

Health Communication preventing harmful consumption (Alcohol and Drugs) in the School Population of Sao Tome and Principe

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Background

Absence of healthy lifestyles, education & of health communication policy. Extreme poverty causes health inequalities.

Major environmental challenges, including the safeguarding of protected species (turtles).

There are no A&D consumption surveys or binge drinking studies in the PALOP.

The 2008 STEPS is the only survey on chronic diseases.

Several WHO Africa alerts point to rising consumptions.

School age population is the most vulnerable.

For these reasons, the diagnosis of the situation is critical for future preventive interventions based on new health communication methods and the linkage of environmental aspects to healthy lifestyles.

Aims

- To determine the frequency and distribution of A&D consumptions in young school population.
- To identify the characteristics associated with the consumption of A&D.
- To pilot preventive interventions using public health communication methods such as edutainment.



Material&Methods

Survey

- Sample: 2064 young and adults respondents (12% of the total target population – 16 924). Pilot-survey in the Liceu Nacional School of Sao Tome (secondary school) with a convenience sample of 150 male and female participants followed by a national survey. Support provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Training and the National Directorate of Secondary Education. Inclusion criteria: 13-18 years old or greater (in convenience sample of National Lyceum) and assumed diagnosis (self-reported) as a consumer or dependent of A&D established 6 months ago. Agreement to participate in the study.
- Questionnaire on biographical data; demographic and socio-economic use of licit and illicit substances (A&D); family health situation; non-medical drugs use by members of the family and health of the respondent.
- Statistics: data collection, use and application of multivariate statistical methods like cluster analysis, structural equation models PLS path modeling, to analyze the interrelationships between variables. The software used in the statistical analysis will be IBM SPSS version 21.

Preventive Interventions (PI): The main preventive interventions - through the Public Health Communication using innovative methodology, such as *edutainment*.

Competition for children EDUCA_TARTARUGA

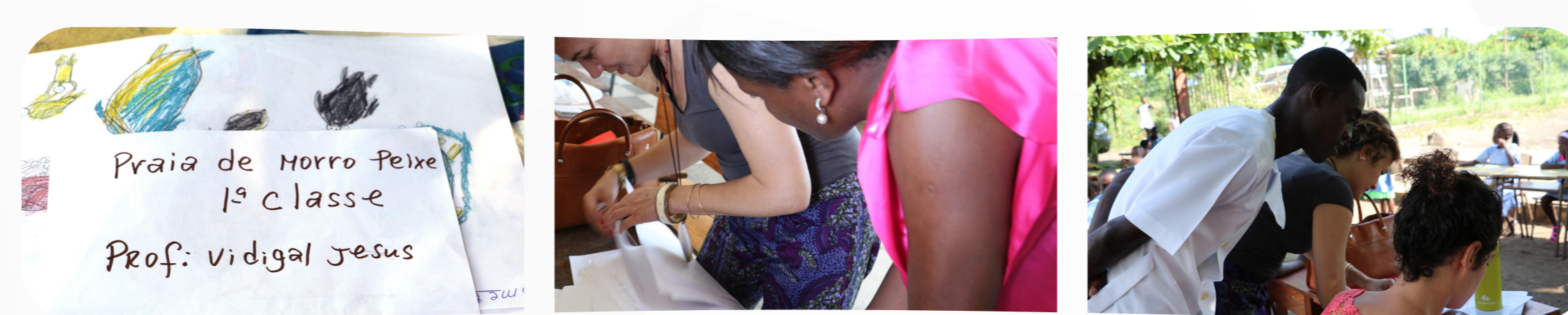
Phase I - Training in the schools, with 1 400 children for tender preparation on how to protect the sea turtle species. In collaboration with the ATM Association.



Phase II - Election of Ambassadors Tortuga in each EB school class selected for monitoring and support their colleagues.



Phase III - Production of drawings and music, between March 1 and May 1, for children between the ages of 6 and 10. Basic education (EB) in the districts of Cantagalo, Caué and Lobata, considered problematic on A&D consumption and problematic capture of endangered turtle species found in STP. The competition was held in accordance with rules distributed to the schools directors and teachers.



Phase IV - Presentation of 1st and 2nd place winners on June 1, 2016 - International Children's Day. 78 children were awarded.



