



CRISA

30 YEARS OF IMPACT









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Editors:

Anietie Etteyit

Anthony Udoh





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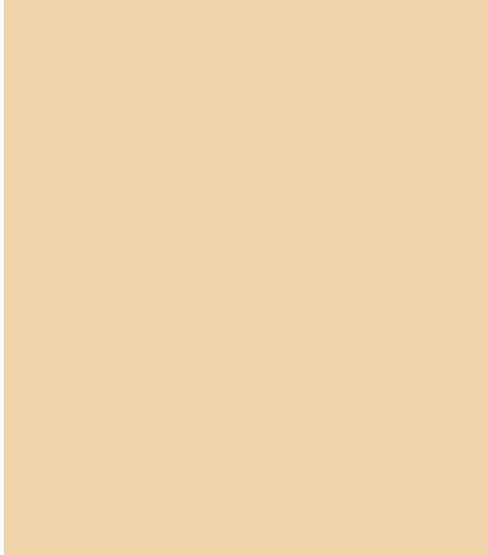
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Dedication

*This publication is dedicated to young people in Africa,
especially those who are vulnerable
to drug use and dependence.*





Acknowledgments

CRISA has over the years, received tremendous support and assistance from various organisations both local and international.

We specifically acknowledge the following:

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

European Union (EU)

FORUT- Campaign for Development

IOGT (now Movendi International)

World Health Organization (WHO)

Open Society Foundations (OSF)

Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)

African Union (AU)

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)

*US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA)*



Foreword

CRISA is the acronym for Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse. It is Africa's foremost NGO devoted to research, policy and interventions on substance abuse. In its thirty years of existence, CRISA has grown from a neighborhood substance use information centre in Jos to a major global actor in research on drug and alcohol abuse. It is one of the few non-governmental initiatives in the field of substance abuse that have thrived in Nigeria for decades. This publication is therefore a compendium of CRISA's achievements in this regard.

Upon his return from the United States of America in 1985, Professor Isidore Silas Obot could have chosen the easy path to "fame" through low-grade, short-term but lucrative consultancy offers. He could have chosen to ascend high academic ranks through arm-chair research and desktop publications. He did not; rather, he chose to invest his energy and resources in the acquisition of educational materials, fundable research and painstaking relationship building. This approach has enabled him to earn public trust upon which he has leveraged to build a network in the public health and human services sectors to engage key stakeholders in substance use prevention and treatment.

Through his work at CRISA, Professor Obot has led advocacy for reforms of extant mental health and drug laws in Nigeria. CRISA's unique reputation for ethical scholarship and fidelity to contractual relationships have won for it the trust of national and international organizations such as Nigeria's National Assembly, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS Commission) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for expert advice and services.

Over the years CRISA has been consistent in the publication of its journal, the African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies and organization of symposia and conferences without government funding. Yet it is a non-profit, non-governmental organization. It should interest readers to find out how the Executive Director has combined ingenuity with probity in the milestone achievements reported in this publication

As Professor Isidore Obot's protege and a core member of CRISA'S management in its heydays in Jos, I feel honoured to do the Foreword to this book. While doing so, I recall the generous support of Barrister Miskom Puepet to the Centre for her bi-monthly drug seminars, which attracted a lot of public interest.

I also recall our media outings that raised awareness on the harm of drug use and created demand for treatment in Jos, Plateau State. In addition I recall the pride of being associated with the Middle-belt alcohol study of the early nineties, which inspired unprecedented interest in community-based behavioural science studies in Nigeria.

I commend this publication to every calibre of researcher that aspires to impact society in the manner that Professor Isidore Obot has. CRISA is an idea; it is a network and an organized system founded on strong scientific principles and values. Moving forward, one expects its management to extend/cultivate partnerships with world-class universities and research centres on its core mandates. Happy Thirtieth Anniversary, CRISA.

Professor Andrew Ezadueyan Zamani, FNPA, FNACP FAppN
Director, Institute of Governance and Development Studies
Nasarawa State University, Keffi
Nigeria

In The Beginning...

The Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA), which was officially founded in Jos in 1990, had a long gestation period. The organisation is the product of the experiences of Professor Isidore Silas Obot (its founding director), beginning from his formative years as a student in the United States of America (between 1973 and 1984), then his experiences as a newly employed research and teaching staff at the University of Jos, Nigeria, in 1985.

Professor Obot says his initial interest in the field of substance issues and research

was kindled at Harvard University, where he undertook a WHO sponsored programme to study health and behaviour. In Jos, Obot began to study the neighbourhood, and soon discovered that there was an emerging pattern of problematic alcohol and drug use, among the residents of the serene, happy and burgeoning city including school children

He soon started a series of public outreaches, in small groups, including personnel of institutions, like the Nigeria prisons service, the Police, his colleagues and schools within the Jos neighbourhood..

It is really there that I developed a strong interest in substance abuse research... I can remember clearly when I took the first course on alcohol and drugs. I thought it would be an exciting field to spend my life in.

His wife, Theresa Obot, who was a young lawyer at that time and currently a Judge in the Akwa Ibom State Judiciary, recalls:

He started, with monthly seminars that he organized, with personal funds...that seminar series became very successful. Then he got some indigenes like a Senior Lawyer in the City, Miskom Puepet Esq. interested. Mr. Puepet offered to provide some kind of sponsorship for the monthly seminars, initially by providing refreshments at the meetings, providing funds for payment for the venues, then talking to some of his clients, and other influential people who provided some kinds of additional support.

Before the foundation of CRISA, in 1990, there was a non-governmental organization whose main business was the issue of drugs. It was called the Nigeria Institute of Substance Abuse, founded in Benin, by Dr Ona Pela. Professor Obot said he served that body as an anchor person in the northern part of Nigeria. Later, Ona Pela left Nigeria, relocating to the United States.

Professor Obot said he had sufficiently soaked in the message by this time, and felt it was a good idea to proceed with research and advocacy work on drugs and alcohol abuse, which he was already familiar with and passionate about. Added to Dr Pela's work running a CSO, was the fact that some work had already been done by some pioneer researchers, like Professors Adeoye Lambo, Tolani Asuni,

and some psychiatrists based at the Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta and the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Yaba, both in Western Nigerian. Their work was being published in research journals, newspapers and the media generally, and was receiving public attention at that time.

On a date in August 1990, at the Psychology lab of the Department of Psychology at the University of Jos, then Dr Isidore Obot invited friends, associates, colleagues and other stakeholders to a meeting whose proceedings CRISA emerged from. The people at that initial meeting included mostly his colleagues at the Psychology Department and others from the Faculty of Social Sciences. Some colleagues in attendance were Etannibi Alemika, Ogoh Alubo, Egwu U. Egwu, Amaechi Nweze, and younger people like Akanidomo Ibanga, Andrew Zamani, Gloria Karuri, Paul Wai and several others. The younger group was made up of graduate students, mostly. There were other people invited from the Nigeria Prisons Service, the Ministry of Health, the Child Welfare Department and others.

In those early years, Professor Obot acknowledged that his work received extensive help from some community leaders, who provided funding for the early outreach programmes, while valued advice was received from Professors T. Adeoye Lambo and Tolani Asuni as well as Peter Ebigbo and Tunde Makanju.

Founding Objectives

CRISA's initial Objectives were to:

- Carry out and support research on all aspects of licit and illicit drug use and other lifestyle and health issues
- Offer treatment and rehabilitation services for alcohol and drug use disorders.
- Serve as clearing-house for state-of-the-art information on alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.
- Organize conferences, training workshops, seminars.
- Provide regular information to researchers, prevention and treatment professionals, the public and media, through publications of pamphlets, newsletters, books and journals.
- Engage in all other activities that may contribute to the promotion of healthy lifestyles, especially among African youth.

During those early days, prior to the incorporation of the organization by the Corporate Affairs Commission and after, CRISA was organizing and hosting

awareness seminars once every two months in Jos, but there were huge challenges.

Challenges

Dr Isidore Obot had arrived at the University of Jos, fresh from the United States of America, where he had lived and studied between 1973 up to 1984. He was a young scholar brimming with fresh ideas in the Department of Psychology.

Andrew Zamani (now a professor), who was then a graduate student in the department recalled that Dr Obot's interest in doing research on, and about narcotic drugs, alcohol and other harmful substances was novel then. This was about the time three Nigerians (Bartholomew Owoh, Lawal Ojuolape and Bernard

Ogedengbe) were openly shot and killed at the firing squad, having been sentenced to that fate, by a tribunal empowered by the then Military government through decree number 20. Zamani arrived Jos as a student about that time. Then Dr Isidore Obot was settling in as a lecturer. Akanidomo Ibanga, currently a programme officer with the United Nations Office on Drugs and crime (UNODC), who arrived Jos about 1988/1989 as a junior lecturer, with a Masters degree said he perceived CRISA's major headache (then) to be finance. Zamani and Justice Theresa Obot both agree with him even as Professor Obot concurred.

Professor Obot's wife, Justice Theresa Obot, recalls that in these early years a great percentage of her husband's salary mostly ended up funding CRISA programmes, his research engagements and other activities. Zamani said Professor Obot leveraged on his experience and contacts to tackle the problem of funding, reaching out to his enormous contacts, to seek support. Even so, it was still tough.

Another challenge Professor Obot's desire and need for self improvement, through further education. This need was to take him entirely and completely away from the scene of action (Nigeria) to the United States at various times, where he was billed to acquire more knowledge and competencies. This was where his protégés -- Andrew Zamani, Akanidomo Ibanga, Gloria Karuri and others -- proved their mettle. For almost four years of Professor Obot's long absences, frequent travels and unavailability, the advocacy work continued between 1991, up to 1996. During those years, Dr Obot would visit Nigeria sometimes twice, thrice or not at all, but the work continued. For example, Obot left Nigeria for the Johns Hopkins University's Department of Mental Hygiene, Baltimore, Maryland, USA in July 1991, just the next year, after

the formal commencement of activities by CRISA. He was a post-doctoral fellow in that institution. He rounded off that programme the next year. Even so, his baby (CRISA) did not suffer neglect. That year (1991) and the next, CRISA had commenced a radio programme on the Plateau State Radio Service on issues around drugs, and alcohol. Akanidomo, Zamani and the rest of the crew, were on hand to do the needed research and supply necessary materials to ensure that the programme was live on air weekly, for the two years period that it lasted. The airtime was made available by that radio station free, as its contribution for creating awareness on the emerging problem.

In 1991, the CRISA Biennial Conference series kicked off in Jos, with the theme "Approaches to Demand Reduction". There were just two non-Nigerians in attendance, but by 2012, nationals from twelve Countries were in Abuja to attend the scientific meet, with many of the researchers coming in from across Africa and three other continents. Incidentally, CRISA's first conference outside their base (Jos), was taken to Abuja by Obot's ambitious protégés and Abuja proved to be a good venue (for their conferences), but Lagos also came in handy later.



Akanidomo Ibanga, Gloria Karuri and Dr. Isidore Obot

Collaborations/Partnerships/Synergy

In the fullness of time, CRISA's productivity, earnestness, commitment, and focus were eventually acknowledged by different organizations, which now sought the organization out, for collaboration, sound technical advice and mutual assistance. It began tentatively, but expanded with time. CRISA's partners/collaborators include: The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World

Health Organization (WHO), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), FORUT-Campaign for development (a Norwegian aid organization), Open Society Foundations (OSF), the European Union (EU), states governments in Nigeria, national governments across the African Continent, global and regional blocs concerned with alcohol, drugs and tobacco regulation, control and policy formulation.

