

BPI SUPPORTS MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH) TO LAUNCH THE NATIONAL ALCOHOL POLICY (NAP)



Mr. Alhassan Andani (BPI Board Chair and Chairman for the Occasion) delivering his address during the launch.

The harmful use of alcohol is a cause for great concern globally and nationally. Though alcohol use is part of the Ghanaian culture and society, the current trend of consumption and inadequate regulation of alcohol adverts in both the print and the electronic media is a source of worry. Yet the seriousness of this issue does not seem to register with the general public, hence not much has been done to regulate the sector. The informal sector, which produces alcoholic beverages with high percentage of ethyl alcohol, is also largely unregulated.

In the light of this, the launch of the National Alcohol Policy is a step in the right direction to address these serious issues. The Policy which was developed by the Ministry of Health (MOH) with support from Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) was launched at the Ministry of Health on Friday 17, 2017, Accra. The policy seeks to regulate the production, distribution, marketing and consumption of alcohol in Ghana.

Giving an overview of the policy, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Mental Health Authority, Dr Akwasi Osei, indicated that, there would be a National Alcohol Commission to oversee its implementation and also a special task force to do the implementation.

Launching the policy, the Minister of Health, Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu also expressed the hope that the implementation of the policy would culminate in the drafting of legislation on alcohol use.

In his address, Mr. Alhassan Andani, the Board chair of BPI and also the Chairman for the occasion said that, the policy would go a long way to help reduce the impact of harmful effects of alcohol on individuals and families.

The President of BPI, Mr. Salem Kalmoni in his address stated that the realization of this policy would contribute to the protection of the future of our youth and the vulnerable in society. He also reiterated that, Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) would continually support the Ministry to ensure the development and the adoption of the legislative instrument (LI).

The WHO Country Representative, Dr. Owen Laws Kaluwa, also commended Ghana for launching the policy. He indicated that the policy would improve good health and the general wellbeing of the citizenry. Also, he stated that Ghana was one of the few African countries which have not put in place legislation on alcohol use and, therefore, called on policy makers to expedite action on implementing the policy.

On her part, the Chief Executive Officer of the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Madam Delese Mimi Darko, indicated that it is part of their responsibility to assist the Ministry in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 3 which is, ensuring healthy life and promoting wellbeing for all and of all ages. She also pledged the FDA's readiness to help with the full implementation of the policy.