

International Research Group on Gender and Alcohol

14th Annual Workshop

GENACIS Eighth Working Meeting

**Perroen-Pallierter Café-Restaurant
Maastricht, The Netherlands**

May 26 – 27, 2006

Friday, May 26: Plenary

Welcome and Introductions (Sharon Wilsnack)

The 2006 GENACIS workshop was attended by 30 GENACIS members from 15 countries. Sharon opened the meeting with a welcome, introduction of workshop participants, and a special thank-you to Ronald Knibbe and his colleagues for locating the venue for our meeting, given that all academic buildings are closed during the Ascension Day holiday weekend.

Updates from GENACIS Components:

EU (Kim Bloomfield)

Kim reported that the three-year EU/GENACIS funding cycle officially ended December 31, 2004. However, approximately 36,000 Euros remain in unexpended overhead funds. One-half of this money is available to Kim now, part of which will be subcontracted to SIPA for costs of maintaining the GENACIS data base. It is possible that some of the remaining overhead funds can be used to support a mid-year GENACIS meeting.

Kim is presently coordinating the publication of five papers from the EU final project report in a special issue of Alcohol and Alcoholism. It is hoped that publication will be in October 2006. There may be an opportunity to include in this issue a paper about GENACIS methodology that could be used as a reference for other GENACIS publications.

Kim encouraged GENACIS members from EU countries to look at the European Commission's recently issued 7th Research Framework as a possible source of funding for GENACIS-related alcohol research in EU member states. Some members felt that the 7th Framework might be more favorable for social and epidemiological research on alcohol than was the 6th Framework.

WHO (Robin Room for Isidore Obot)

Isidore was unable to be in Maastricht due to schedule conflicts but sent his greetings to GENACIS members. He also sent copies of the recently published WHO GENACIS book, Alcohol, Gender and Drinking Problems: Perspectives from Low and Middle Income Countries (WHO, 2005). Edited by Isidore and Robin, the book contains chapters from each WHO-funded GENACIS country plus Brazil and Mexico. Members thanked Isidore for sending the books and

congratulated the editors and chapter authors on an excellent product. In addition to hard copies, the book is available as a PDF file on the WHO website.

Robin reported that considerable work is underway following the May 2005 World Health Assembly resolution on alcohol (the first passed since 1983). A report is due to the World Health Assembly by May 2007, for which information needs to be marshaled by late 2006. There are currently three WHO staff working on alcohol issues in Geneva. Isidore may decide to resign from WHO due to the difficulties of living and working in Geneva, Nigeria, and Baltimore. Robin did not think that the recent death of the Director General of WHO will have any major impact on WHO's activities in the area of alcohol.

PAHO (Sharon Wilsnack for Maristela Monteiro)

Sharon reported for Maristela that the Brasilia alcohol policy conference in late November was very successful. Jointly sponsored by PAHO and the Brazilian government, the conference drew delegates, mostly government officials, from 27 Latin American countries. Several GENACIS members presented a panel about gender, culture, and alcohol, which was well received by participants. Participants were quite passionate about the extent of alcohol-related problems in their countries. On the final day of the conference they wrote the Brasilia Declaration, which identifies major alcohol-related harms in the Americas and prioritizes areas for action, including women/pregnant women and alcohol-related aggression. It is hoped that the Declaration can be used as a basis for funding requests and policy development in the participating countries.

Other activities of the PAHO Multi-Centric Study of Gender and Alcohol include (1) collaborative analyses of data from the GENACIS surveys in the PAHO-funded countries, together with surveys in Canada and the U.S., with initial findings to be reported at a PAHO satellite meeting during the October 2006 policy conference in Toronto; and (2) a book on alcohol and partner aggression in the Americas, using data from the GENACIS surveys in Latin America, Canada, and the U.S. The book will be published by PAHO in both English and Spanish, and edited by Kate Graham, Myriam Munné, and Sharon Wilsnack.

UND/R01 Update (Sharon Wilsnack)

Sharon reported that the entire set of papers presented at the 2003 KBS symposium honoring Ludek Kubicka was published in the December 2005 issue of Addiction. These included papers by Marja Holmila and Kirsimarja Raitasalo, Kim Bloomfield and colleagues, Jacek Moskalewicz and colleagues, and Myriam Munné, plus an introduction by Sharon and discussant comments by Robin. Ludek sent an email expressing his pleasure and appreciation for the publication of the papers. The introduction to the symposium was reprinted in the Czech journal Adiktologie.

Sharon announced that the revised GENACIS R01 application to NIAAA was submitted in February and will be reviewed in June. She feels that the revised application was considerably strengthened, and she thanked all members who helped with the revision.