Phase V - Prizes delivered to the winners on September 2016. Prizes consisted of new school supplies donated by Portuguese companies.

- Children Commitment EDUCA_TARTARUGA: symbolic gathering of children's signatures – hand-palm painted with STP flag colors on a canvas screen. Awareness Walk with sector stakeholders: teachers, parents, students, NGOs, local and international radio and television.



- Training of radio journalists: EDUCA_PRESS. Improved learning and empowerment for radio programs production (for children and youth), blogs, Facebook and Instagram (young people). Since children observe close relatives' consumption (father, mother and older siblings), information must be designed so as to enhance awareness aimed at preventing future A&D consumption and other excessive behavior.



Statistical analysis: Upon completion, the PI's were submitted for evaluation by survey to the teachers of primary schools students and to radio journalists. Application of multivariate statistical methods such as cluster analysis, structural equation models PLS path modeling, were used to analyze the interrelationships between variables. The software employed in the statistical analysis was IBM SPSS version 21.

Other aspects: identification, support of official services authorization and ethical and legal approvals.

Results

Alcohol consumption frequency:

- Male (58%), Female (43%).
- 15-18 years old (39.46%) and over 19 years (>63%)
- Evening classes and literacy (57%), technical (76%) and higher education (79%)
- Sons of mothers without formal education (49%); secondary cycle incomplete (52%).
- Sons of fathers (56%) and mothers (59%) that regularly consume.
- Residents of districts of Agua Grande (56%) and Lembá (57%).

Illicit Drug consumption:

Young people of both sexes, corresponding to 1% of the population surveyed.

Participants in edutainment activities:

Schools: 6
Children: total of 1400; 78 winners
Teachers: 48

Survey of teachers: participant breakdown

Gender: Male (45.2%), Female (51.6%).

Geographical Distribution by District: Cantagalo (51.6%); Caué (19.4%); Lobata (29%).

Teachers' opinion of children competition:

Edutainment helps children to avoid excessive A&D consumption: very much (71%); somewhat (25.8%).

Street social mobilization activities with children keeps them aware and responsible: very much (58.1%); somewhat (38.7%); indifferent (3.2%).

Teachers' opinion of successful edutainment:

Agree with more physical activities during school time: (54.8%); during weekends (35.5%).

Prevents A&D consumption (22.6%); solely prevents A consumption (16.1%); no response (25.8%).

Agree with more handicraft activities: during school time (6.5%); during weekends (6.5%); no response (87.1%). Agree that handicraft activities prevent A&D consumption (19.3%); no response (71%).

Teachers that never did handicrafts with students, but would like to do (64.5%); did so over the last 2 years so as to prevent D consumption (3.2%); no response (32.3%).

Radio Press opinion of successful edutainment radio programs:

