LESOTHO

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)

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

Abstainers (do not drink alcohol)

From the same survey, 65\% of drinkers reported drinking traditional home-brewed beer exclusively. 15\% reported drinking western-type beer exclusively and 20\% drinking both western-type and traditional beer (data available from 72 cases). The daily volumes of traditional beer that were consumed on a typical drinking day ranged from 340 to 10 000 ml with a mean (SD) of 2634 (± 1737 ml). Daily volumes of western-type beer consumed ranged from 750 ml to 9000 ml with a mean of 3377 (± 2310 ml).1

Hazardous drinkers

Same survey as above. Hazardous drinking was defined as drinking 350 g (males) or 225 g (females) of pure alcohol a week, or, engaging in bouts of heavy drinking one to two days a month or more during the past 12 months.1
The same survey also showed that 55% of the 78 drinkers on whom CAGE data were available scored above the commonly recommended cut-off value for the CAGE (score of 2 or greater).\textsuperscript{1}

Alcohol abuse

According to data collected for the Lesotho Epidemiology Network on Drug Abuse (LENDU) in 2003 from two rehabilitation centres, one psychiatric clinic, four Mental Observation and Treatment Units, and the police department, alcohol was the dominant substance of abuse for patients seen at treatment facilities. Overall, 70% of the 67 patients treated for substance abuse had alcohol as their primary substance of abuse during the period January to June 2003. 78% of the patients treated for alcohol abuse were male, and about one third of the patients were 30 years of age or younger.\textsuperscript{2}

A 2001 national study that collected data from ten psychiatric clinics, two rehabilitation centres, the mental hospital and the police authorities found that alcohol was the primary substance of abuse in Lesotho (52.1%).\textsuperscript{3}

Traditional alcoholic beverages

\textit{Joala} (traditional beer) is consumed in Lesotho, with an average alcohol content of 3% (compared to Western beer of about 5%).\textsuperscript{4}

Unrecorded alcohol consumption

The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Lesotho is estimated to be 1.5 litres pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts).\textsuperscript{5}

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

In a 1988 study of all patients with assault trauma attending Quthing District Hospital, alcohol was involved in at least 185 (37%) incidents. 30% of both men and women admitted they were drunk at the time of the incident. Victims claimed to know their assailant was drunk in 10% of the cases.\textsuperscript{6}

In a paper looking at alcohol and alcohol-related problems facing women in Lesotho, it was noted that as in many other developing countries, the cultural position of women in Lesotho facilitates a vicious circle in which women are at one time brewers of alcohol, then sellers, then become excessive consumers due to the problems created by their drinking husbands. Married women encounter social censure if they drink, and termination of their marriages if they abuse alcohol. Culturally, women are regarded as minors and depend on their husbands for economic survival, so that alcohol abuse can cause great economic hardship.\textsuperscript{7}

Country background information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population 2003</th>
<th>1 802 000</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (2002)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult (15+)</td>
<td>1 081 200</td>
<td>^\text{Life expectancy at birth (2002)}</td>
<td>^\text{Male}</td>
<td>^\text{Female}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% under 15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population distribution 2001 (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>^\text{Gross National Income per capita 2002}</td>
<td>^\text{US$ 470}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


References