She also announced that a GENACIS symposium has been accepted for presentation at the 2006 World Congress of the International Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ISBRA) in Sydney in September. GENACIS members participating in the symposium include Isidore Obot, Tom Greenfield, Madhabika Nayak, Robin Room, Richard Wilsnack, and Sharon Wilsnack.

GENACIS Participation and Authorship Guidelines

The list of GENACIS papers planned or in progress was circulated, and members were asked to indicate which papers they are (or intend to be) actively involved in, which papers they no longer wish to be involved in, and (where known) any papers that are no longer being planned for publication. The same request will be made by email to members not present at this workshop. The intent is to greatly simplify the paper list so that it is clearer which papers have been published, which are currently in progress, and which are still “alive” in terms of members being actively interested in producing them.

Three recent issues regarding participation in and authorship of collaborative GENACIS papers were discussed. First, the question was raised whether an individual member can present or publish a paper using his/her country’s own data on a topic on which other members are planning to conduct and publish multinational comparative analyses. The answer is yes, individual members are encouraged to publish findings from their own country’s data on any topic of interest to them. This is specified in Guideline (1) in the authorship section of the May 2002 GENACIS Participation and Authorship Guidelines.

A second question concerned Authorship Guideline (8), which states that “survey leaders will be sent a draft publication of any article using their data set and will have one month to review it.” Recently concern was expressed by one survey leader whose data were used in an article which he was not given the opportunity to review before publication, and who disagreed with some of the interpretations made in the published article. Guideline (8) states that if such disagreements cannot be resolved by a survey director and the paper author(s), they should be discussed by the Steering Committee and, if significant disagreement remains, this disagreement should be mentioned in a footnote in the publication. The first author of the paper in question had previously communicated to GENACIS members in an email that the analyses in question had been presented at several GENACIS and KBS meetings, which he felt offered sufficient time for study directors to offer feedback and criticism. He raised the question of whether one survey director’s disagreement with a paper’s conclusions should be allowed to slow or stop the publication of the paper. The GENACIS Steering Committee discussed this publication issue at its March 14, 2006, conference call meeting and recommended some minor changes in the wording of Guideline (8) to indicate more clearly that drafts should be circulated before publication. The revised guideline reads as follows (changes are indicated by strike-out and italics): “Survey leaders will be sent a draft *before submission* for publication of any article using their data set and have one month to review it. Any disagreements that cannot be resolved by the study authors and survey directors ~~will be discussed by~~ *should be brought to the GENACIS steering committee for discussion*. Significant disagreements may be mentioned in a footnote.” Despite this attempt at clarification, workshop participants felt that further discussion of this issue would be helpful. It will be discussed by the Steering Committee at its Friday night meeting and re-visited at the Saturday plenary.

The third issue involved avoiding duplication and overlap of GENACIS papers. A recent example is a list of new papers using European data proposed by Martin Plant and Gerhard Gmel. At least one of the proposed papers appeared to overlap a planned (but apparently not active) paper on the paper list. In this case, Kim and Sharon contacted the author of the planned paper and clarified that that paper was inactive, and then informed and encouraged the Plant/Gmel group to proceed with the paper. Although this situation was easily resolved, it made salient the need for members planning new papers to notify the Steering Committee, to allow

identification and resolution of any overlap problems. Additional questions were raised about whether the Steering Committee's oversight should involve merely detection of overlap or also some degree of quality control of new proposed papers. This issue will also be re-visited at the Friday Steering Committee meeting and the Saturday plenary.

Knowledge Transfer and Capacity Building

Louise Nadeau facilitated a discussion of how best to disseminate and capitalize on the capacity-building potential of GENACIS, and how to maximize knowledge transfer, i.e., to use the results of GENACIS analyses to inform practice and policy development in participating countries.

Members discussed ways in which GENACIS's capacity-building contributions can be documented and disseminated. Suggestions included (1) a publication documenting how the GENACIS process and data have activated and enabled multinational research participation, including researchers from low- and middle-income countries; (2) a brief description in the introduction to each GENACIS publication of the project's successful capacity building; (3) including capacity building as an attractive feature of GENACIS in applications for additional research funding; and (4) seeking funding for a conference that would showcase the products of GENACIS's multinational capacity building.

