar-cane juice and incubated in a warm place. The fruit is removed from the juice after 24 hours and sun-dried. The fruit is now added to a barrel of sugar-cane juice which is allowed to ferment for between one and four days. The final product has a sour alcoholic taste.9

_Banana beer_ is made from bananas, mixed with cereal flour (often sorghum flour) and fermented to an orange, alcoholic beverage. It is sweet and slightly hazy with a shelf life of several days under correct storage conditions. _Urwaga_ banana beer is made from bananas and sorghum or millet.10

Unrecorded alcohol consumption

The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Kenya is estimated to be 5.0 litres pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts).1
consumption would be 4.18 litres of absolute alcohol per capita of the adult population. Amongst drinking males, the estimated mean annual consumption would be 14.6 litres of absolute alcohol.11

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

Of the 188 patients evaluated after a motor vehicle crash in all hospitals located in Eldoret, 23.4% were blood alcohol concentration (BAC) positive (5 mg%) and 12.2% were intoxicated (50 mg%). Greater proportions of night-time and weekend crashes involved intoxicated subjects. Motor vehicle drivers were the most affected by alcohol (60%), whereas pedestrians (33.3%), passengers (16%) and cyclists (8.3%) were involved to a lesser extent.12

A roadside survey in Eldoret of 479 drivers (aged 19 to 65 years) over a one-week period between 19:00 and 24:00 found a blood alcohol concentration level of 5 mg% or greater in 19.9% of the drivers. 8.4% had a blood alcohol concentration greater than 50 mg% and 4% had a blood alcohol concentration level of greater than 80 mg%. Virtually all drivers with blood alcohol concentrations in excess of 50 mg% were men, with age brackets most affected being 25 to 34 years and 45 to 54 years.13

The mean annual fatality rate from all traffic accidents in Kenya is estimated at 50 deaths per 10 000 registered vehicles. The annual economic cost of road traffic accidents is 5% of the country’s Gross National Product. Traffic police indicate that most road traffic accidents (85%) result from human error, comprising driving at excessive speed, losing control, improper overtaking and misjudgement. Such errors may have alcohol as the underlying contributing factor.14

A survey of women in Nairobi found that with regard to alcohol consumption, about 44% of the women reported that their partners drink alcohol. While half of the women considered their partner’s drinking habit to be of a social nature, 10% said the habit was intolerable. Women who reported that their partners drink alcohol were significantly more likely to report lifetime violence and violence in the last year. Comparing women whose partners were moderate drinkers and those with intolerable drinking, the women of intolerable drinkers had significantly higher reporting of domestic violence.15

In November 2000, at least 140 Kenyans died, many went blind and hundreds others were hospitalized after consuming an illegally brewed and poisonous liquor called kumi kumi in the poor neighbourhoods of Mukuru Kwa Njenga and Mukuru Kaiyaba. Made from sorghum, maize or millet, the alcoholic drink is common among Kenyans living in the country’s low-income urban and rural areas, who are too poor to afford conventional legal beer. Kumi kumi (a poisonous liquor) contains methanol and other additives such as car battery acid and formalin.16

Country background information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population 2003</th>
<th>31 987 000</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (2002)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>49.8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult (15+)</td>
<td>18 872 330</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>51.9</td>
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<td>% under 15</td>
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<td>Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)</td>
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<td>Population distribution 2001 (%)</td>
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<td>Urban</td>
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<td>Gross National Income per capita 2002</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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References