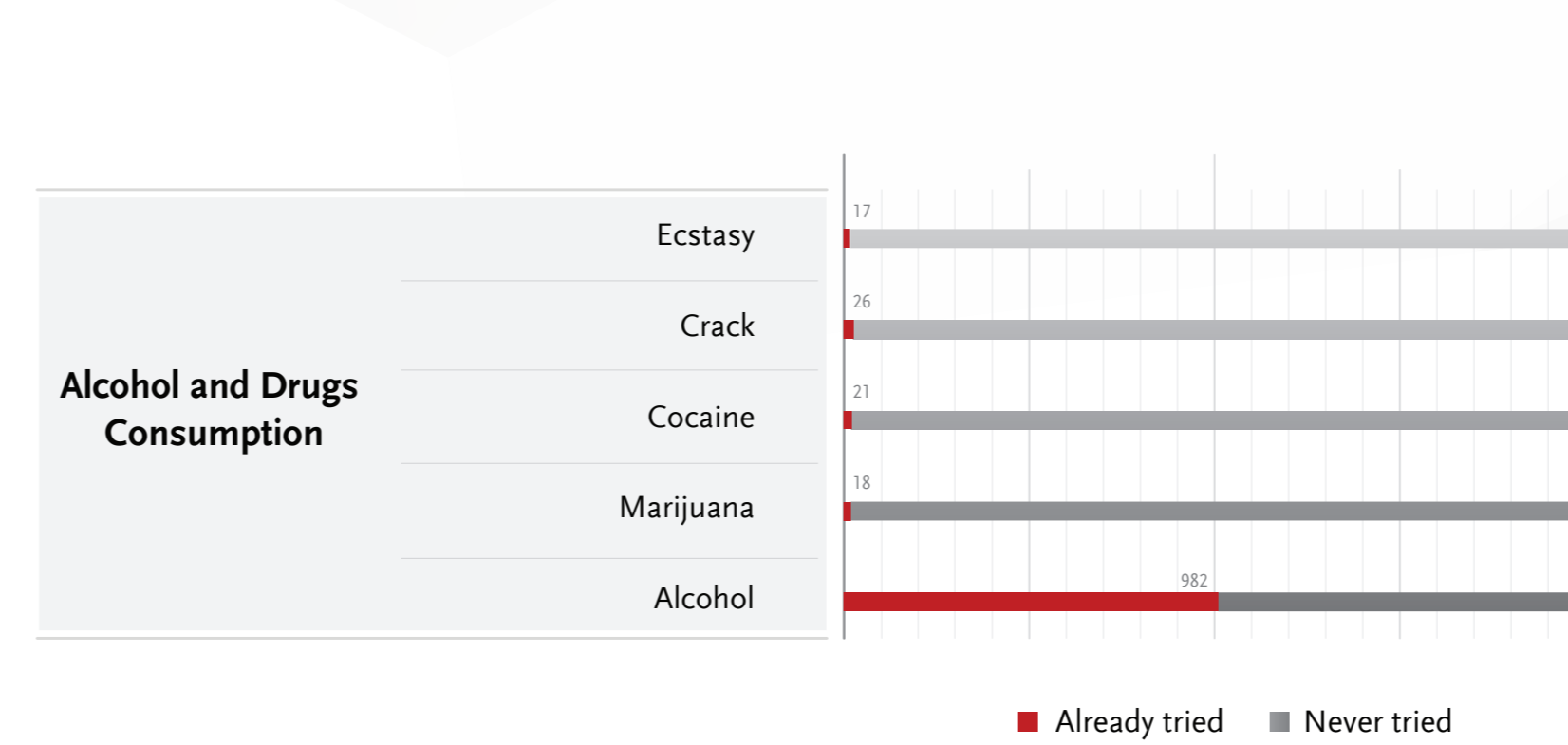
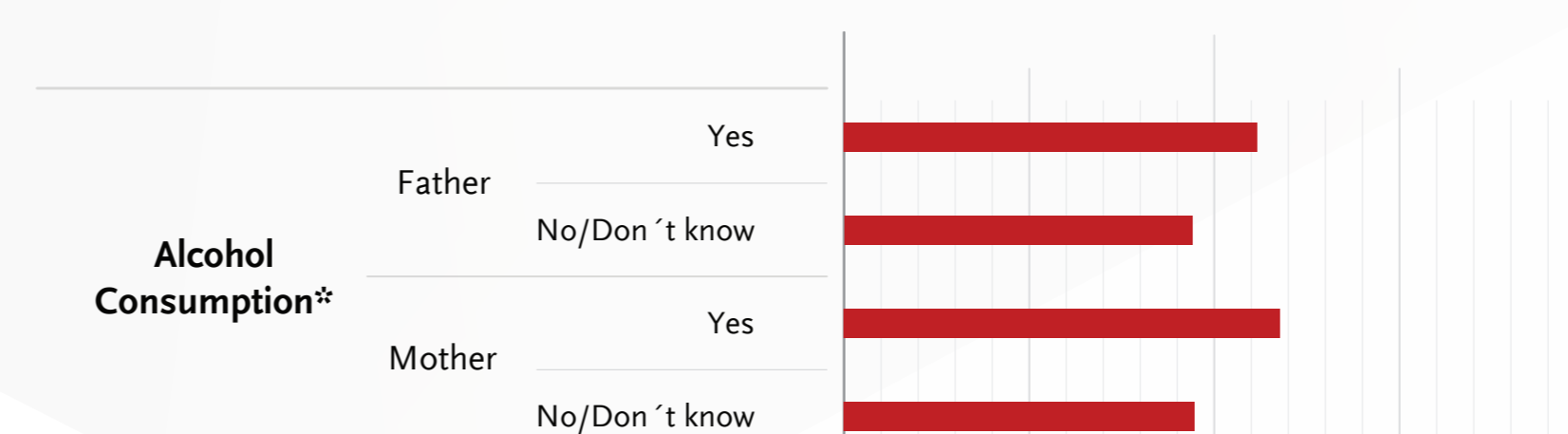
