



Media Release

Global Alcohol Policy Conference [#GAPC2023] welcomes Dr Rajesh Pandav as a keynote speaker

15 August 2023

Cape Town: The Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA), the SA Medical Research Council (SAMRC), the Southern African Alcohol Policy Alliance (SAAPA) and the South African Department of Social Development, along with their co-sponsors, are excited to announce Dr Rajesh Pandav as a keynote speaker at the upcoming 7th bi-annual Global Alcohol Policy Conference (GAPC) to be held in Cape Town, South Africa from 24th to 26th October 2023.

Dr Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav will speak on “*Alcohol Marketing Regulation in Nepal: challenges and opportunities*”.

He has been appointed as the World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal since September 2020. Dr Rajesh’s extraordinary service has been recognized by WHO. He was awarded the WHO Director General’s Excellence Award in 2016. Under his leadership, WHO Country Office Timor-Leste was awarded the 2018-2019 WHO Director-General’s Award for Excellence for championing the *Walk the Talk* initiative to promote physical activity.



Dr Pandav has authored several scientific publications. He received his MBBS degree from Grant Medical College, Mumbai, India; and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh, USA.

The conference theme is “***Investing in People before Profits: building momentum towards the Framework Convention on Alcohol Control***”.

The 7th bi-annual Global Alcohol Policy Conference is also co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO), *Open Philanthropy*, and support from local sponsors including

South Africa's Department of Health (DOH), the National Research Foundation (NRF), the DG Murray Trust, the SA National Convention Bureau (SA Tourism).

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For more information contact: Mr Julian A. Jacobs on 061 917 9661 (#GAPC2023: Media Liaison)

***Conference website:** <https://gapc2023.samrc.ac.za/index.html>

Note to News desks:

GAPC 2023 Co-hosts

1. Global Alcohol Policy Alliance - GAPA [Co-Host]

It is a network of non-governmental organisations and people working in public health agencies and researchers in academic and other institutions who share information on alcohol issues and advocate evidence-based alcohol policies, free from commercial interests.

Regional and national alliances affiliated with GAPA operate in Africa (Southern Africa, East Africa, and West Africa), the European Union, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, the USA, and Western Pacific regions. The bi-annual GAPA conference is the leading forum for the world's alcohol policy makers, advocates, researchers, civil society activists and practitioners. - <https://globalgapa.org/>

2. SA Medical Research Council - SAMRC [Co-Host]

The SAMRC was established in 1969 with a mandate to improve the health of the country's population, through research, development, and technology transfer, so that people can enjoy a better quality of life. The organisation's research projects include tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, cardiovascular and non-communicable diseases, gender and health, and alcohol and other drug abuse. <https://www.samrc.ac.za/>

3. Southern African Alcohol Policy Alliance - SAAPA [Co-Host]

SAAPA was established in 2012 as a platform for civil society organisations in the Southern African region to share resources and experiences in the lobby for evidence-based alcohol policy that promotes the well-being of citizens. <https://saapa.africa/>

4. Department of Social Development- DSD [Co-Host]

Management and oversight over social security, encompassing social assistance and social insurance policies that aim to prevent and alleviate poverty in the event of life cycle risks such as loss of income due to unemployment, disability, old age, or death occurring.

Developmental social welfare services that provide support to reduce poverty, vulnerability, and the impact of HIV and AIDS through sustainable development programmes in

partnership with implementing agents such as State-funded institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). - <https://www.dsd.gov.za/index.php>

GAPC 2023 Sponsors:

1. The World Health Organisations (WHO) [Co-Sponsor]

The World Health Organization leads and champions global efforts to achieve better health for all. By connecting countries, people and partners, we strive to give everyone, everywhere an equal chance at a safe and healthy life. - <https://www.who.int/>

2. Open Philanthropy - OP [Co-sponsor]

Open Philanthropy recommended a grant of \$75,000 to the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance to support the 2023 [Global Alcohol Policy Conference](#) in Cape Town, which will bring together researchers, advocates, and policymakers from around the world to discuss alcohol policy. This funding will go toward travel expenses for speakers and attendees at the conference, particularly those from low- and middle-income countries. This falls within our work on [global health and wellbeing](#).

3. National Research Foundation - NRF [Co-Sponsor]

The NRF is an independent statutory body established through the National Research Foundation Act (Act No 23 of 1998), following a system-wide review conducted for the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST). The NRF promotes South African research and innovation interests across the country and internationally, and together with research institutions, businesses, industry, and international partners, we build bridges between research communities for mutual benefit that contributes to National Development. - <https://www.nrf.ac.za/about-us/>

4. SA National Convention Bureau (SANCB) [Co-Sponsor]

The SANCB is a 'one-stop solution' for independent information and assistance, giving neutral advice on all aspects of hosting and organising any business event in South Africa. - <https://www.southafrica.net/za/en/>

5. DG Murray Trust [Co-Sponsor]

The DG Murray Trust (DGMT) is a public innovator that aims to develop South Africa's potential through strategic investment. Together with other funders, NGOs, and government, DGMT studies and supports work being done in the critical areas of early childhood development (ECD), youth unemployment, school dropout and education quality, as well as innovation in the civil sector. - <https://dgmt.co.za/>

6. The Department of Health (DOH) [Co-Sponsor]

The Department of Health's vision is for all South Africans to have a long and healthy life. Its mission relates to improving citizens' health status through preventing illnesses and the

promotion of healthy lifestyles and to consistently improving the healthcare delivery system by focusing on access, equity, efficiency, quality, and sustainability. -

<https://www.health.gov.za/>