Research and Publications

While publication of books and academic and scientific research were CRISA's major preoccupations, the inauguration of CRISA's journal, the "African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies (AJDAS), in the year 2000, signaled CRISA's final climb

onto the platform of hosts of scientific knowledge in all matters concerning drugs, alcohol, and tobacco research. By 2020, the journal, which comes out twice yearly, was in its 20th year.



At the world drugs day 2020, in Uyo Nigeria: Prof. Obot with some Staff of CRISA

Relocation and Treatment Services

In 2008, CRISA moved its headquarters from Jos to Uyo, following Professor Obot's acceptance of an offer of appointment at the University of Uyo which had been pending since 2002 while he was employed as a scientist at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland. With his movement, all the paraphernalia of CRISA, the staff, the library and all other accompaniments of the office relocated with him to Uyo. This new development was very beneficial to his new base as Uyo now became a new hub for research on and about alcohol and

other substances.

Few years later, CRISA's desire to inaugurate a treatment centre into its operations was realized as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with funding from the European Union (EU) to Nigeria, rolled out a programme to assist the opening and running of out-patient centres. The scope of the EU/UNODC assistance included support for six Drop-in-Centres (DIC) across the country in 2016. CRISA was one of the beneficiaries.

The Present

Currently, CRISA is intricately involved (technically), with Policy and directing agencies for drug control, governments, multilateral organizations and regional groups and blocks, contributing needed delicate information on issues of mutual interest. The organization is now a global player on knowledge production, publication and dissemination, and has gained the

confidence of counterpart agencies.

Its Director, Professor Isidore Obot says his desire is to build a one stop facility which will house its research offices, library, treatment centre; which will accommodate its personnel, visiting scholars, researchers and all who wish to make inquires. He disclosed that land has been acquired for this purpose, and hopes that finance will be handy to commence construction as soon as possible.



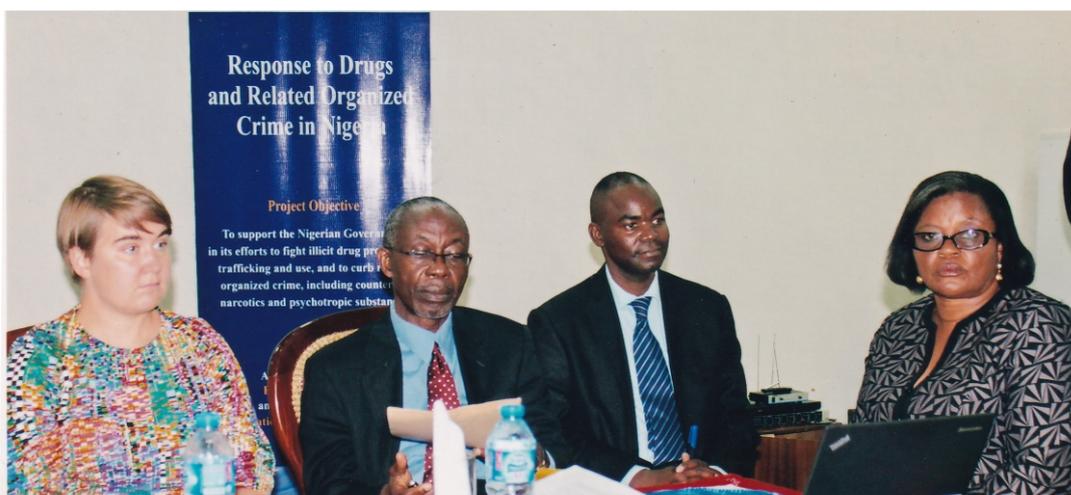
At the world drugs day 2020, in Uyo Nigeria: Prof. Obot with some Staff of CRISA

Our Operations, Programmes and Activities

Training

Selected workshops and seminars:

- Workshop on prevention of substance abuse in collaboration with the Nigerian Network on Drug Demand Reduction (NNDDR), Jos, 2001
- Training for young researchers on writing and publishing in the addiction field, Abuja, 2010
- UNODC/DAPC Drug Prevention workshop for NGOs, Abuja, 2012
- Training on data collection for WHO/Thai Health Study on Alcohol Harm to Others, Uyo, 2013
- Publishing addiction science workshop, Lagos, 2014
- Training on data collection for the National Survey of Drug Use, Kaduna and Uyo, 2017
- Grants proposal writing, Abuja, 2019
- Qualitative methods in substance abuse research, Abuja, 2019
- Sensitization training on Drugs, Drug use, Prevention, Treatment and Care (DPTC), Uyo, 2019-2020



At the CRISA 2016 international conference at Barcelona Hotel, Abuja



At a community outreach event with tricycle riders in Uyo, Nigeria; a cross section of participants

Research

Project	Sponsor
General Population survey in the middle belt region (The Middle belt study), 1993	University of Jos Senate Research Committee
Monitoring Alcohol Marketing and Promotion in Africa (MAMPA), 2010	Dutch Institute for Alcohol Policy (STAP), The Netherlands
Assessment of Drugs NGOs in Nigeria, 2011	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
Harm to others from drinking, 2013	WHO/Thai Health
National Drug Use Survey (High risk drug use and Key Informant surveys), 2017	EU/UNODC
International Alcohol Control (IAC) COVID-19 Study, 2020	College of Health, Massey University, New Zealand

Publications

CRISA is registered as a publisher at the Nigerian ISBN Agency. The Centre has published several research monographs, a well-received bibliography on drugs and alcohol in Nigeria, a prevention guide for parents and guardians, and an academic journal. The African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies is devoted to the publication of empirical research findings, informed opinion, and policy analysis on alcohol- and drug-related issues in Africa.

Recent issues of the journal were published with grants from IOGT-NTO (Sweden) and FORUT-Campaign for Development (Norway). The journal and other Centre publications have also been produced with support of the Medical Research Council (Cape Town, South Africa), the U.S Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the UNODC and the NDLEA.

Conferences/Symposia

In June 1991 the Centre held its first biennial international conference on “Drugs, Alcohol and Society in Africa” in Jos. Since then a total of twelve conferences have been held in the series drawing participants from all parts of the world. Beginning with the fifth edition, this

biennial gathering of academics, policy makers, professionals, and students has been held in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria.

In 2013 CRISA launched the “National Symposium on Drugs and Drug Policy” to focus attention on drug issues of particular relevance to Nigeria

Library

The CRISA Research Library holds thousands of publications (books, journals, newsletters, etc.) on substance abuse, health and social sciences, including books published by the

Centre, rare materials from the World Health Organization, other UN agencies and local and international organizations. You can contact the centre for information on how to register and use

Treatment

CRISA's desire to inaugurate a treatment centre into its operations was realized in 2016, as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with funding from the European Union (EU) to Nigeria, rolled out a programme to assist the

opening and running of out-patient centres. The scope of the EU/UNODC assistance included support for six Drop-in-Centres (DIC) across the country, and CRISA was one of the beneficiaries.



Cutting the 20th anniversary cake at Chelsea Hotel, Professor Isidore Obot assisted by friends of CRISA; 2010

Collaborations, Partners and Sponsors through the Years

CRISA has worked in collaboration with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Affairs Office of the U.S Embassy (formerly USIS), University of Jos, Pro-Health International, World Federation for Mental Health, Medical Research Council (Cape Town, South Africa), IOGT-NTO (Sweden) and FORUT-

Campaign for Development (Norway), Federal and State Ministries of Health, Youth and Sports, Social Welfare, etc.

CRISA is a member of several societies and networks, including the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE), the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialist (SALIS) Network, and the International Confederation of ATOD Research Associations (ICARA).



Prof. Obot with Shadrach Haruna, Secretary of NDLEA and Shiyin Wu of UNODC

Goodwill Message

HOPE OBIANWU

(e-mail: hopeobianwu60@gmail.com)

It gives me great pleasure to participate in the commemoration of the 30th year of CRISA activities. I have been participating in the symposia organized by CRISA for several years and I consider myself a good friend of CRISA. I particularly appreciate the dedication and efficiency showed by the CRISA functionaries at most of the symposia it has organized.

During my tenure of the office of Director, Nigerian Training Course on Substance Abuse, based at the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, CRISA sponsored participants to attend the then annual training programmes on substance abuse. I believe that the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes organized by CRISA, reflect the personality of its Director, Prof. Isidore Obot. Prof Obot has been very understanding and extremely helpful in dealing with issues concerning some of the participants attending the CRISA-organized symposia. He has been very generous in entertaining the speakers at the symposia.

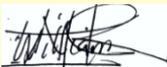
Despite the global negative impressions of leadership transparency in Nigeria, CRISA has continued to receive regular support from major international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO, European Union (EU), UNODC, etc.). I salute Prof. Obot and wish him and CRISA well in all their future activities.

Goodwill Message

I became acquainted with the Center for Research and Information on Substance Abuse sometime in 2001. Prof. I. Obot and CRISA was just as dedicated then to the vision of making rigorous scientific evidence the basis of interventions in the field of Substance Abuse prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

Over the years CRISA has remained a core pillar and catalyst of the paradigm shift experienced in Nigeria towards Evidence Based Practices. CRISAs activities have gone a step further to expand the “evidence base” by supporting Research in the field of Substance Abuse in Nigeria, filling a void by providing much needed context appropriate literature. Over the course of 20 years that I have personally known, participated in, collaborated with, and supported programs and activities with CRISA, the organization has come to embody that rare consistent growth and development one rarely finds in privately run Nigerian Organizations.

On behalf of myself and all of us at Milestones Rehabilitation Foundation, I extend our hearty congratulations to Prof. Obot and the CRISA family on this monumental achievement!



Dr. N.W. Ebiti

Executive Director, Milestones Rehabilitation Foundation
National Coordinator, Community Intervention Network on Drugs Clinical Supervisor, Addiction Treatment Services,
Federal neuropsychiatric Hospital, Barnawa, Kaduna, Nigeria



Axel Klein & Tony Esu, Chairman, House of Reps. Drugs Committee at the conference in Jos



Andrew Zamani at the National Conference, Plateau Hotel Jos, 1999



Prof. Obot with Adhoc Staff of the National Conference, Plateau Hotel Jos, 1999



Participants at CRISA International Conference, Plateau Hotel, Jos, 1999



ICISAT

"Taking one day at a time"

ISANA CENTER FOR INFORMATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

**GOODWILL MESSAGE AS CRISA CELEBRATES
30 YEARS OF EXISTANCE AS AN NGO IN NIGERIA**

It is with profound joy and gratitude that I, Associate Prof. Gloria S. Karuri, send this goodwill message on behalf of the board of trustees, staff, volunteers and friends of ICISAT. It seemed like yesterday, when as a student in the late 80s I came across Prof. Isidore S. Obot as a lecturer in the Department of General and Applied Psychology, Faculty of social sciences, University of Jos. I became interested in CRISA in the early 90s and became her programme officer in the late 90s. As a staff in CRISA, the need for more information and intervention in the area of drug use/abuse became a passion that led to the launching of ICISAT. We in ICISAT see CRISA as a motivator, a pace setter and a mentor to us and I believe to many in related NGOs. CRISA has come a long way and represents patience, hard-work, academic excellence and perseverance on the part of her esteemed director and staff. Indeed when CRISA moved from Jos to Uyo, a part of us moved with her. That connection has remained and many from Jos, especially ICISAT are grateful that you were the reason why we came into being and are where we are today. We cannot mention drugs in Nigeria or Africa without mentioning CRISA or Prof. I. S Obot. We are glad to have shared in your struggles and now your success story. We are wishing the Director, members of the board, staff, and volunteers of CRISA many happy returns as you clock 30 years and look forward to many more years of giant strides in the area of drug use/abuse prevention and treatment in Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world.

