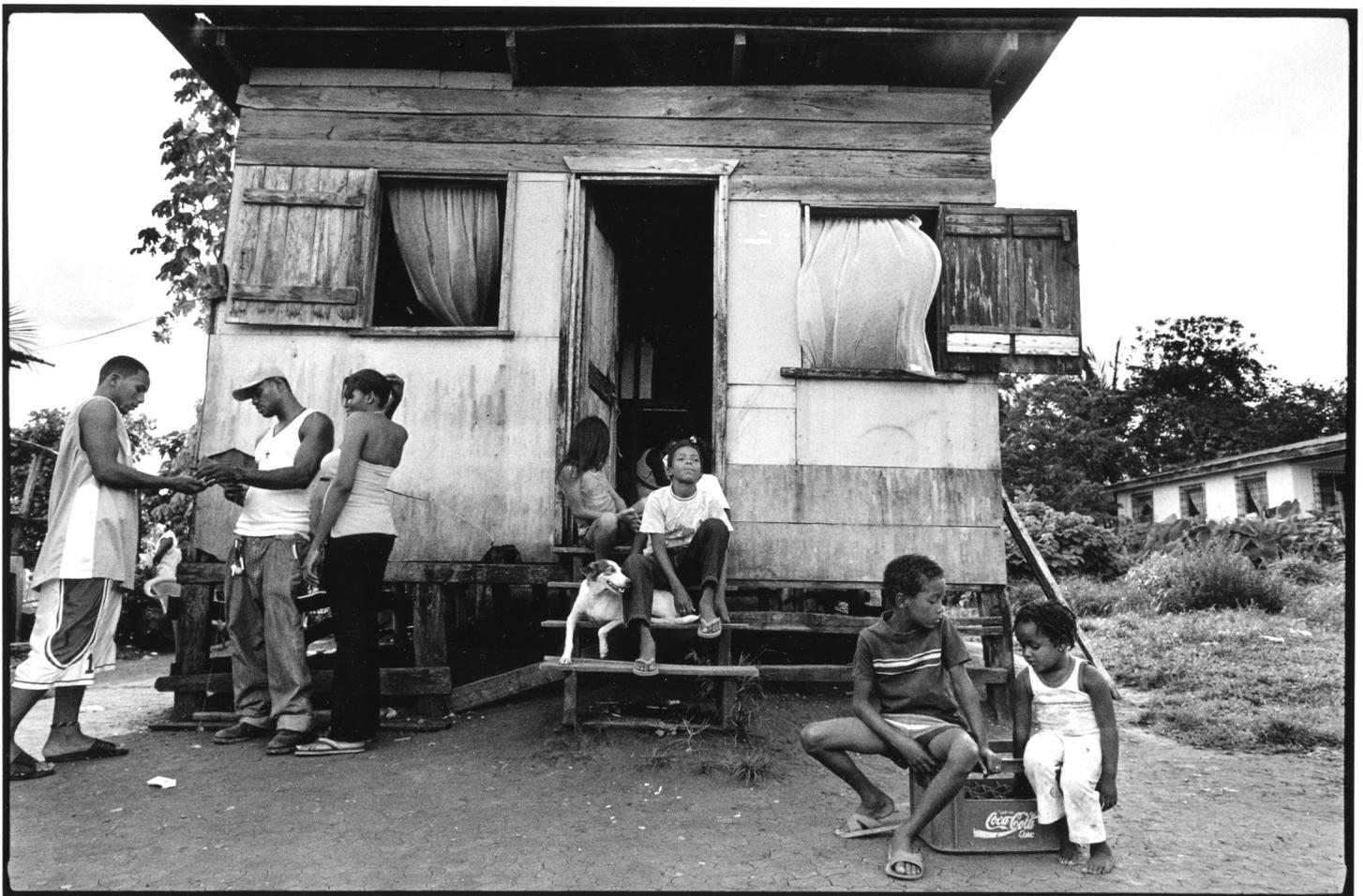




Assessment of Alcohol and Drug Situation



Crack-dealing in a residential area in Bluefields, Nicaragua (Photo: Rune Eraker)



The following is a tool to make a systematic assessment of the alcohol and drug situation in a given country or population, by a combination of statistical data and practical experience. On some of the issues, hard data from research reports will be available, while on other issues one will have to rely on other sources of information; interviews, oral reports and experiences from the field. There may be good reasons in a given situation to address the questions in a different order from what is presented here.

The consequences of alcohol and drug use?

Which are the **most frequent** negative consequences of taking alcohol and drugs that you observe in your context;

- for the users themselves;
- for their family;
- for friends, colleagues, neighbourhood;
- for the local community
- for the society at large?

Which do you consider to be the **most serious** problems resulting from alcohol and drug use in your context?

Which types of substances are available and are being used?

- Alcohol
- Medicines; legal and illegal
- Solvents for sniffing
- Illegal drugs
- Which of these create the most severe problems?

The next questions are primarily related to alcohol, which normally is the most used of the intoxicating substances. The questions can, however, easily be adapted and used also for other types of substances.



Which types of alcohol?

- Homemade traditional beverages
- Industrially produced traditional beverages
- National production of international beverages
- Imported international alcohol brands
- Which of these types of beverages dominate in your context?

Distribution systems?

- Who are the producers or the sources for the various substances?
- Who are the distributors and retailers?
- Which other vested interests are involved?

Who are the users?

- Proportion of non-users and users
- Proportion of moderate users and heavy users
- Gender differences
- Age differences
- Are there special risk groups/vulnerable groups among the users?

Level of alcohol consumption?

- Recorded consumption
- Un-recorded, legal consumption
- Consumption of illegal beverages

Situations of use?

- What kind of situations are alcohol being used?
- Regularity of drinking: How often is drinking taking place?
- Amount consumed in different drinking situations
- Risky consumption situations: Is drinking taking place in situations where the risk for accidents etc is high?
- Risky user patterns: Is alcohol used in a way that leads to heavy intoxication, reduced control etc?



The consumption context?

Under which circumstances is the consumption taking place:

- A traditional context (traditional beverages, drinking situations and user groups)
- A ritual context (linked to religion, rites or rituals)
- A poverty context (urban or rural)
- A modernity context (Westernized values, globalization)
- A crisis context (conflict, war, disaster)

The use-values of the substances?

Which values are attributed to the alcohol or drug use, by the users or the surroundings?

- Cultural values
- Social values
- Economical benefits
- Psychological effects
- Physical effects

Suggestions for improvements?

FORUT has the intention to develop this document, both its structure and content, based on practical use of it in a variety of settings and organizations. If you have suggestions for improvements, please contact us.

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Alcohol, Drugs and Development

“Alcohol, Drugs and Development” (ADD) is a global program in FORUT, in the sense that it involves all countries with FORUT activities and also FORUT action on the international level. As one of its main priorities, FORUT aims at integration of alcohol and drugs perspectives in its development programs, as well as in the field of development cooperation in general.