



Drinks Federation
of South Africa

Panel Discussion on Understanding the **Illicit Alcohol** Market in South Africa

Tuesday, 1 July 2025



The United for Good Forum:
Addressing **Illicit Alcohol** Together

The United for Good Forum: Addressing Illicit Alcohol Together

aims to provide a dedicated platform for multi-stakeholder collaboration. It brings together government entities, enforcement agencies, industry bodies, civil society, and research experts to explore the drivers and impacts of illicit alcohol and begin to co-develop strategies to disrupt it effectively.

The illicit alcohol market continues to grow in South Africa, undermining government revenue, consumer safety, and the legitimacy of the regulated industry. The 2025 DF-SA research study, Understanding the Illicit Alcohol Market in South Africa, reveals that nearly 1 in 5 alcoholic drinks sold in the country is illicit, with an estimated fiscal loss of R16.5 billion annually. Counterfeiting, not smuggling, now dominates the illicit trade, particularly in spirits.

What sets this panel discussion apart from previous engagements is its foundation in data, and its commitment to action. It is informed by credible, independently verified research, and is designed not just to share insights, but to move beyond narrative and dialogue toward collective action and tangible solutions.



The United for Good Forum: Addressing Illicit Alcohol Together

PROGRAMME

08h30– 09h30: Arrival and registration

Light refreshments served

09h30–09h35: Welcome by DF-SA

09h35–09h50: Research summary overview presentation

Topic: “Understanding the **Illicit Alcohol Market** in South Africa” by Euromonitor International

Key findings and data highlights

09h50–10h30: Panel Discussion

10h30–10h50: Moderated Q & A

- Open floor discussion
- Feedback, sector-specific insights, and alignment on next steps

10h50–11h00: Closing & Call to Action

- Stakeholder Pledge Signing
- Audience invited to also sign pledge cards and hang them on pledge wall at reception hall

Photo Shoot Moment

Facilitator



Nomathemba Malinga

Nomathemba Malinga is a seasoned reputation strategist, broadcaster, and business leader with over 18 years of experience helping organisations and individuals shape meaningful narratives that drive visibility, trust, and social impact. Her work is rooted in a commitment to conscious business—supporting leaders in aligning purpose with performance and social relevance.

Over her 12-year entrepreneurial journey, Nomathemba has built a strong track record in reputation management, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication. She is particularly passionate about driving dialogues that address systemic issues affecting business in South Africa, from inclusive leadership and sustainability to ethical branding and stakeholder trust.

Her facilitation style blends strategic insight with social intelligence, creating space for critical yet constructive industry conversations. Nomathemba brings a sharp lens to how businesses can engage authentically with their communities and catalyse transformation in meaningful, measurable ways.



Panellists



Richard Rivett-Carnac, CEO,
South African Breweries (SAB)
and Chairperson of DF-SA

Richard Rivett-Carnac is the current Chief Executive Officer of the South African Breweries (SAB) with 16 years of experience in various roles within the AB InBev group. He joined SABMiller in the London office as part of the Mergers and Acquisitions team in 2009. Prior to being appointed CEO of SAB in 2022, he held the role of Vice President for Finance, Legal & Corporate Affairs for AB InBev's Africa Zone, successfully navigating the business through COVID and what could be considered the most challenging years for SAB since its inception.

Amongst some of his achievements, was managing the sale of 4 Coca-Cola Bottling businesses in Zambia, Botswana, eSwatini and Lesotho as well as managing the sale of the Chibuku business in Zambia and Malawi.

He is also responsible for the unwinding of one of the biggest BEE share schemes in South Africa, SAB's R14bn B-BBEE deal.

A true beer man, Richard's main responsibility is ensuring that SAB employees, the alcohol industry and the country remain SAB's top priority.





Hardin Ratshisusu,
Acting Commissioner, The National
Consumer Commission (NCC)

Hardin Ratshisusu is the Deputy Commissioner of the Competition Commission since 2016. He has also been recently appointed as Acting Commissioner of the National Consumer Commission, effective 1 May 2024. He is an expert in competition regulation, with over a decade of executive management experience in both the public and private sectors. Mr. Ratshisusu actively participates in international and regional fora for competition regulation including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), BRICS, United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD), SADC and the African Competition Forum (ACF).



Benjamin Rideout,
Research Consultant,
Euromonitor International

Benjamin is a consultant in the Cape Town office. He has worked with many of the continent's top companies in various sectors, ranging from alcohol, fuels, foodservice, packaged food and financial services. Benjamin has conducted research in Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, Cameroon, DRC, Egypt, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Kenya.