Gloria S. Karuri Ph.D.
Executive Director

OUR CONFERENCE SERIES

NUMBER	YEAR	MAJOR THEME	Venue
1 st	1991	Approaches to Demand Reduction	Jos
2 nd	1993	The Social Costs of Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking	Jos
3 rd	1995	Drugs in the Work Place: An Emerging Labour Crisis in Nigeria	Jos
4 th	1999	Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment: What Works?	Jos
5 th	2000	Drugs, Alcohol and Youth: From Research to Policy	Jos
6 th	2002	Social and Economic Consequences of Drug Abuse: Research and Policy Consideration for Sub-Saharan Africa	Abuja
7 th	2006	Responding to Alcohol and Drug Problems: A Focus on Effective Policies and Interventions	Abuja
8 th	2008	Substance Abuse and Social Development	Abuja
9 th	2010	Substance Abuse and HIV/AIDS in Africa	Abuja
10 th	2012	Social Determinants of Substance Abuse in Africa: From Knowledge to Action	Abuja
11 th	2014	Improving Access to Effective Treatment for Drug Use Disorder in Africa	Lagos
12 th	2016	Public Health and Drug Policy in Africa: Beyond the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS 2016)	Abuja
13 th	2018	Substance Use and Sustainable Development in Africa: Strengthening the Evidence Base for Policy and Action	Abuja

NATIONAL SYMPOSIA ON DRUGS AND DRUG POLICY IN NIGERIA

È È Ð ÅÆ	ĜÆÄÈ	THEME	ÈÆÈ ÈÆ
Qst	RPQS	ÆŃĶĪ NĪ ÍŃĴ ÁĪ NĪ Í ÍŌŌ ÍŃÒ Substance Abuse Research and Interventions	Uyo
Rnd	RPQU	ĎĬ Ĵ Ĭ ĹĬ NĪ ÊŃĤĪ Ō ÅŌĬ Ĺ Ĭ Ō ÑŌĹ for Drug Control in Nigeria	Abuja
Srd	RPQW	Ĝ ÑŌĹ, ÍŃĴ Ō ÍŌĶ ĎŃĪ Ĭ Ĺ Communities to Reduce Drug and Alcohol Problems.	Abuja
Tth	RPQY	È ŃŃĶ Medical Use of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Effective Response	Abuja



Abom Tony Esu (Chairman, House of Reps. Committee on Narcotics) and Prof. Obot at the National Conference, Plateau Hotel Jos, 1999



Prof Egwu

An Interview with
Professor Isidore S. Obot
Executive Director of CRISA



Who is Professor Isidore Obot?

My name is Isidore Silas Obot; I am from Adiasim in Essien Udim LGA, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. I was born more than 70 years ago in that village and grew up in what is presently called Akwa Ibom State, before I stepped out to go to school. The first time I actually left what is Akwa Ibom State today was when I went to higher school after my secondary school in both Queen of Apostles Seminary and Holy Family College. I did higher school in Mary Knoll College, which was a very good secondary school in those days. Mary Knoll is in Okuku, Ogoja, part of the present day Cross River State. After higher school, I came back home and taught in my Alma Mater, Holy Family College, for one year, before I proceeded to the United States for University education. So all my university education took place in the United States.

How did your interest in substance abuse develop?

Well, it came naturally from my interest in human behaviour. I studied psychology for the first and second degrees at Loyola of Maryland in Baltimore, and received the doctorate degree at Howard University, during which I learned about smoking prevention in a social psychology course. Then I returned home to participate in the NYSC after my Ph.D. I did my NYSC in the University of Calabar where I taught in the public health department of the College of Medicine for one year. After the service year I left for a WHO-sponsored programme to study health and behaviour in the School of Public Health, Harvard University. It is really there that I developed a strong interest in substance abuse research, substance abuse work in general; and I can remember clearly when I took the first courses on alcohol and also on drugs. I thought it would be an exciting field to spend my life in, and in a sense I have spent my life in the field.

How did your professional life in Nigeria begin?

After I completed the master of public health degree, which was a post-doctoral master's degree that lasted for one year, I came back to Nigeria in 1985 and got a job as a lecturer in the University of Jos in Plateau State. That was where I remained until I left for the World Health Organization in Geneva in 2002. After five years in Geneva working on alcohol and drug issues around the world, and nearly two years as Professor and Chair of a department in Morgan State University School of Public Health, Baltimore, I returned to Nigeria, this time to the University of Uyo as a Professor of Psychology, a department I helped to start with a proposal to the first vice-chancellor of the university.



Distinguished Professor James Gire,

I worked in the Department of Psychology from 2008 until I ended my career in 2019. Basically right now I am a retired professor of psychology, but actively engaged in research and interventions on substance abuse as Director of CRISA. My interest in why people use drugs even when they know that using drugs can be very harmful, and what we can do to help the addicted remains strong.

30 years ago, NGOs in Nigeria were not very common, so how did you come about the concept of an NGO?

CRISA was founded in Jos in 1990 and, as I said earlier, I was a lecturer in Jos at the time. At that time, there was actually one local NGO dealing with this issue of drugs; it was called the Nigeria Institute on Substance Abuse; it was founded in Benin by a man who became a good friend - Dr Ona Pela. I happened to serve as the anchor for the NGO in the north, because he wanted to get out to the whole country. So I was working for him in the north, and we were having meetings here and there. He later left for the United States where he decided to live. So it was around that time that I thought it was a good idea to carry on with the idea he had, to bring people together to work on this new problem that we were beginning to encounter in the country. I thought I should follow his model somehow, and that led me to putting together a small group of friends, colleagues, and students (my students in the University of Jos) to start this new organization known as the Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse, such a long name but luckily we had an easy acronym -- CRISA.

So what led me to start an NGO was first of all learning from Ona Pela and also understanding that not much was happening in terms of doing something about what was emerging as a new problem in the country. You have to recall that interest in drug issues, substance abuse, and dependence on drugs started going back to the late 1950s, prominent in 1960s and this was, because of the work of some psychiatrists mostly in Western Nigeria, people like Professors Adeoye Lambo and Tolani Asuni and other psychiatrists in Aro and Yaba. These experts were beginning to see young people seeking treatment for substance related problems and they wrote articles about this in newspapers, published in scientific journals, talked about it with journalists. So around the early 1960s, substance abuse was beginning to be an issue, a public

health issue in the country, but not much was being done by anybody to understand the dimensions of the problem in terms of conducting population surveys. That was where Ona Pela and organizations like the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA) and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control came in, and that was where CRISA continued the journey. This need for general population surveys led me and CRISA to conduct the Middle Belt Survey on Alcohol and Drugs in the early 90s and our more recent direct involvement in data collection for the EU/UNODC National Drug Use Survey.



Barr. Miskom Puepet and Prof. Obot, 2010

As you have said, you studied psychology first degree, second degree, third degree, and then a Master's degree in public health. There are different other routes that you could have taken other than substance abuse, so what motivated you into substance abuse specifically?

Before I even went to Harvard to take courses specifically on substance abuse issues, I would say that the first time I was exposed to research on addiction in general was during a course in social psychology, when I was doing my Doctorate degree at Howard and that course dealt with issues around smoking prevention. One of the questions that intrigued me was why people smoke when smoking is so dangerous, and I remember I read a lot of articles on that topic and it took me to articles on smoking in Nigeria; so it was basically that interest about why people do things that are ultimately bad for them, why they engage in that kind of behavior; which is really a sad thing about substance abuse... you derive pleasure, but ultimately it can really be very harmful. So it was this interest that led me to this field and has kept me going; we understand a lot about it now but the science of addiction is still growing, it is something that we are still learning about, and it cuts across various disciplines, biology, neuroscience, public health, psychology, sociology and so forth.

You talked about how you started CRISA in Jos a little over 30 years ago. We want to believe you did not start alone, although you conceived the idea. So who were the people that travelled with you at the point of starting and what were their contributions?

Well, I still remember clearly the first meeting that I called; we used the psychology lab of the Department of Psychology, University of Jos. And whom did I invite? I sought the support of colleagues mostly from the Faculty of Social Sciences, people like [now Professors] Etannibi Alemika, Ogoh Alubo, colleagues in the Department of Psychology, Egwu U. Egwu, Amechi Nweze, etc. Eventually, younger people like Akanidomo Ibanga, Andrew Zamani, Gloria



Abuja CRISA Conference Peter Eriki, WHO Rep. 2010 and Prof. Obot

Karuri and others, got involved. These were people from the academia, but I also brought together people representing different government agencies. I can remember clearly that officers from the Nigeria Prison Service (as it was then called) were involved; there were some other government agencies that were related to issues of public safety and public health that were invited. Private individuals were also in the picture, for example, late Miskom Puepet provided funding for our early community outreach programme and we benefitted from advice from experts like Professors T. Adeoye Lambo, Tolani Asuni, Peter Ebigo and Tunde Makanju.

Sir, you said the journey started in Jos in 1990. At 30 how do you feel about the vision of CRISA?

What was our mission? We hoped then, when we got together in that room a little over 30 years ago, that we would be able to make a difference in two major areas. One was the knowledge area -- we thought that we will shed more light, we will bring more understanding to the problem that we were dealing with, and we sought to do this through research, by doing more research ourselves, and by encouraging other people to do research as well... and I think in some sense we have done relatively okay in that area.

The other area that we thought we could bring some improvement was in doing something about the problem, doing something in terms of prevention, in terms of treatment, and maybe here I can talk about what we do and you see how these things fit into the mission of knowledge and intervention.

In terms of knowledge I think we have done well and we have done these from two major perspectives; first is the production of knowledge materials. By knowledge materials, I am referring to our journal, the African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies, which has been in existence since 2000 and we are now in Volume 20. We publish twice a year, so that is an area that I think we have helped to at least encourage people to do research, because when you do research and you are not sure that you are going to be published or you will not have a chance to be considered for publication, it doesn't encourage you to continue. So we think we have done very well in that area.

Another type of knowledge products that we produce are books: mostly books from papers

presented at conferences. We have a series of books that we have published over the years, so we have done reasonably well in terms of fulfilling our knowledge function. The journal is the only journal of its kind in the African continent. We publish papers from all over the continent and as long as the work has something to do with drugs, alcohol and addictive behaviours in Africa it can be submitted for publication in the African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies (AJDAS).

The other area that we have tried and are still trying to do something about, is getting the knowledge out to policy makers, to professionals who are working in the field, and we do that, again, through publishing and distribution of the kind of materials that will provide information to the public and other people who are doing something about the problem. Another major thing we do is organising conferences, workshops, symposia. We started a conference series in 1991, one year after CRISA was founded, it is a biennial conference; except for the problem we had last year with COVID which we still have, we would have had our 15th conference by last year (2020).

When you run a biennial conference series, one year is left in between without a coming-together activity, so we started what is called the National Symposium series, which was launched in Uyo in 2013. People come from all over the world to attend the conference; it is mostly scientific and it is an opportunity to present research, so it is different from the national symposium, which has a scientific component but also has capacity building component especially for young researchers and professionals. We use the National Symposium to build the capacity of Nigerian researchers mostly, professionals and policy experts. It is an opportunity to run workshops, hold panel discussions around selected issues, whether the issue has to do with research or whether it has to do with policy. There has been a lot of emphasis on policy in the National Symposium, because CRISA believes that drug laws need to be reformed and that we need to be talking about that at this kind of events.



