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Statement on Drug Use among Older People Delivered at the Civil Society Hearing at the 128th Session of International Narcotics Control Board-INCB, Vienna, August 31- September 4, 2020

The history of psychoactive substance use by older person in Africa is relatively short except for the reports on the use of traditional substances such as alcohol, cannabis and khat. The introduction of prescription drugs to Africa drastically increased the availability and use of psychoactive substances. This notwithstanding, alcohol, cannabis and khat still remain the most common substances of abuse by older person and the youth in Africa. More recently, trafficking in heroin and cocaine has made narcotic drugs easily available across Africa despite the existing legal control measures. Complications arising from the use/abuse of psychoactive substances often draw public attention to their deleterious effects, which culminate in drug control policy formulation. The issues of drugs highlights the contribution of poverty, political instability, social unrest and refugee problems to the rapid spread of psychoactive substance use/abuse in Africa particularly among the older person and youth. The points to a possible linkage between psychoactive drug use and the older person and the youth . At present in Africa, systematic evidence-based drug information is sparse. Also, drug policies are skewed towards formal control measures that may not encourage community participation. Poor funding, insufficient skilled health personnel, poor laboratory facilities, inadequate treatment facilities, and lack of political will are some of the impediments to controlling substance use/abuse in Africa. The argues that will bring the policy makers and civil society participation is necessary in the control of drug problems in Africa in order to achieve a balance between supply and demand reduction effor use of Drugs Among the Older Person and the youth in African countries .

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