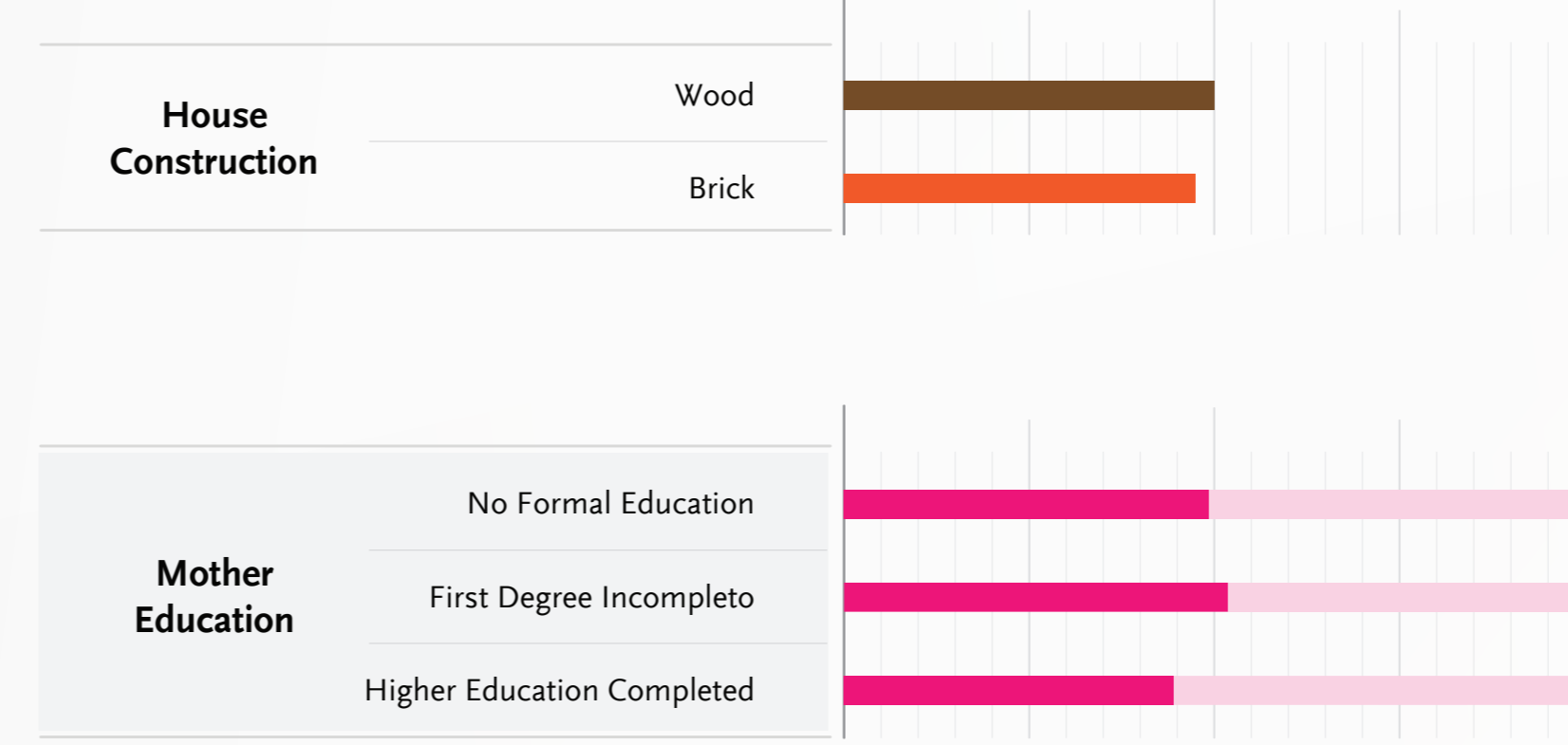