As we know rightly or wrongly that NGO's are sponsored, because it is not easy to finance it from private (personal) pockets, so 30 years down the line who have been your major

sponsors or supporters?

We have had sponsors over the years; we wouldn't have survived if we didn't have people wanting to help us in one way or the other. Let me give you one example in our flagship publication, the African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies. The journal has stayed alive all these years because there have been different types of people supporting us, either financially or just taking on some related responsibilities. It is not easy for an NGO to publish things and distribute them across the world without assistance.

When the journal was launched in Jos in 2000, I would say basically it was self-sponsored, by that I mean, friends contributed some Naira and I brought some Naira and we put these together for the publication. But soon after that, we got good assistance from the drugs unit of the Medical Research Council of South Africa headed by the distinguished researcher, Professor Charles Parry, which took on the responsibility of printing the Journal for us; so the journal was printed for some time in Cape Town and shipped to us in Nigeria. That was really a big help but it stopped because we got full sponsorship from the IOGT, a Swedish NGO dealing with alcohol prevention, which has changed its name now to MOVENDI International. They actually gave us money to publish the journal for a number of years and that responsibility was taken over by another Nordic organization in Norway, and this was FORUT which is a well known development NGO that does a lot of alcohol and drugs work across the world. They also provided funding to print the journal, to edit the journal and that was very helpful. So for the journal, we have received funding from these sources. Unfortunately the journal has been starving for funds in the past four years because grants are not forever and we are yet to find another sponsor.



Dr Musa Umar, Director, NAFDAC with Prof Obot

Over the years other publications have been sponsored by different groups and by different organizations. OSIWA – Open Society Institute for West Africa - an institute of Open Society Foundations has given us support. More recently, we have benefitted from grants from the European Union Development Funding to Nigeria; the project that is being funded by the EU and implemented by the UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime -- has given us the opportunity to publish some books and also special issues of the journal. We have received funding from UNODC, which helped us to produce a booklet informing parents and teachers on drug use. Generally, the UNODC has been a valued supporter and partner going back to the early 1990s.

At 30 years of CRISA, what have been your regrets or major challenges?

I wouldn't call them regrets ... there were and continue to be challenges, of course. One major challenge was that I was moving quite a bit in the 1990s and 2000s, which was good academically because I was having post-doctoral fellowships and other opportunities here and there, and when you are out of the country and your organisation is in the country, something has to give. But luckily we had some very effective people helping out. For example, I remember one international conference that was held in Abuja and I had to fly in to attend the conference, a conference that was hosted by my centre. That worked out because I had some good people on the ground, people like Dr Akanidomo Ibanga who is now working for the UNODC and Andrew Zamani, who is now a professor of Psychology.

For the period between 2002 and 2008, I was either working in Geneva, Switzerland, or in the US. No matter how useful people can be, without the head being there, things cannot be the same; but somehow things managed to continue to be run. Of course there was no time in my absence that I forgot



Director of CRISA and Daniel Amankwaah of ECOWAS

about the organization. I remember while living in Geneva, I was editing the journal from there, the journal was printed in South Africa and sent to Nigeria. When I then moved from Geneva to the US, I was editing and printing in the US and shipping from there. It was challenging but we managed to publish the journal and engage in other activities as a knowledge organization.

I need not say much about the challenge of funding because this is a perennial problem. Anybody running an NGO is familiar with this difficult terrain. Sometimes you are doing well and at other times not so good. For example, for several years our publishing activities were funded but right now there is really no funding for the journal, so we are looking for ways to make it an online journal only, or to begin to charge fees; we are one of the few journals that don't charge authors anything, but we are thinking that maybe we have to go that route to keep it alive. And with the editorial involvement of colleagues like Professor Charles Parry in South Africa and Professor James Gire in the US, the journal is in good hands.

At what point did you feel most fulfilled, satisfied or so encouraged to keep it up? Or, put another way, do you feel fulfilled?

I will say that, in general, I have never felt that I should not be doing what I am doing now or I should be doing anything else. The challenge is when you are not getting the kind of help you probably expect from people who should understand. I know that apart from generating and disseminating knowledge about drugs in Africa, we have also brought a lot of good to people in other ways. I have not talked about the work we do here in Uyo at the Drop-in-Centre (an out-patient health centre for people with drug use problems), which we started in 2015/2016 with support from the European Union through the Nigerian Government.

We have seen (attended to) close to 700 young people in Akwa Ibom State where we have the centre, which surprises people when they hear the number; and if we have seen 700 young people with drug and alcohol use disorders in Akwa Ibom in the past five years, it means there are hundreds of others who need help. It would have been great if we could expand the help to reach more people, provide the kinds of services that they need. For example, though not everybody who has a drug problem needs a residential facility, many do; so there are people who could benefit from a residential facility.

Yes, we need residential facilities, but we cannot do that alone, so NGOS like ours need the help of, not just government, but individuals who understand the problem, because there is a huge problem out there. There is hardly a family that is not impacted by addiction, so we are using this opportunity to call out to people, to individuals, to business people, to politicians, to professionals to help us in this regard. We need a residential facility that we can use to attend to those people whose problems require that they leave their familiar environments and go to live in a place for some months to receive professional care for their problems.

At 30, do you feel fulfilled having come this far?

I certainly do... but it is never quite complete fulfillment. I wish the Centre and I could do more... I think that CRISA has the potential to do a lot more than what we have done. While I certainly believe that we have done generally okay, there are things, as I said earlier in terms of the residential facility, that we still need to do, to make us feel fully fulfilled, if there is anything like being fully fulfilled.

Given an opportunity now to turn back the hands of the clock, at 30, do you feel that there are things you would have done differently?

I think we could have gotten into treatment much earlier. As an organization, we got into treatment in 2015 but due to the difficulties of getting things started,



Cross section of participants at the Nigeria Network on Drug Demand Reduction (NNDDR) Prevention Workshop, Jos, 2001



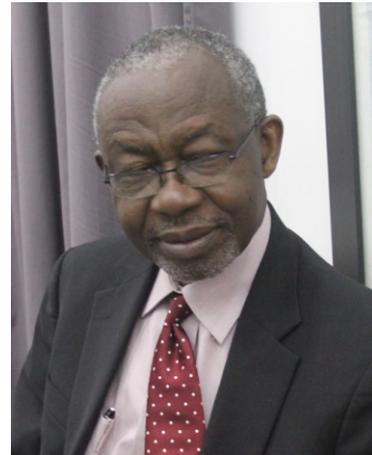
Professor James Gire, Department of Psychology, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA;
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, *African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies*



Front row from left, Dr Mrs Amali, Prof Amali & Antonio Mazzitelli of the UNODC, at the 1995 Conference



especially with the initial funding, we waited for the opportunity and got the opportunity in 2015 when we applied for funding from the UNODC-implemented European Union (EU) project to Nigeria. We knew that there were people using drugs, becoming dependent on drugs, having different kinds of substance use disorders. We had known that for a long time and I must say that we had occasions when people actually came to us and made some offers. For example, people came to us and offered us a piece of land in Abuja; we didn't take it on because while a piece of land is a good thing, it is not good enough if we do not develop it, and to develop it, you need funding and we never really were able to get that kind of funding. I think one area



that CRISA can do much better is in looking for funds from the non-traditional sources. We are very traditional in the sense that we go looking for money where grants are advertised by funding agencies, foundations and philanthropists. But there are other sources of money and support that we have not explored enough. One source as I said is individuals; there are people out there who may have money but we need to know who they are in the first place, and how to approach them, and also state governments and federal agencies. So these are areas that we have not done well and maybe that is where the future lies.

Given the experience that you have garnered over the years, if given an opportunity to turn things around, would you still want to be involved in this area of substance abuse?

I am primarily an academic and if I go back in time and I still remain an academic and a researcher this is the field that I would still want to be in. It is quite an exciting field and there is a lot to learn, there is a lot that we don't know and there is a lot of good that we can do in this field, and there are not too many people in the field in Africa. In Nigeria, part of what CRISA has tried to do is to increase the number of people doing research on substance abuse and I think, as I said earlier, through our publications, conferences, symposia we have made some impact in that regard.

This is CRISA at 30; as the conceiver, initiator, the brain behind CRISA or the one that started this NGO, before the golden jubilee, about 20 years from now, where do you see CRISA?

Well, that is a long time and I don't know who will be here by then, who will be sitting on this seat. However, my dream for CRISA is to see an organization well situated here in Uyo as its headquarters with a campus, not just a building that holds a library. You know we have a library here and I keep telling people if you need the largest collection of printed materials on drugs, alcohol and tobacco, this is the place to come to. So my picture is a campus that has structures with a library, with conference facilities, with meeting rooms and not far from the main campus should be a treatment facility. I want to see a place that people want to come to learn and I want to see a place where people will come to seek help from people who are

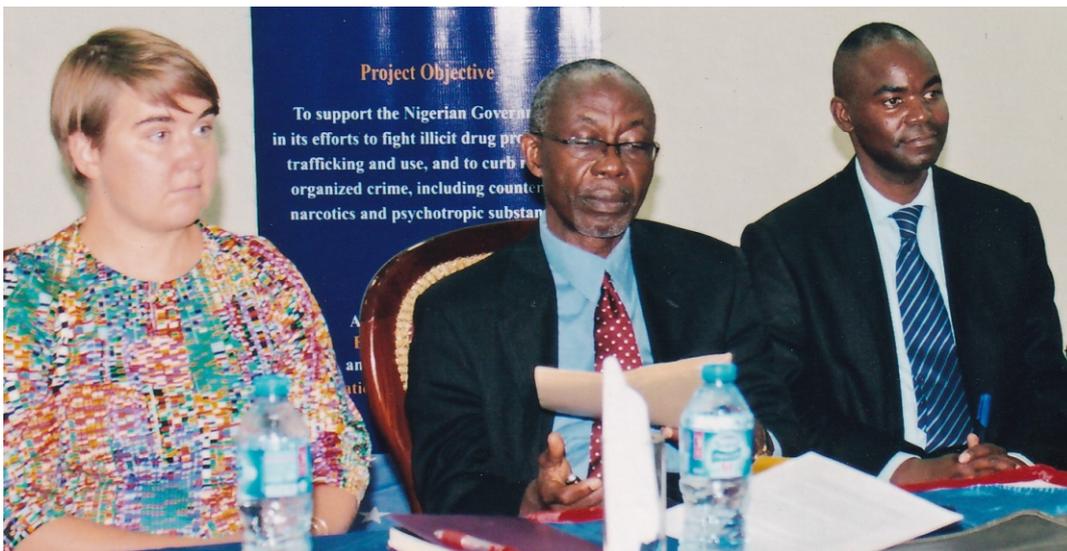
well-trained professionals. That is my picture of CRISA, and I would say that not even in 20 years time but way before 20 years, we should be able to attain that kind of objective.

As a professional in this field, what would you advise somebody who intends to start an NGO in this line, someone who wants to venture into an NGO in this field or similar or related area?

Well, I get asked for such advice actually; young people come to me and say they want to be like CRISA and what do they need to do to get started. My advice is always a very simple one -- believe in yourself and don't expect anyone to come to your rescue in the early days. So have some source of income, because you are going to spend your money whether you like it or not, especially at the very beginning, and if you are not willing and ready and capable of spending your own money, then there is a problem.

So that means you should have something else to do. In other words, don't see personal income coming from this, because if you want to depend on this for your income, then you probably would be hungry. If anything, the organization should be tapping from your source to grow. Some people register at the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and the first letter they write is to maybe UNODC, NDDC or NDLEA asking for financial support. Do something with whatever money you have or what your parents and friends can give you, something that you can show some evidence that you are serious about this. It is not an easy world, the NGO world; but if you stay the course the result can be life changing -- yours and that of others.