With regard to knowledge transfer, members discussed various challenges facing attempts to make policy-making audiences aware of GENACIS data and findings: How do we get gender and alcohol on the agenda of policy-makers? One challenge is that GENACIS findings tend to be complex whereas policy-makers typically prefer simple answers to single, urgent questions. Members offered several suggestions, including (1) holding thematic conferences on topics of particular concern (e.g., partner violence) within the framework of GENACIS findings; (2) choosing two or three high-priority issues (not just gender), perhaps on a regional rather than international basis, which GENACIS data can address; (3) framing our message in terms of how alcohol affects other people (in addition to the drinker), thus broadening the base of concern for policy-makers; (4) learning how best to package our findings for the media and for policy-makers (e.g., avoiding qualified "it depends" answers), seeking help from knowledge transfer experts where necessary; (5) using GENACIS findings to show how patterns of alcohol use reveal larger issues of gender differences worldwide; and (6) finding ways to demonstrate the value added of having multinational, not just national, data on a variety of topics. Ann Hope, Moira Plant, Kim Bloomfield, and Sharon Wilsnack indicated their willingness to work with Louise on an agenda of actions that would most effectively bring media and policy attention to GENACIS findings. These actions should include determining which GENACIS findings are most important and useful to emphasize, and evaluating regularly the impact GENACIS is already having on intervention and policy in participating countries.

Review of Publications and Papers in Progress, by Work Areas

The group reviewed the status of individual papers across the seven work areas of GENACIS (drinking patterns, drinking problems, alcohol and violence, social roles and social inequalities, intimacy/sexuality, health and lifestyle, and societal-level indicators). Work area leaders and members provided updates on papers published, papers in progress, and papers planned. Input from this discussion -- together with individual comments from members attending the workshop and those contacted subsequently by email -- will be incorporated in a simplified paper list,

which will be reviewed by the Steering Committee at its mid-year meeting and circulated to all members prior to the June 2007 GENACIS workshop in Budapest.

Saturday, May 27: Plenary

Availability of Finnish Data

Pia Mäkelä reminded members that the Finnish data are not included in the GENACIS data base because of proprietary restrictions by STAKES. However, they are available to all members upon request to Gerhard. Pia encouraged members to include the Finnish data in their comparative analyses.

Work Group Reports

Capacity Building/Knowledge Transfer

Louise Nadeau emphasized the importance of GENACIS as a capacity-building resource for young investigators and investigators from low and middle income countries. Louise's work group recommended that all documentation of GENACIS activity should include -- in addition to publications -- all presentations, training sessions, and other capacity-building activities of GENACIS members. Sharon suggested that such activities be included in members' responses to UND's bi-monthly request for recent publications, which are sent every two months to NIAAA. Louise indicated that these activities can provide an initial quantitative indicator of GENACIS's impact in knowledge transfer and capacity building. Doctoral dissertations should also be included as an indicator of capacity building. GENACIS data have already been used in five to ten doctoral dissertations.

Work Area Papers and Publications

Work area leaders reported on progress of publications in their areas. Highlights, in addition to the recent WHO "brown book," included (1) the special issue of Alcohol and Alcoholism (projected for October 2006) containing five papers from the EU GENACIS project; (2) a forthcoming paper by Sylvia Kairouz and colleagues on psychometric characteristics of acute and chronic problem measures across countries; (3) a group of papers on informal social controls to be published as a special section in Contemporary Drug Problems, coordinated by Hildigunnur Olafsdottir; (4) a book in progress on alcohol and partner aggression in the Americas, edited by Kate Graham, Myriam Munné, and Sharon Wilsnack, using data from all GENACIS countries in Latin America plus Canada and the U.S.; and (5) a proposal from the societal-level variables work area members that Giora Rahav and Gerhard Gmel work together to incorporate the GENACIS societal-level variables into the GENACIS data base at SIPA.

Simplifying the Paper List

The paper list circulated earlier will be sent via email to all members, again asking them to indicate those papers on which they wish to remain actively involved, those they are no longer interested in, and those on which they have agreed to serve as first author. First authors of all papers planned and in progress will be sent guidelines and a time line for submitting a brief abstract of the paper for review by the Steering Committee.

Authorship Guidelines

The following decisions resulted from Friday's plenary discussion and Friday evening's Steering Committee meeting:

- (1) Members are encouraged to publish analyses of their own country's data, even in domains where comparative analyses are also planned. Such use of one's own country's data does not require Steering Committee approval.
- (2) The first authors of all papers planned or in progress are asked to submit to the Steering Committee for its approval a short abstract of their paper indicating the countries to be included, the variables to be analyzed, and the analytic methods to be used. This will aid the Steering Committee in identifying areas of actual or potential overlap and duplication.
- (3) A paper group will have one year after receiving Steering Committee approval to complete the proposed analyses and prepare a manuscript for submission for publication. If a paper is not completed within one year, other members interested in that paper topic can propose a new paper on that topic.
- (4) All survey directors whose country data are used in a paper will receive a draft of the paper before submission for publication and will have one month to review it. Any disagreements that cannot be resolved between study directors and paper authors should be referred to the Steering Committee, and may ultimately be reflected in a footnote in the published article.