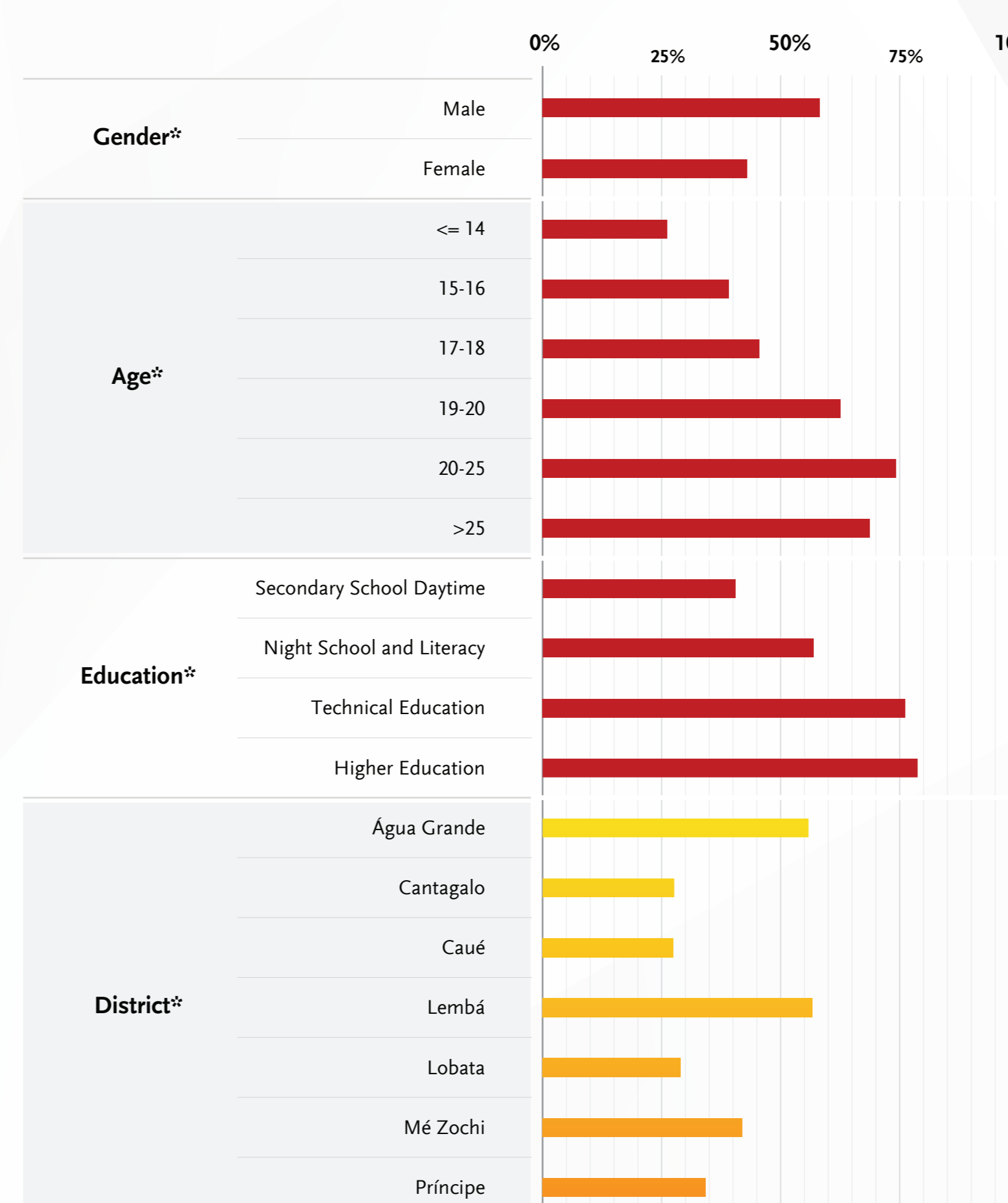
Respondents: Male (66.7%); Female (33.3%).