Thank you very much, Sir.



EU and AU Representatives at 2016 CRISA international conference, Barcelona Hotel, Abuja



Board of Trustee members: Justice Theresa Obot and Prof Tunde Makanju

■ *Goodwill Message* ■

Fatima Abiola Popoola DCN

There is no gainsaying that the Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA) is a forerunner in the fields of substance use, prevention, treatment and research in Nigeria. With the increased rates of drug trafficking and substance use in the society, CRISA has proven itself in the areas of researching into new trends in substance use and drug demand reduction activities and has been filling these gaps over the years through collaborations and partnership with organizations like the UNODC, NDLEA, the Nigeria Correctional Services, ISSUP, Teachers, NGOs, CSOs and other related stakeholders in the country, I am pleased to be associated with your good works.

On this 30th Anniversary of CRISA, there is the need for better knowledge, further collaborations, data collections and preservation, evidenced based practices and funding of research works in areas of drug trafficking and abuse especially among young people and women in general, this good work should continue. I therefore call on all stakeholders and well-wishers to continue to support this organization for the great work its doing and together we shall reduce the demand for illicit drugs in Nigeria.

Thank you for reading.

Signed:

Fatima Abiola Popoola

DCN is a Deputy Commander of Narcotics, Drug Demand Reduction at the NDLEA Kaduna State Command, the State Coordinator ISSUP Kaduna, an Addiction Counselor, a Researcher and a Trainer.

CRISA at 30: A WORTHY EXPEDITION

by **Mfon Ineme**, PhD

Department of Psychology, University of Uyo, Nigeria

I came in contact with CRISA about 12 years ago. Within these years I have found CRISA a rare and uncommon organization in Africa. Founded on sincerity of purpose, perseverance, and hard work, CRISA is simply an answer on the affirmative to the question: Can a good thing come out of Africa?

Drug problem in Africa has been on the rise in the past decades, especially with civilization and globalization. Few organizations within the continent may have taken some steps to curb or remedy substance abuse problem in Africa. But CRISA has invariably taken the foremost and most gigantic step in solving substance abuse problems within and beyond Africa.

CRISA conferences and symposia have provided platforms for cross-fertilization of ideas across the globe. I have personally benefited unspeakably.

CRISA research centre has provided a big pot, big enough for all interested scholars and researchers to eat from.

CRISA research has been a rich well of resources, giving reliable information in an era of paucity of reliable academic information. They have filled a gap and reduced intellectual bankruptcy.

CRISA journal has provided mentorship, tutelage, promotion, and guidance on publication of international standards, rare publications opportunities, global exposure, and true scholarship.

CRISA drop-in centre has given hope to the hopeless and help to the helpless.

I salute the boldness of Prof. Isidore Obot, a great son of Africa and a citizen of the globe. I covet his courage. I respect his doggedness. I appreciate his selflessness. I like his unwavering focus (on substance abuse) over the years.

From information to research, from research to conferences, from conferences to intervention, from intervention to policy, CRISA has covered.

Long live CRISA, our oasis of information on substance abuse!

Long live Nigeria, the giant of Africa!!

Long live Africa!!!

CRISA: 30 years of impact



Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria, making a speech at the 2014 conference, at Lagos Airport Hotel, Lagos



Prof Obot, Glen Pritchard, Professors Obianwu, Alemika and others at the 2017 National Symposium



Delegates at 2018 International Conference, Reiz Continental Hotel, Abuja.

CRISA: 30 years of impact



Participants at the 2018 International Conference, Reiz Continental Hotel, Abuja.



House of Reprs Members on a visit to Washington DC, led by CRISA Director, 2001



Professor Obot and Members, House of Representatives Committee on Drugs on visit to Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, Baltimore, with Professor Jim Anthony

(RC. 371, 555)

**SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL PEOPLE
(SIRP)**

FACILITATING LOCAL INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O.Box 144
Enugu Main post Office
Enugu, Nigeria



OFFICE ADDRESS

No. 161 Agbani
Uwani Enugu, Nigeria
+234-0734161674
Email: sirpnigeria@gmail.com
Website: www.sirpnigeria.org
Facebook: SIRPNigeria.
Twitter: @SIRPNig

A GOODWILL MESSAGE SUBMITTED BY DR CHRIS.N.UGWU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL PEOPLE ON THE OCCASION OF CRISA'S 30TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

Society for the Improvement of Rural People (SIRP Nigeria) heartily congratulates CRISA on this her 30th anniversary. CRISA is a devoted professional organization like no other on drug and alcohol research, prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, and promotion of healthy lifestyles among Africans.

CRISA has enhanced the capacity of African scholars and professionals to engage in research that advance our understanding of psychoactive drugs, drug use and drug related problems.

I paused, looked back and realized that it has been an amazing 8 years of relationship between SIRP Nigeria and CRISA in our collective commitment and journey for Drug prevention and treatment of substance use disorders in Nigeria; particularly in our participation in her biennial international conferences and national symposium.

Nevertheless, there is still so much to do! The recent Drug Use survey in Nigeria of 2019 which was conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and CRISA, with technical support from the UNODC, and funded by the European Union is a great window of opportunity that we will continue to explore.

Congratulations on your milestone achievements. We wish you more successful work years ahead.



MOBILE MANNA FOUNDATION

... Raising the Bar of Hope

Project Office:

72 Ikot Udoro Road
off Ikot Ekpene Road
P.O.Box 2668, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State
Tel: 07080013201, 08039489205

E-mail: Info@mobilemannafoundation.org
Website: www.mobilemannafoundation.org

June 28, 2021.

Prof. Isidore Obot,
The Executive Director
CRISA
84 Aka-Itiam Street, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State.

GOODWILL MESSAGE

The Board of Trustees, Advisory Council, Staff, Members and Patients of the Mobile Manna Foundation, felicitate with you, the Management and Staff of Center for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA) on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of your establishment.

It is indubitable that, CRISA, has over the years been one of the leading organizations that have stood tall both internationally and locally in addressing drugs-related issues by providing reliable and relevant data and information to strengthen drug use and policy in Nigeria. Your commitment to this course has helped international agencies and the Federal Government of Nigeria in designing evidence based responses to drug use problems in Africa. Your success is indeed applaudable and worthy of emulation.

We cannot fail to acknowledge your unflinching support to our Foundation in the past years. We are proud to be associated with the CRISA as we offer drug-related services in Akwa Ibom State.

We are, therefore, delighted to be a part of this unique occasion. Be assured of our prayers as we continue to promote a drug free and productive society. May God continue to bless and sustain you and the CRISA family.

Accept our Congratulations!

Yours in the service of God and humanity.

Fr. Donatus Ukpong,
Founder/CEO

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rev. Fr. Dr. Donatus P. Ukpong, Sr. Catherine Nkeruwwem
Prof. (Mrs.) Inyang Udofot, Hon. Justice Winifred I.A. Effiong, Barr. Ben Obaika

TREATMENT SERVICES



C RISACare Addiction Services, a Drop-In Centre (DIC) of the Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA), was established in May 2016 with support from the project, 'Response to Drugs and Related Organized Crime in Nigeria' funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Background

In all cities across the world, growth and development come with social problems. One of these is drug use and abuse. Recent surveys by local researchers and international organizations indicate a high and increasing prevalence of psychoactive substance use in Nigeria. The findings show that drugs commonly used include alcohol, cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines, heroin, opioids and other prescription drugs. Demand for treatment services has consequently been on the increase across the country.

In spite of the high and increasing demand for drug dependence counselling and other services few facilities exist in the country. For example, in Akwa Ibom State (current home of CRISA), the only referral facilities available are the psychiatric unit of University of Uyo Teaching Hospital and the Psychiatric

Hospital, Eket. But these facilities are grossly inadequate in terms of space, scope, equipment and manpower, leaving parents and affected people with no choice other than to take their wards to traditional healers, prayer houses and other places where services are not only crude and often inhuman, but are not based on scientific evidence. People who use drugs (including injecting drug users) and their partners and families face very serious issues. Many of these people are homeless, hopeless, and helpless, isolated, frightened and are suffering from physical and mental problems.

CRISACare Drop-in Centre (DIC) was set up to address this situation. The project is implemented as a contribution to meeting the enormous need for treatment services for drug dependent persons and their families. It adopts a community-centred and cost-effective approach to the provision of services. The location of the DIC in Uyo is at 10 Okon Essien Close, off NEPA Line, Uyo. The DIC operates from 8am to 5pm, Mondays through Fridays, and from 10am to 2pm on Saturdays every week.

Crisacare's staff training is based on holistic healing and the use of motivational interviewing as well as other CBT techniques to treat not just substance dependence, but also the underlying conditions that cause addiction. Treating the underlying conditions is the central part of getting individuals who visit the centre to make progress. This is the key

philosophy of Crisacare as these underlying conditions, if not properly treated, can drive individuals back to the use of drugs and alcohol. When these underlying conditions that perpetuate the addiction are healed, it becomes much easier to stay away from substance use.

Records show that 693 drug users have presented at the DIC to utilize services between June 2016 and July 2021. Most clients are male. Clients use different types of licit and illicit drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cocaine, heroin and prescription medications (e.g., tramadol, codeine and rohypnol). The most commonly used drugs are cannabis, alcohol and tobacco. The use of heroin, methamphetamines and prescription medications (mostly opioids) is a growing problem. The centre provides essential services to clients, including basic health services, individual and group counselling, group therapy, family therapy, drug information and education, Voluntary HIV counselling and testing (VCT) and distribution of condoms.

Over the years, the centre has developed and implemented a publicity plan with the goal of getting more individuals and families to know about and utilize services provided at the centre. These involved activities designed to create awareness on drug use and related harms and services provided at the centre and to encourage utilization by members of the community. The specific strategies adopted included advocacy visits to stakeholder organizations, public events and use of the media, including banners, flyers, radio announcements and social media platforms. Implementation of this plan is ongoing and includes outreach to brothel-

based sex workers and secondary school students, advocacy visits to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Human Rights Commission, State Agency for the Control of AIDS (SACA) and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). Flyers and banners have been printed and deployed to create awareness of existing services.

Achievements

The major successes recorded during the period under review are as follows:

- Overall improvement in the general wellbeing of many of our clients with reduction and cessation of substance use;
- Reintegration of clients with their families and loved ones;
- Improved control of blood pressure among clients through early detection and treatment;
- Improvements in clients' health behaviours, including weight control, routine exercises, improved dieting and adequate sleep;
- Increased enrolment of female clients in treatment.

The Future

In response to high demand for residential facilities for certain persons with substance use disorders in the state and all over Nigeria, CRISA has embarked on a plan to provide in-patient services to clients whose conditions require such services. In order to achieve this objective, the Centre seeks collaboration with and support from individuals, other non-governmental organizations, the private sector and government.