GENACIS members were in general agreement with these recommendations. The point was made that giving study directors time to review papers using their data is important not only for giving them the opportunity to comment on a paper's overall conclusions, but also for obtaining feedback that may aid interpretation of findings in individual countries. Input should also be requested from study directors early in the course of developing a paper, to better understand cultural influences on how common questions might be asked, understood, and responded to in different countries.

To help facilitate communication among study directors and paper authors, the UND group will post the names and email addresses of all study directors on the UND/GENACIS website (www.med.und.nodak.edu/depts/irgga). Any updates or changes will be highlighted in the GENACIS Participation and Authorship Guidelines that are already posted on the UND website.

2007 GENACIS Workshop

The 2007 KBS Symposium will be held June 4-8, 2007, in Budapest. Pia Mäkelä asked whether the GENACIS workshop could be more continuous with the KBS symposium so that the combined workshop-symposium meeting time is not so extended. Sharon indicated that the Steering Committee will discuss holding the GENACIS workshop on the Saturday and Sunday (rather than Friday-Saturday) preceding KBS.

Members agreed that GENACIS has matured to the point where most countries' data have been centralized at SIPA, and many papers are being published or nearing publication. The paper list will be greatly winnowed and simplified following this workshop and the subsequent emailing to members not present here. For these reasons, there are probably better uses for our workshop

time than convening more working groups to generate ideas for additional papers. Suggestions for the format of the 2007 workshop included the following:

- (1) An opening plenary session which provides a summary and overview of what has been learned in GENACIS to date. This should be more than just the findings of individual GENACIS papers, but rather a “meta-analysis” and synthesis of patterns of findings from individual papers, the EU report, the WHO book, and other major GENACIS products. The overview session could also include methodological improvements and innovations in GENACIS, such as the development of common measures of drinking patterns and drinking-related problems, and of demographic and societal-level characteristics, and common methods of data analysis. The session might benefit from a discussant, perhaps an alcohol or gender researcher(s) from outside GENACIS who could comment on GENACIS’s progress to date.
- (2) Whereas the opening plenary might provide a higher-order synthetic perspective, other parts of the workshop could be more micro- in nature, involving focused intense work on specific papers, including pre-workshop and on-site data analysis and writing, and ideally culminating in a first draft of a paper for publication. Many logistical details would need to be worked out (e.g., arranging for a number of small meeting rooms, determining which paper groups should meet during the workshop, and scheduling paper groups to minimize conflicts for members involved in multiple papers), but there seemed to be consensus that these active working groups would be a valuable use of our limited workshop time.
- (3) A closing plenary could include reports from the active paper groups, summary of progress during the workshop, and discussion of future directions for GENACIS.

These suggestions and others will be discussed at the mid-year meeting of the GENACIS Steering Committee. GENACIS members should send other ideas about the content and format of the 2007 workshop to Sharon or Kim for presentation to the Steering Committee.

The 2006 workshop concluded with thanks to the workshop participants, workshop organizers, and especially to the members and staff of the KBS Maastricht organizing committee for their valuable assistance with logistical arrangements for the workshop.

Tuesday, May 30: IRGGA/GENACIS Plenary

A 90-minute meeting of IRGGA/GENACIS members provided a summary of the preceding workshop for members unable to attend.

Moira Plant and Raquel Magri invited members interested in a GENACIS work group on pregnancy, alcohol, and drugs to contact them and to send them information about laws and regulations related to substance use and pregnancy in their countries, as well as recent research and research materials (e.g., questionnaires) from their countries. If there is sufficient interest, this work group will communicate electronically during the coming year and meet during the 2007 workshop in Budapest.

Sharon reminded the group about the new process of Steering Committee review of abstracts from planned papers and papers in progress, to minimize potential duplication of papers. After the paper list simplification is completed, first authors of all active papers will receive more information about the content and time line for submission of the paper abstracts to the Steering Committee.

The meeting ended with discussion of how best to share information about new measures developed with GENACIS data, about recommended measures of drinking patterns and problems, and about how to enhance consistency across papers in reporting methodological aspects of GENACIS surveys such as response rates. Members were reminded that the best current recommendations about drinking measures are in the GENACIS codebook and cookbook prepared by Gerhard and staff, with a few minor modifications suggested during the extended discussion of drinking measures at the 2005 GENACIS workshop in Riverside (minutes posted on the UND website). Members were urged to use the GENACIS list serv IRGGANET to communicate with other members when they develop new measures, providing the syntax for the measure and references to publications in which it is used. This information can then be archived and updated on the UND GENACIS website.

The meeting adjourned with a group picture (posted on the website) and encouragement to all members to plan to attend the June 2007 workshop and symposium in Budapest.