

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This special issue of the *African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies* is devoted to the theme of substance use and HIV/AIDS in Africa. Though substance abuse, especially injecting drug use, has long been associated with HIV infection in western countries and is today the driving force behind the rapid spread of infections in some low and middle income countries, not much is known about the role of alcohol and drug use in the African HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The papers in this issue of the journal are a first coordinated attempt to address this gap in our understanding of the direct and indirect links between substance use and HIV infection based on research conducted in seven countries – Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

This is the second time a full issue of this journal has been devoted to a topic of significant contemporary relevance. The first was the immediate past issue (Volume 5, Number 1) which focused on alcohol policy in Africa at a time when many countries in the region are experiencing rapid increases in per capita consumption of alcohol and in alcohol-related problems. A special issue of this or any other journal provides a forum for concentrated attention on any topic of current interest, but we hope that this effort will also serve as a catalyst for more work on this important topic.

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In response to the Council of Science Editors' call for a Global Theme Issue on Poverty and Human Development we are planning a special issue on "Substance abuse, poverty and human development in Africa" for publication in October 2007. More than 100 other scholarly journals across the world have signed on to this initiative and we are happy to be part of it. We hope you will submit a paper for publication in this special issue. Established researchers are also encouraged to suggest topics deserving of special attention and to serve as guest editors for future special issues.

The journal continues to seek high quality submissions from researchers working on any aspect of psychoactive substance use and abuse with a focus on Africa and Africans in the diaspora. We are happy with the response to our new look and the overall quality of the journal and look forward to greater support and encouragement from you and your organization.

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