CRISA: 30 years of impact



Cutting the 25th Anniversary cake; Professor Obot assisted by CRISA friends at Barcelona Hotel, Abuja, 2016



Dr Gboyega Abikoye, Prof Andrew Zamani, Prof Akinawo and another delegate at the 2013 National Symposium, Governor's Office Annex, Uyo

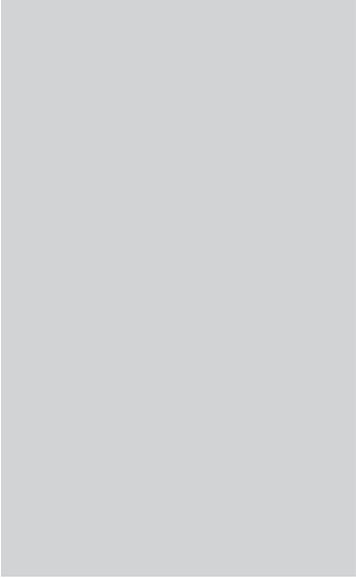


Peter Sylvester at the registration desk, 2013 Symposium, Uyo



Anyiebiet Umoh, First Administrative Assistant, Uyo CRISA Office

Shariq Bin Raza, UNDCP Representative, at the 1995 CRISA Conference



**CRISA
ASSOCIATES
SPEAK**



“CRISA is one of the best Educational and Health Intervention NGOs in Africa”



Professor
Andrew Zamani

CRISA is one of the best educational and health intervention NGO's in Africa... and that translates to the fact of the positioning of Professor Obot, CRISA's director... he is a great gift to humanity. Right now CRISA is a household name in all academic circles, in Nigeria, and Africa. CRISA has created very significant footprints over time... and as a matter of fact, is a very serious global player in matters of research, on drugs and drug education.

I think most of the foundational objectives of CRISA have been overshot... overshot in the sense that CRISA keeps expanding the space for social and educational impact. When this idea was mooted, and CRISA was eventually registered, the idea was to provide a resource base for the community, for people to access readable materials and other resources on drugs and substance use/abuse, so as to bring about behaviour change. This was quickly followed up by a bi-monthly seminar series. These were usually very well attended and proceedings of such gatherings (seminars, workshops, meetings), were always disseminated through radio and television. CRISA made great impact in Jos at the very early stages...

A library was set up... supply of materials in very large quantities came in from the USA mainly... and other parts of the world...which eventually became veritable materials for students to reference for their research projects... Invariably, people began to develop interest in drug and alcohol use research.

People came to the library to access help; from Professor Obot himself, who had by now succeeded in convincing

his colleagues in the department of Psychology, that the issues around and about drug use, was an important issue worth paying attention to.

As time went on, CRISA began to access grants for national and international conferences, grants for research and then eventually for its publications... and you know, the *African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies* (AJDAS), is the lead Journal in Africa, on this subject matter. Right now, we have watched CRISA over the years expand its coast, to impacting on the UNODC, the NDLEA and for the first time, an NGO/CSO in Nigeria has assisted governments to derive national statistics on the condition of drug use in Nigeria. So, CRISA has achieved its set objectives, and I am really very glad to be associated with the organization.

At the outset, Prof Obot was focused, and I think, rather than pay attention to any distractions, he decided to recruit his post graduate students, for mentoring and I am a beneficiary of that deliberate action of his; he gave me an insider's position and opportunity, to make my own contributions... also to be a part of the organization he was setting up... so it was very easy for me and some of my colleagues, like Akanidomo Ibanga to flow; Gloria Karuri, Paul Wai and co. to identify and to deploy ourselves to contributing to the realization of his set vision.

At some point, he needed to acquire further education, outside the shores of Nigeria, so some of the things he would have wished to accomplish personally, now had to be delegated to others. But... to sustain what he started, he gave some

of us trust; Akanidomo, myself, Gloria Karuri and others. We had to maintain the library, keep it open and running, ensure that the bi-monthly seminars went on... whatever he could afford the resources to avail us to do, he made sure we had access to those resources, so the work may continue...

So when he came back, he met CRISA in good shape. I am glad that upon his return (he had given us so much confidence) he met an organization that was not just stable, but also growing... with the level of confidence he reposed in us, we were bold to take whatever lawful actions necessary, to ensure that CRISA was popularized and got credibility in the circles that were relevant. For instance, once or twice while he was away, we were able to run conferences, in Abuja... That was a little strenuous, because Jos that was our base, was where we were known... but now CRISA now extended its influence beyond our comfort zone and eventually CRISA became a household name, not just in Jos, but in the Federal Capital territory. When he eventually relocated to Uyo (upon his return to Nigeria), where he was assuming the headship of the Department of Psychology at the University of Uyo, people acknowledged him, and followed him. Uyo is now also a hub for research in drug prevention, treatment, and drug education engagements. So these were some of the challenges we faced, which became stepping stones for most of us.

Professor Obot is a go-getter, he is one who is very consistent in his mission and who has been very consistent too, in his relationship with people that have relevance to his vision... Such that it has

not been too difficult for him to grow the project

How did we overcome the odds? I do not know other than to say that with his openness, his availability, we could get in touch with him at all times. He gave us the opportunity to share our ideas, without making us feel inferior... His openness in terms of the resources of CRISA (Financial and material resources) that he began to acquire for CRISA, made it easy for us to keep trust, work our whole hearts out, to ensure that this trust that was invested in us, was not abused.

Professor Obot also developed capacity within the leadership of CRISA. Now, talking about those of us he entrusted with leadership in the organization he gave us opportunities to access/attend international training programmes, he gave us the opportunity to attend meetings within Nigeria, West Africa, Africa and the rest of the world. Sometimes we were given the opportunity to represent CRISA at very elevated platforms. He did not look down on us, as younger or less knowledgeable people. He was training us to be the best of what we ought to be... so with such disposition, it would have been very difficult for any of us to abuse the trust, rather, we bonded closer with him as our leader, motivator, mentor and patriarch, that we must always look up to, for guidance... so, whatever contributions one has made in CRISA, owes to that disposition and dispensation.

My first contact with CRISA? I just returned to UNIJOS after my NYSC year, the very year Professor Obot assumed duties in Jos (1985), having freshly returned from his studies in the USA. The

Professor Obot I remember made the point that the Master's Degree that we came for (we were just two in that programme, but my colleague did not push it to the end)... Professor Obot looked at the training programme (curriculum), adjusted it and got the department to approve it, so that our Master's programme in Clinical Psychology, will be richer and impact us better, intellectually, and will be of better relevance to the immediate environment, and the country at large.

That was my first contact with Professor Obot, and because I benefitted from that generous, but rigorous and engaging disposition with/from him, I decided that I will pitch my academic tent with him and of course, I returned for a Ph.D. after a few years.

Then again I met Professor Obot, who said that my Ph.D. will be more useful, if I did a residency in the department... so I was engaged in doing lectures... I engaged (interacted) with the faculty. He said I should do all these, so that I may have proper guidance, from established scholars and experts in the field (the faculty), so that I may fully and contemplatively think through the areas of my intended research concerns... Because I took that advice... it paid well for me. Let me also state again that I was the first beneficiary of such an innovation. Right now, I am a Professor of Clinical Psychology, I had my Ph.D from UNIJOS... but ...when I talk to people, they ask me, where did you train? Did you study in London, Canada, USA or what? My humble but steady strides are courtesy of my association with Professor Obot... I owe him quite a lot.

CRISA: 30 years of impact



CRISA Director with students of the Department of Psychology, University of Uyo, at the inaugural symposium, 2013



The research team on the project "Harm to Others from drinking alcohol" Helsinki, Finland, 2013

As his protégé, I have also grown to become the president of the Nigerian Psychological Association (NPA)... I have actually taken after him because he is a one-time president of the Nigerian Psychological Association... Again I must say that, whether I have done well (or badly), it is for him and others to tell... but I pride myself in the assured fact that I took after him; he is my teacher, and played a huge role in my formation.

Right now, I sit on the executive committee of the Pan African Psychological Association... I know that I feature very, very prominently there... because, my colleagues on the executive committee of the Union treat me with respect. Just recently, I was elected into the executive Committee of the International Union of Psychological Scientists.

Going forward I think CRISA should continue to expand its place/space in research leadership ... CRISA should think in the direction of promoting research fellowships for people all over the continent of Africa and other parts of the world, to come and do some work (research) at CRISA.

Going forward, I believe very strongly that CRISA has what it takes to make a lead

move, to have a state of the Art Drug Rehabilitation facility... Moving forward, I see CRISA upgrading to a continental training institute... some of the training we get from the Colombo Plan and some Austrian based organizations... CRISA has what it takes, to do training and certification programmes for those who want to do research, drug prevention/intervention trainings and so on.

I would also love CRISA to begin to contemplate establishing three satellite offices in Nigeria; one in Lagos (for the West), another in Abuja (for the North), in addition to one in the South/South, which should also service the South Eastern States.

The National Assembly should collaborate on a continuous basis with CRISA and you cannot achieve that without having an office in Abuja. Uyo is okay, but those additional operational outlets will be very complementary. I believe that the consultancy role of CRISA, is sorely needed in Abuja, and will be greatly helped by its official presence in Abuja [Between 1999 and 2003, CRISA served as a consultant to both the Senate and House of Representatives Committees on drugs and Narcotics]. NDLEA too, is in dire need of the technically competent counsel of CRISA, to guide policy and other interventions



CRISA Staff with National Orientation Agency State Director, Akwa Ibom, 2019

CRISA: 30 years of impact



Prof Isidore Obot and Controller of Corrections Akwa Ibom State, Akinola Orisabinone, May 2021



Dr Charles Parry (left), Derek Rutherford (Right) Chair of the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA) and another guest at the 2010 CRISA Conference in Chelsea Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria



Drug Abuse, Prevention Treatment and Care (DPTC) Training for law enforcement agencies in Akwa Ibom State; supported by the UNODC, 2020

***“There is a Contagious
Atmosphere of Zeal
for Excellence at
CRISA”***



Gboyega Abikoye

*Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology
Department of Psychology,
University of Uyo*

I am Gboyega Emmanuel Abikoye, a PhD holder in Clinical Psychology from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. I am a member of the Board of Trustees and the General Secretary of ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, and an Associate Deputy Director at the Center for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA). As a researcher, I have published widely on epidemiology and psychosocial underpinning of substance use, prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, psychopathology, and health-related quality of life.

I came in contact with CRISA in October 2010 and over the last one decade; my relationship with CRISA has been beneficial and scientifically enriching. My contact with CRISA has enhanced my scientific exposure and scholarly visibility. My close association with CRISA has sharpened my technical and organizational skills.

CRISA is one of the best non-governmental organizations (NGOs), not only in Nigeria but in Africa. CRISA's track record of integrity, evidence-based convictions, pursuits of excellence and strong national and international recognition are unparalleled among NGOs in Nigeria.

For 30 unbroken years, CRISA has demonstrated an uncommon resilience and consistency as epitomized by its organization of arguably, the best biennial conference series for three decades – despite daunting challenges. The African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies (AJDAS), Africa's foremost addiction journal now in its 20th Volume, also bears ample testimonies to CRISA's scientific and scholarly prowess.

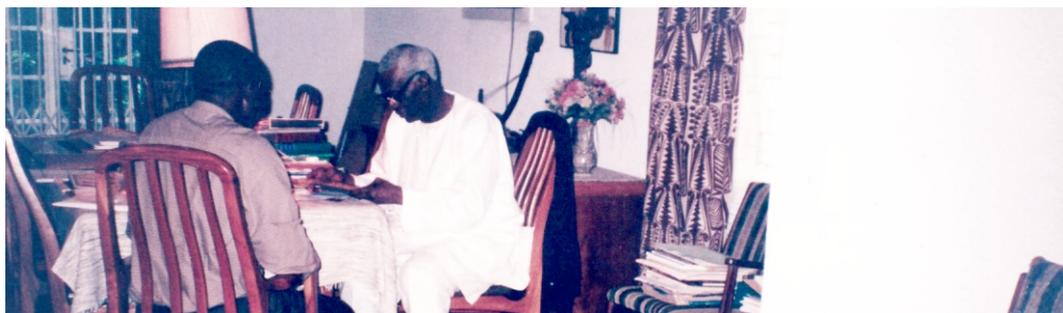
The programmes of CRISA are impactful to the scientific

community and the society at large. Since my first contact with CRISA and up till now, my impression is that CRISA's programmes and activities are driven by scientific evidence and there is no room for arbitrariness or evidence-free practices in CRISA. CRISA's management is also democratic – decisions about

planning and execution of programmes are taken collectively and democratically. In terms of personnel, CRISA has a knack for identifying and grooming highly intelligent and motivated individuals. Generally, there is a contagious atmosphere of zeal for excellence at CRISA.