Respondents from the Districts of Água Grande (16.7%); Lobata (16.7%).

Agree that radio edutainment broadcasts prevent A&D consumption: very much (83.3%); somewhat (16.7%).

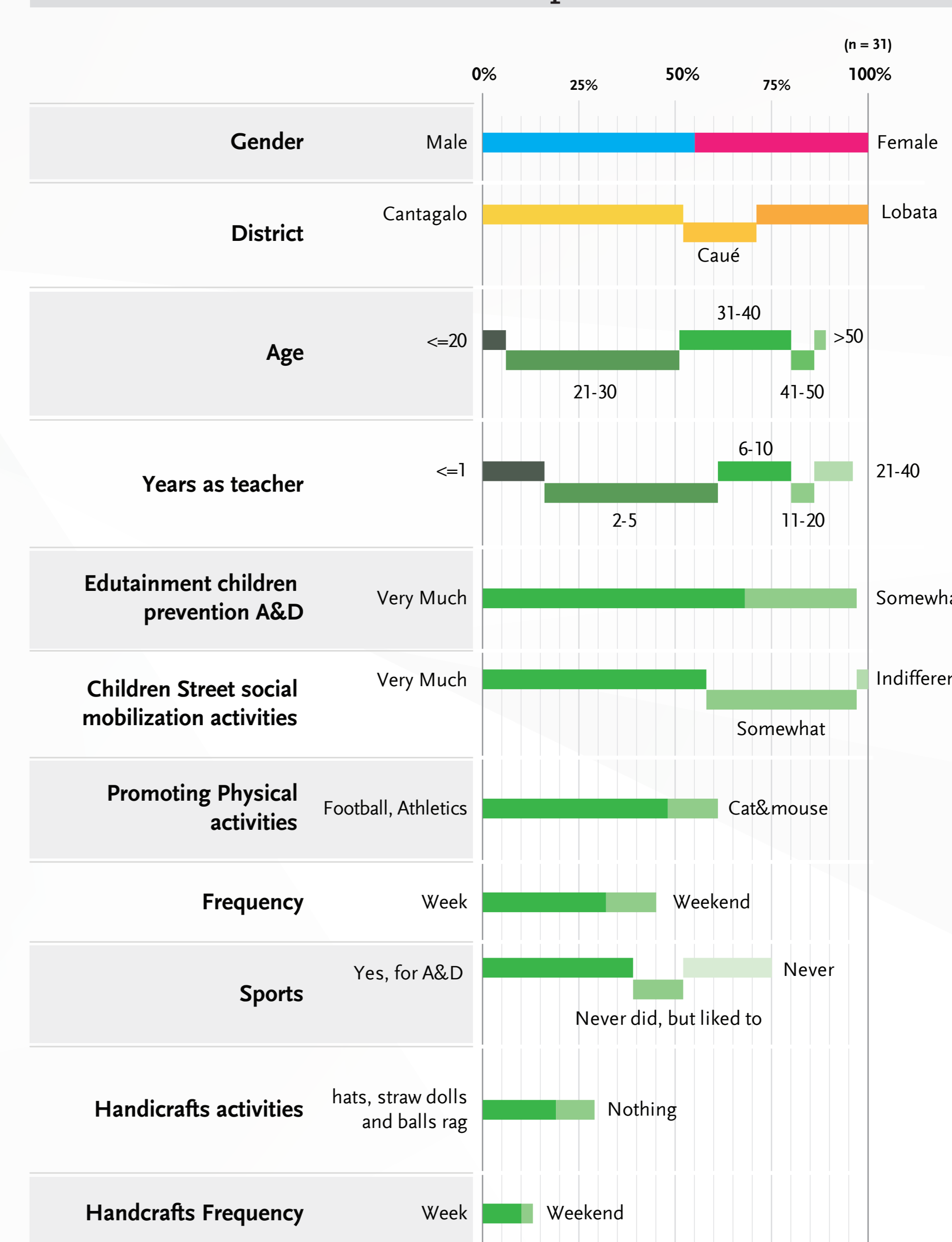
Social mobilization edutainment activities transmitted by radio generate community awareness, thus contributing to the prevention of A&D consumption: agree (75.0%); somewhat (16.7%); indifferent (8.3%).