Benjamin has researched illicit alcohol extensively in Africa since joining Euromonitor. Over the last year, he has led numerous illicit alcohol projects, including the 2025 Kenya and DFSA research.



Dr. Shamal Vinesh Ramesa
Head of Research, Drinks
Federations of South Africa (DF-SA)

Dr Shamal Vinesh Ramesar holds a Bachelor of Medical Science with Honours, a Master's degree in Medicine, and a PhD in Physiology. He was inducted into the Golden Key International Honour Society in recognition of his academic excellence. Dr Ramesar began his career in academia, serving as a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and later at the University of Johannesburg. He subsequently transitioned to the corporate sector, where he held the position of Scientific Affairs Manager at 3M Healthcare and later added to this role as the Business Unit Manager for the Infection Prevention Division. He went on to serve as Chief Medical Officer at Augustine Medical (South Africa), later expanding his portfolio to include Head of Operations (Gauteng). He currently holds the position of Head of Research at the Drinks Federation of South Africa.



Jan-Harm Swanepoel
Partner , Adams & Adams

Jan-Harm is a partner in the Anti-Counterfeiting Department. He obtained his LLB from the University of Johannesburg, completed his articles and joined the Department of Justice as a public prosecutor in 2007. He joined Bowman Gilfillan Incorporated in 2009 and obtained a postgraduate diploma in labour law (Cum laude) from the University of Johannesburg during this time. Jan-Harm joined Adams & Adams as an associate in 2013 and obtained the relevant qualifications for joining as a fellow of the South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law (SAIIPL).

Jan-Harm's practice areas include criminal and civil litigation in South African and other African countries with a specific focus on Intellectual Property Crimes and related aspects. Jan-Harm has collaborated with various local and international law enforcement agencies in matters over the years, including the HAWKS, FBI, US Secret Service and INTERPOL.

PLEDGE OF COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We, the undersigned, representing government institutions, enforcement agencies, industry bodies, civil society organisations, research institutions, and other committed stakeholders, affirm our united stance against the rise of illicit alcohol in South Africa.

We acknowledge that:

- The illicit alcohol trade undermines public health, consumer safety, economic stability, and state revenue.
- Counterfeit and unregulated alcohol threatens the integrity of formal markets and exposes vulnerable communities to avoidable harm.
- No single entity can solve this challenge in isolation. A coordinated, transparent, and data-informed response is essential to drive meaningful impact.

We hereby pledge to:

1. COMMIT TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Participate actively in cross-sector efforts to curb the production, distribution, and consumption of illicit alcohol.

2. CHAMPION PUBLIC AWARENESS

Use our platforms to raise awareness of the risks associated with counterfeit and unregulated alcohol and promote informed consumer choices.

3. SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE AND LEGAL TRADE

Promote ethical practices, legal compliance, and fair competition within our sectors and networks.

4. ADVANCE EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

Endorse the use of credible, independent data and research to guide enforcement strategies, public health interventions, and legislative reforms.

5. ENABLE INFORMATION SHARING

Contribute to knowledge exchange, intelligence sharing, and joint problem-solving to foster a unified, harm-reduction approach.

6. ENDORSE THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Support the establishment and work of the DF-SA-hosted Multi-Stakeholder Committee on Illicit Alcohol, and actively participate in its agenda, dialogue, and accountability structures.

We make this pledge in good faith, committed to a future where responsible trade and consumer protection are upheld — for the benefit of all South Africans.

Signed on the 1st of July 2025

At the United for Good Roundtable hosted by the Drinks Federation of South Africa
Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), Johannesburg.



PLEDGE INSTRUCTIONS

Take the Pledge | Be #UnitedForGood

Here's how you can be part of the movement to protect our economy, communities, and consumers from illicit alcohol:

Step 1: Sign the official Pledge of Commitment card on arrival

Step 2: Stick your signed card on the Pledge Wall in the reception area at GIBS.

Step 3: Snap a selfie or group photo in front of the wall.

Step 4: Post it to LinkedIn using #UnitedForGood and tag @Drinks Federation of South Africa (DF-SA).

SOUTH AFRICA'S ILLICIT ALCOHOL MARKET 2025

UNCOVER THE HIDDEN COST

The real damage of illicit alcohol often hides behind the label. The latest Euromonitor International study reveals deep financial, structural, and social consequences that demand urgent attention and action.



THE COST IS CLEAR

A multidisciplinary approach can effect change and release the hold illicit alcohol has on South Africa's market. Greater enforcement, frequent testing, and stronger public awareness remain key.
[Download the infographic at drinksfederationsa.co.za](https://drinksfederationsa.co.za)
A concerted effort is needed.

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Source: Understanding the Illicit Alcohol Market (Euromonitor International, May 2025)



THANK YOU

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