Prof Obot, Brig-Gen Buba Marwa and Others at the 4th Biennial National Symposium, 2019



Early days: Prof. Obot with Prof. Lambo



Early days: CRISA pioneers; Gloria Karuri, Mary-Queen Idongesit Ekong and Professor Isidore Obot

*“I am Glad to be
part of
CRISA”*



Nyitor A. Shenge,

Ph.D, FNPA, FNIM, FIMC, CMC

Professor of Industrial & Organizational/

Consumer Psychology

Department of Psychology,

University of Ibadan, Ibadan, NIGERIA

I graduated from the Department of General and Applied Psychology, University of Jos (Unijos), Plateau State in 1990. Professor Isidore Obot was one of my most cherished teachers in the department during my undergraduate study there. Professor Obot's teaching, scholarship, diligence and organized nature have impacted me a great deal. The year of my graduation (1990) from UNIJOS was the same year that the African Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA) was founded in Jos, Nigeria as an Independent, Non-profit, Organization devoted to drug and alcohol research, prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. I cannot recollect which event (the founding of CRISA and my graduation) came first. This is not relevant in this case.

I started hearing about the activities of CRISA from my late teacher and friend, Professor Fred Tamen barely few years after the Centre was founded. Professor Tamen was obviously passionate about the Centre and its activities. But I did not get involved in the activities of CRISA until just about five or six years ago. Perhaps my being outside the country for a long time at a point prevented me from getting involved with CRISA. Perhaps my being an I-O psychologist led me to think that I had little or nothing to do with CRISA. All these changed when I saw a CRISA

conference flyer on a colleague's office table in Psychology Department at the University of Ibadan some years back. I submitted an abstract for CRISA paper presentation at Abuja. It was accepted and I attended at my personal cost. The conference experience was fascinating. After that I attended CRISA events (still at Abuja) back to back and both were fully sponsored by UNODC. I presented papers which were well received like the first. I also enjoyed numerous presentations and other conference activities which gave me an opportunity to learn a lot during each event.

Since my encounter with CRISA, my understanding of issues relating to drug and alcohol research, prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, as well as promotion of healthy lifestyles increased. I have since realized that my I-O and Public Health Sciences backgrounds can be creatively and beneficially packaged to blend with the subject of drug and alcohol use, research, treatment and prevention. I am glad to be part of CRISA and eagerly look forward to participating more in the activities of the Centre in the years ahead.





Cross Section of students from Cornelia Connelly College Uyo
at a community event organised by CRISA, 2013, Uyo



Cross Section of students from Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom
at a community event organised by CRISA, 2013

***“Celebration of thirty (30)
years of service to
humanity”***



Okokon Umoh
*Department of Psychology,
University of Uyo
Nigeria*

I came in contact with Center for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA) sometime in March 2008, just when the center relocated from Jos to Uyo, Nigeria, following Prof. I. S Obot's retirement from Unijos. We (myself and Miss Anyiebiet Umoh) saw to the day –to–day running of the new center as young graduates, motivated, directed and guided by Prof's wealth of experience in addiction science research, advocacy and education.

Overtime, I owe my experience in community outreach and counseling engagements, addiction science research and publication, organization of local and international conferences, symposia and workshops to Prof. Obot would spare no effort in seeing me through this learning curve.

It is my sincere hope that as CRISA celebrates her thirty year of impactful service to humanity, she would consolidate on these achievements by redirecting her energies to an evolving area of need in the continent; evidence – based intervention practices. From the depth of my heart, I thank thank Prof. Obot immensely for giving me the opportunity to serve, while wishing the entire CRISA family, a happy 30th anniversary – Congratulations!

***“CRISA has presented
a Model to
Follow”***



Nsidibe Francis
Clinical Psychologist

I am Nsidibe Francis, a clinical psychologist and currently the programme manager of CRISA and a UNODC master trainer on Drug Abuse Prevention Treatment and Care. I came into contact with CRISA in 2009 when CRISA relocated to Uyo and this has been sustained over the years. As a researcher, I was part of the Alcohol Harm to Others Research undertaken by CRISA in 2012 and that marked a significant milestone in my engagement with CRISA. Subsequently, I have had an uninterrupted engagement with CRISA since 2016 when the Drop-in Centre began and throughout the lifespan of the project as the centre's counsellor. During these years, CRISA has impacted in the lives of close to 700 people who use drugs and who have made significant progress in their lives by offering intervention to help ameliorate the harms associated with the use of drugs.

In the peak of the COVID-19 lockdowns in Nigeria, CRISA in assisting people who use drugs offered different forms of palliatives and reliefs to clients of the centre. All of these services were offered for free for the cumulative years that the centre has been functioning.

CRISA as an organisation has been a great asset to Africa and the world and today, we are happy that CRISA has clocked 30 years. Thirty years is a long, LONG time. Most of these years were spent toiling to make positive contributions even with budget constraints. For many of us, CRISA has presented a model to follow and the remarkable contributions of CRISA have touched our lives and many lives. CRISA deserves many congratulations and we look forward to many more years!

CONGRATULATIONS



Cross Section of Participants at the CRISA conference, Jos, 2000



4th *Biennial National Symposium On Drugs And Drug Policy In Nigeria*
23rd - 24th Oct. 2019 @ Chelsea Hotel, Abuja
Prof Obot with Brig-Gen Buba Marwa, Chairman/CE, NDLEA



Line up of CRISA publications and CRISA staff at a conference

***“CRISA is Renowned
for Professional Delivery,
Quality Staffing, Globally
Recognized Programmes”***



Otuekong Isang
Director, Human Progeny

My name is Otuekong Isang, the Director of Human Progeny - a child and family development organization with a vision to preserve, promote and protect family values at all levels of influence.

Our organization - Human Progeny - came into contact with CRISA in 2008 in Abuja, Nigeria where we participated in Alcohol, Drugs and Society in Africa Conference at Chelsea Hotel.

The nature of our association with CRISA has been an eventful learning experience both personally as a volunteer for CRISA for about 12 years and also as an organization. Over the years, I have seen the integrity of science protected by CRISA in her publications, adherence to evidence-based practice in her intervention approach to drugs and alcohol problems in Africa. The exceptional leadership of Prof. Isidore Obot who also doubles as an authoritative voice in Drugs and Alcohol policy globally also brings tremendous window of learning curves for all CSOs, NGOs and FBOs driving substance abuse intervention through their different thematic area approaches.

Since our contact, CRISA keeps me on my toes and makes me look out for global trends in Substance Abuse intervention. The network of professionals during her programs and training has also made me build professional relationships with amazing colleagues who are doing incredible work in the field of substance abuse intervention.

CRISA is renowned for professional delivery, quality staffing, globally recognized programmes by frontline public health bodies like UNODC, WHO, and the Federal Government of Nigeria, inspiring alliance with professionals all around the world, and holistic approach to research and other activities.

CRISA has successfully maintained a standard of quality public health and development practice since its inception in the early 90s. This accomplishment has been steadily sustained over the three decades of CRISA's existence. Its penetrative influence has also been clearly visible through CRISA's publication of Journal of Alcohol Studies. This body of

evidence and tremendous literature plays a major role in the organization's success story as a leading research power house in Africa. Coupled with tremendous support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union (EU), CRISA has carved out a niche for itself in Substance Abuse intervention.

Its strategic collaboration with African professionals, governments and bodies in this field also reveal the organization's level of commitment to changing the narrative in drug problems generally. CRISA programmes are always very educative, scientific, collaborative, strategic, holistic, and there are always new trends to watch out for in every CRISA programme.

CRISA IN PICTURES



***“At 30, CRISA
is a Warehouse
of Excellence”***



Gloria Akpabio.
Psychologist

I am Gloria Akpabio, a Clinical Psychologist and currently a Counsellor at CRISA and a UNODC Master Trainer on Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Care.

My first contact with CRISA was as an undergraduate student in 2012 and later became a full member of the centre in 2016. Since then, I have enjoyed daily learning from the Executive Director, Prof Isidore Obot and colleagues at different standing.

Through my association with CRISA, I have grown appreciably as a Psychologist and as a Substance Use Professional. Also, with the exposure in CRISA, I have participated in various projects both in and with CRISA as a group, and as an individual through CRISA. I have also grown academically and professionally, as well as develop quality relationships with people beyond the academia.

Working with CRISA is one opportunity that has incredibly transformed me.

At 30, CRISA has become a mega refinery not only for Psychologists and Sociologists, but Social Scientists especially those with interest in drugs, drug use research I remain grateful to CRISA for the opportunity to be part of this warehouse of excellence.

Congratulations to CRISA at 30.

CRISA: 30 years of impact

THE EARLY YEARS



“CRISA is an Organization that has Withstood the Test of the Time”



Rachel Bolaji Asagba (RIP)

*Professor of Clinical Psychology
University of Ibadan*

I am Rachel Bolaji Asagba, a professor of Clinical Psychology (with a specialty in Logotherapy) at the University Of Ibadan. I obtained my diploma in Nutrition and Dietetics from Vienna, Austria in 1976, a BA in Psychology from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, New York, USA in 1985 and a Master's in Psychology and Nutrition Counseling from Clayton University in Missouri. My PhD thesis was on Religion and Belief Systems (University Of Ibadan).

I am the managing director of the Medical Counseling and Referral Centre, Ojoo, Ibadan, offering counseling to her various clients.

I have been in contact with CRISA since its first conference in 1991 I attended the very first conferences and I even volunteered to help organizing the conferences with the then Dr, now Prof. Zamani. Since then, I have hardly missed a conference of CRISA.

It has been informative and educative for me. I have learnt a lot from presenters as well as from interacting with participants. This in turn has enriched my teaching of substance abuse at the university.

CRISA is an organization that has withstood the test of the time. It is indeed commendable that despite all the challenges that NGOs face in Nigeria, CRISA has been consistent and is thriving.

I must congratulate CRISA on all her strides so far. Apart consulting for a number of organizations and run many

successful conferences, CRISA is also digital with a website and social media accounts, including Facebook. This is very important for health education and promotion in today's world.

I have to give kudos to Prof Obot. He is an erudite and prolific scholar with a strong

work ethic who has been able to bring his wealth of knowledge and experience from USA and WHO to CRISA. These explain why the activities and programmes of the organization are innovative and unique

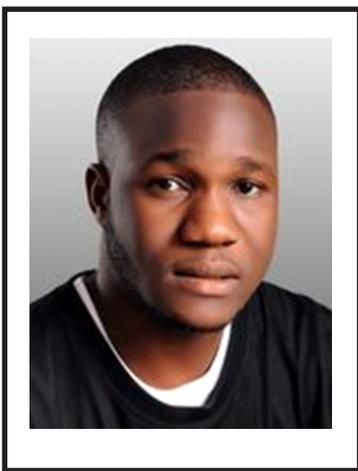


Police Band performing at a CRISA event



Members of National Assembly at a CRISA event

“The Activities and Programmes of CRISA are of Immense Necessity in Africa”



Steven Kator

*Department of Psychology,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka*

I am Steven Kator, a positive psychologist and researcher pioneering research in the field of value for life. My other research interests are centered on human well-being/thriving, substance abuse, environmental sustainability and climate change. Driven by this research exuberance, I have explored virgin research areas that cut across psychology, geography, sociology and criminology. I have been an active participant and presenter in many conferences and have published sound academic papers in reputable journals across the globe.