Alcohol Consumption

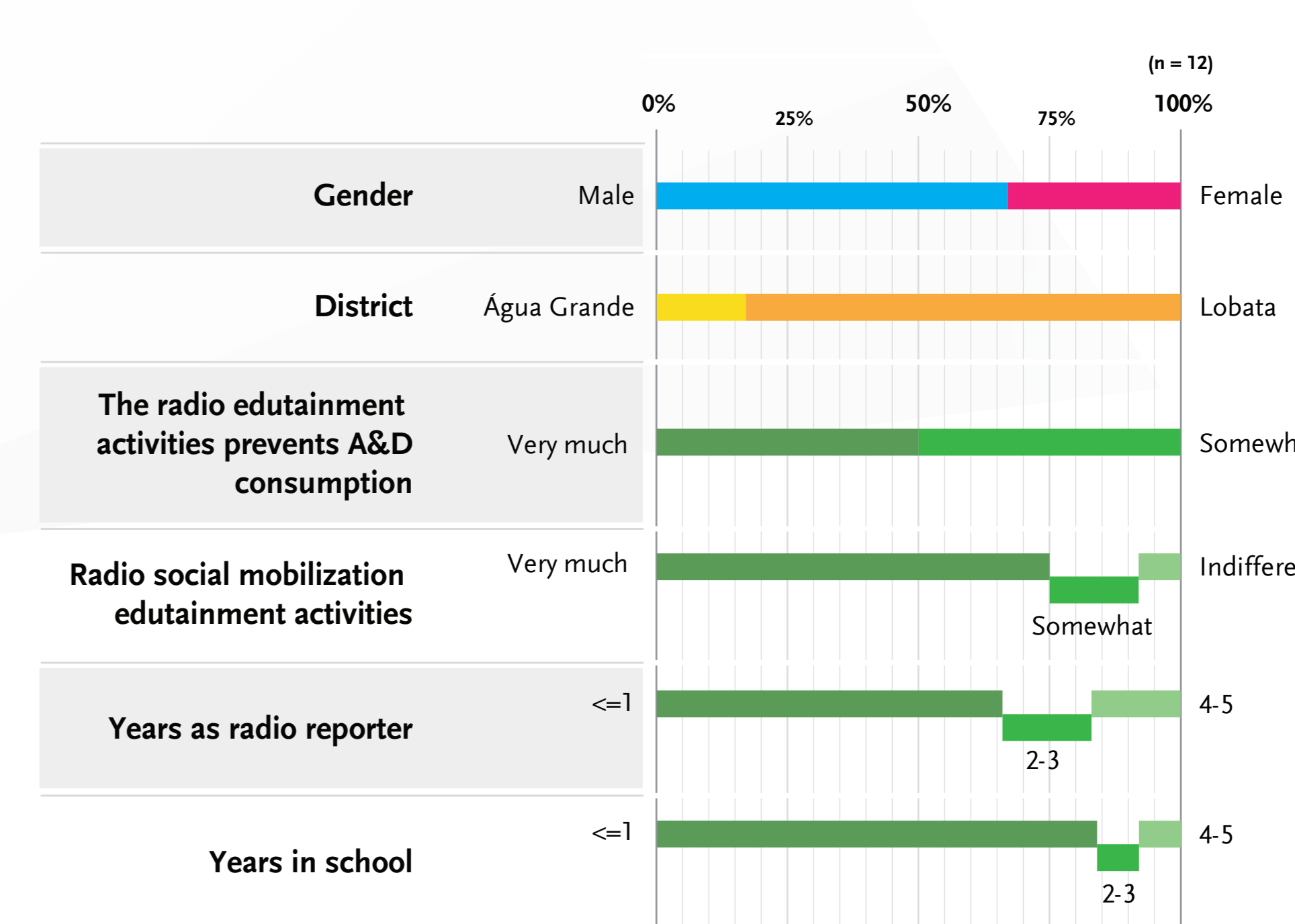


Health Communication - edutainment - Preventive Interventions

Teachers' opinion



Radio Press' opinion



Conclusions

- The prevalence of A&D consumption among the young school population is high, thus constituting a serious threat.
- Paradoxically, the highest consumption was recorded in the wealthier district of Agua Grande in contrast with Lembá, the poorest.
- Sons of fathers or mothers that are frequent drinkers consume more.
- The study confirmed existence of illicit drugs circulating within the school settings.
- The children of mothers with low education consume more. This suggests that health communication interventions (HCI) in primary schools may be relevant.
- Teachers of primary schools claim that schools need more edutainment activities undertaken by specialists.
- Children should be directed away from from excessive consumption (A&D) environments and empowered through ludic activities (sports, theater, handicrafts).
- Authorities need to be aware of and mobilized for the promotion of healthy lifestyles for children and young people.



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