I came in contact with CRISA in 2018, and over the years, CRISA has graciously supported my research in substance use, providing an internationally recognized outlet for publication of my research findings and sponsored me for many of her conferences. My contact with CRISA has greatly positively impacted my research in substance use and misuse. Through the opportunity for UNODC sponsorships, CRISA has aided my research/presentation and publication of findings. Also, the opportunities available for mentorship and training during conferences and workshops have been of great benefit.

The activities and programmes of CRISA are of immense necessity in Africa and so far, have been of great benefit to researchers and policy makers in the area of substance use and misuse. CRISA as the first of its kind in the continent has set the pace for others to follow. She has greatly excelled in the midst of difficulties and there is yet room for more growth. The activities and programmes of CRISA are designed in line with international best practices and have been very instrumental in structuring substance use research in Nigeria and Africa at large.

***“CRISA has a strong
Penchant for Academic
Excellence and Integrity”***



Macpherson Uchenna Nnam, PhD
*Department of Criminology and Security Studies
Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike,
Ikwo, PMB 1010, Ebonyi State, Nigeria*

I am Macpherson Uchenna Nnam, a Lecturer in the Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike (AEFUNAI), Ebonyi State, Nigeria. I earned my PhD in Criminology (UNICAL); MSc in Criminology and BSc in Sociology and Anthropology, respectively (EBSU). I specialize in Activist/Critical Criminology and Organised Crime, with subspecialty in Kidnapping, Terrorism and Radical Social Movements.

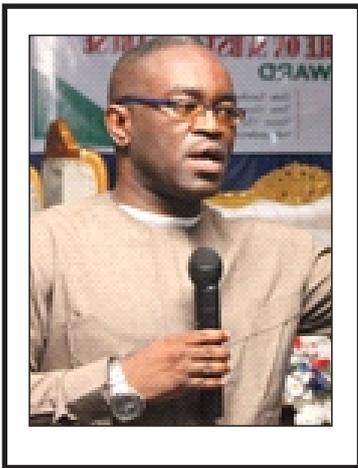
I came in contact with CRISA in September 2016 till date and my association with CRISA has been cordial, engaging, and evidence-based.

My contact with CRISA has been evidently impactful and particularly broadened my horizons in interdisciplinary scholarship. I have received both academic and economic empowerment, supports from this prestigious organisation through grants and publication of my research outcomes in its international learned outlet, African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies.

CRISA has strong penchant for academic excellence and integrity, as evidenced by the high quality of its members of staff, scholarly works, conference and symposium procedures and participants, and the floated journal (Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies).

CRISA has gained a resounding success on the intellectual, social capital and community development/service front. The activities of CRISA are merit-based, objective and nondiscriminatory.

“CRISA Bridges the Gap in Research needs in Nigeria and Africa on Substance Use”



Pharm. Nonso Maduka,
*Executive Director Bensther Development Foundation,
National Secretary Community Intervention Network on Drugs,
and National Trainer Universal Prevention Core Colombo Plan*

My name is Pharm. Nonso B. C Maduka, the Executive Director Bensther Development Foundation, National Secretary Community Intervention Network on Drugs, and National Trainer Universal Prevention Core Colombo Plan

I came in contact with CRISA in 2014 through participations in the CRISA Conference, collaborations to host the National Symposium on Drug Abuse, and I have worked with CRISA as the Southeast B Research Team Lead for the National Problematic Drug Use Survey.

Since my contact with CRISA, it has been very educative, both through the CRISA Conference and National Symposium on Drugs and also the mentoring role of Prof. Isidore Obot in substance use in the country.

The CRISA Conferences and National Symposium have been very educative and so valuable, and at 30, CRISA has been a great success to the Substance Use Intervention Community in the country generally.

CRISA also goes a long way to bridge the gap of the research need in the country and Africa on the subject of substance use.

“CRISA has Significantly Impacted on my Career both as Physician, Researcher and Academic”

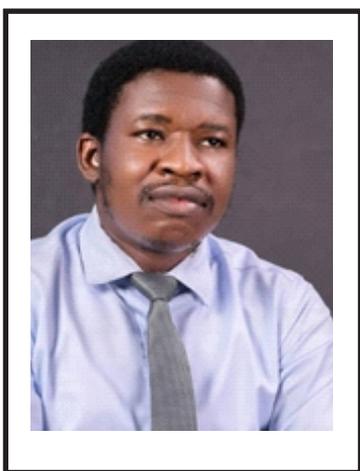
CRISA has Significantly Impacted on my Career both as Physician, Researcher and Academic. My name is Mufutau Yunusa, a Consultant Psychiatrist and a Professor of Psychiatry. I had contact with CRISA in 2009 when I attended and presented a paper at CRISA Conference. At the conference, we were informed about KBS conference in Uganda. The opportunity given to me by CRISA marked my first exposure to international conferences. I am very grateful to CRISA. With regards to my association with CRISA, though I would have loved to participate more actively, I see the association as elitist or conservative.

Mufutau Yunusa

*Consultant Psychiatrist and
Professor of Psychiatry
Usmanu Dan Fodio University, Sokoto*

CRISA has significantly impacted on my career both as physician, researcher and academic. In fact my exposure to CRISA conference defined my research development and inclinations as most of my research works were on alcohol and drug, in spite that my Fellowship dissertation was on Consultation Liaison Psychiatry. In addition, my interaction with CRISA gave me the opportunity to participate in the UNODC National drug study where I was appointed as zonal coordinator, with huge success. Also, the sampling method I used in my research presented at the KBS meeting in Sweden, Response Driven Sampling method was learnt during the UNODC drug study.. CRISA, I believe is contributing to the prevention and research in drug and alcohol study in Nigeria, and at 30, CRISA is a major contributor to research in drug in Nigeria. My impression about the activities and programmes of CRISA are that their presence in Nigeria has continued to ensure that my country, Nigeria continue to recognize drugs and alcohol as a national problem.

“CRISA Activities and Programmes are Superb and Fantastic”



Dr. Obinna A. Nwangwu
Practicing Medical Doctor and a Biochemist

My name is Dr. Obinna Anthony Nwangwu, a practicing Medical Doctor and a Biochemist with passion for clinical research. I am a native of Nkpor in Idemmili-north Local Government Area, Anambra State.

I came in contact with CRISA in 2019 and I was opportune to participate in the 4th National Symposium on Drugs and Drug Policy in Nigeria held on 22nd to 24th October 2019 at Chelsea Hotel Abuja Nigeria, where I presented a paper titled “Over-the-Counter Medications in Nigeria and their Effects on Health.” My association with CRISA has been great and wonderful, we worked together in editing my presented paper/publication (in view) titled “Over-the-Counter Medications in Nigeria and their Effects on Health.”

This contact with CRISA has improved my clinical research in the area of drug usage, and also exposed me to other researchers. The activities and programme of CRISA is superb and fantastic; and the annual conferences held are quite enriching and educative.

At 30, CRISA has recorded tremendous success in sensitizing the populace on the use of drugs and drug related products.

***“At 30, CRISA has
been Tremendous in
Social Impact”***

Mobile Manna Foundation, Uyo

The Mobile Manna Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organization registered by the Nigerian Authorities (CAC/IT/NO43542) for non-profit social interventions in the mental health sector, developmental actions, and enhancement of democratic values in Nigeria. As founded in 2008, her focus is helping the government to remove mentally ill persons from the streets and giving them complete rehabilitation in a community based facility, and above all to strengthen mental health and productivity in Nigeria.

The Mobile Manna Foundation came in contact with CRISA right from the inception of Mobile Manna Foundation in Uyo as CRISA was already in the state doing drug treatment. The relationship of CRISA and MMF became cordial, starting from 2015 when Prof Obot the Founder/CEO was invited to chair MMF event and further recommendation of MMF to UNODC by the CRISA boss. The nature of the MMF association with CRISA has been on co-treatment for Psycho-affective Disorder and providing of clinical counseling to the public. The contact with CRISA has impacted on our professional life as there is a cordial relationship in exchanging ideas and providing professional counseling to drug users. CRISA activities so far are well organized to target drug addictions in our society as this is one of our social problems that the Centre has been addressing for the past 30 years and there is a lot of tremendous impacts of its activities on the society. At 30, CRISA is almost at the apex of dealing with drug addictions in our society with amazing success records. Given the trend in CRISA success stories, the sky seems to be the only limit.

CRISA LIBRARY



The CRISA Library is as old as the centre itself. The Library holds a growing collection of knowledge and information materials focusing on substance use and addictive behaviours dating back in time. The CRISA Library plays a significant role, enabling people to engage with all kinds of information and knowledge resources in the field of substance use. The library boasts of a collection of books and monographs (including classic texts in the field of addiction), bulletins, serials and periodicals, highly rated academic journals, special reports by the WHO, UNODC, ECOWAS, EU, AU and other international agencies, and bibliographic

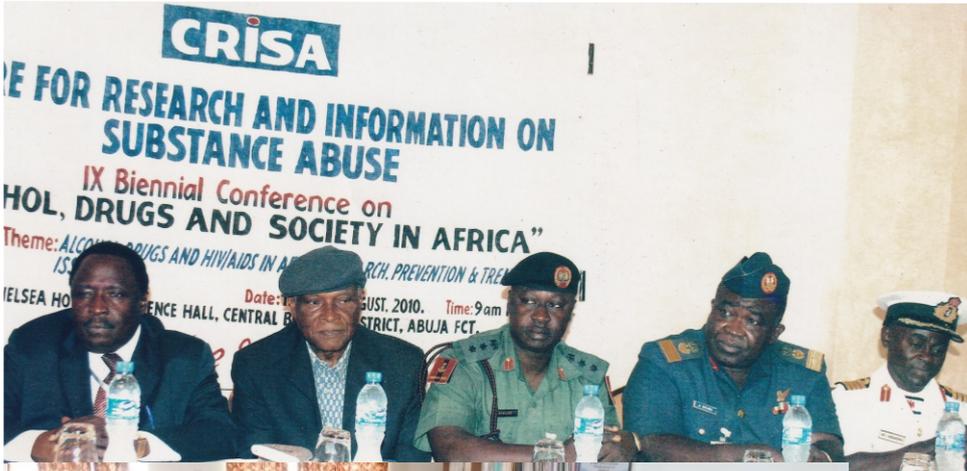
materials which span the field of substance use and behavioural addictions. The CRISA library is the repository of knowledge and records in the field of substance use and behavioural addiction in Africa. With the transition to electronic media, CRISA's digitised footprint is evident on the website www.crisafrica.org/publications which has a section where journals and articles can be easily accessed. The library remains a leading store of knowledge on addiction in print and the library is available for use by researchers and students every day of the week from 9am to 5pm, except on holidays and weekends. The CRISA Library is located at 84 Aka Itiam Road, Uyo.



CRISA and OSIWA staff members after a meeting

The Future

It is the dream of CRISA to have an organization well situated in Uyo as its headquarters with a campus, not just a building that holds a library. So the picture is a campus that has structures with a library, with conference facilities, with meeting rooms and not far from the main campus should be a treatment facility. CRISA hopes to have a place that people want to come to learn and a place where people will come to seek help from well-trained professionals.





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