

FROM ADVOCACY TO ACTION:

Building a Safer Gaming Ecosystem

During an interview with iGaming AFRIKA Magazine, **Fisayo Oke, Chief Executive Officer, Gamble Alert**, a leading responsible gaming advocacy organisation, reflects on a landmark recognition from the Lagos State Lotteries and Gaming Authority, the growing public health risks posed by underage gambling, and the urgent need for collective action across Nigeria's betting ecosystem.

The conversation explores the intersection of research, advocacy, treatment, regulation, and technology, offering rare insight into what it will take to build a safer, more sustainable gaming industry in Nigeria and across Africa.

Wakati wa mahojiano na Jarida la iGaming AFRIKA, **Fisayo Oke, Afisa Mtendaji Mkoo, Gamble Alert**, shirika linaloongoza la utetezi wa michezo ya kubahatisha linalowajibika, anaangazia utambuzi wa kihistoria kutoka kwa Jimbo la Lagos na Mamlaka ya Michezo ya Kubahatisha, hatari zinazoongezeka za afya ya umma zinazosababishwa na kamari ya umri mdogo, na hitaji la dharura la hatua za pamoja katika mfumo ikolojia wa kamari wa Nigeria.

Mazungumzo hayo yanachunguza makutano ya utafiti, utetezi, matibabu, udhibiti na teknolojia, yakitoa maarifa adimu kuhusu kile kitakachohitajika ili kujenga tasnia salama na endelevu zaidi ya michezo ya kubahatisha nchini Nigeria na kote Afrika.



Congratulations on receiving the Lagos State Lotteries and Gaming Authority Responsible Gaming Advocacy Award. What does this recognition mean for you and for Gamble Alert? And how do you see it influencing your future initiatives in promoting responsible gaming across Nigeria and potentially beyond?

Thank you very much. We see this award as a meaningful recognition of the work we do. Personally, I believe that public protection, education, and policy advocacy must work hand in hand. This recognition affirms that Gamble Alert's efforts, combining research, advocacy, and treatment, are making an impact and are not being overlooked by the industry. It reinforces our mandate in the responsible gaming space and motivates us to expand our initiatives further, building across Nigeria and eventually extending to other African markets.

Recent data from Gamble Alert points to a worrying trend: underage gambling, with nearly one in three teenagers aged 13 to 15 already participating, often influenced by peers, family members, and pervasive gambling advertising. Considering these social and media pressures, what strategies is Gamble Alert prioritising to prevent early exposure to gambling, and how can parents, schools, and regulators take a more proactive role in addressing this growing public health concern?

The data you're referring to truly states that one in three teenagers between the ages of 13 and 15 are already gambling, and that's an urgent public health concern for us and for everyone in the country. But to be fair, that data was collected from a particular local government. So, while we may be able to extend that to the entirety of Lagos, caution must be taken to say that this is focused on the community, and we also focused on public secondary schools. So, it may not be the same for private secondary schools in the same region. Generally, it shows us that whether it is one in three or four, a lot of teenagers are already involved in gambling activities. And we think, as I said earlier, that's an urgent public health concern.

We're expanding our school-based curriculum, moving to different communities in the country. We've already done about four states in the whole Southwest, and there are six states in the Southwest. We are looking to comb through the entire Southwest and then move to the Southeast, which are aspects that are part of Nigeria. We believe that because children are increasingly exposed to gambling, we could equip them daily with the right information to use.

Apart from that, we are currently engaging with gaming regulators across different regions, and we are advocating for responsible advertising. First is the law and policy; giving operators distance buffers when it comes to advertising in areas where students or teenagers are more likely to be; and we think that the places where they are more likely to be are schools, cyber cafes, research centers, just about any place where you would find children in good numbers, there should be restriction of advertisement in that environment.

There are certain provisions already in the laws, but we are asking for even more. Let's have something even more solid, in terms of the distance between sites and operating platforms, betting shops, retail outlets, and school environments. So, we're looking at that. The third one is community and parental engagement. We've been expanding our academic tours, and we've done several of them for five years, and seven editions, close to 30,000 students. We're expanding this to even involve the community and the parents themselves.

Hongera kwa kupokea Tuzo ya Utetezi wa Uchezaji wa Kuwajibika kutoka Mamlaka ya Bahati Nasibu na Michezo ya Kubahatisha ya Jimbo la Lagos. Hii kutambuliwa kunamaanisha nini kwako na kwa Gamble Alert?

Asante sana. Tunaona tuzo hii kama utambuzi wa maana wa kazi tunayofanya. Binafsi, ninaamini kwamba ulinzi wa umma, elimu, na utetezi wa sera lazima ufanye kazi bega kwa bega. Utambuzi huu unathibitisha kuwa juhudhi za Gamble Alert, zinazochanganya utafiti, utetezi, na matibabu, zinaleta athari na hazipuuzwi na tasnia. Inaimarisha mamlaka yetu katika nafasi inayowajibika ya michezo ya kubahatisha na inatuhamasisha kupanua mipango yetu zaidi, kujenga kote Nigeria na hatimaye kuenea hadi masoko mengine ya Afrika.

Data ya hivi majuzi kutoka Gamble Alert inaashiria mwelekeo wa kutia wasiwas: kamari ya umri mdogo, na karibu kijana mmoja kati ya watatu wenye umri wa miaka 13 hadi 15 tayari anashiriki, mara nyingi huathiriwa na wenzao, wanafamilia, na utangazaji wa kamari ulioenea. Kwa kuzingatia shinikizo hizi za kijamii na media, ni mikakati gani Gamble Alert inatanguliza kuzuia kufichuliwa mapema kwa kamari, na wazazi, shule, na wasimamizi wanawezaje kuchukua jukumu kubwa zaidi katika kushughulikia wasiwas huu unaoongezeka wa afya ya umma?

Data unayorejelea kwa kweli inasema kwamba kijana mmoja kati ya watatu kati ya umri wa miaka 13 na 15 tayari anacheza kamari, na hiyo ni wasiwas wa haraka wa afya ya umma kwetu na kwa kila mta nchini. Lakini kwa haki, data hiyo ilikusanywa kutoka kwa serikali fulani ya mitaa. Kwa hivyo, ingawa tunaweza kupanua hiyo Lagos nzima, tahadhari lazima ichukuliwe kusema kwamba hii inalenga jamii, na pia tulizingatia shule za sekondari za umma. Kwa hivyo, inaweza kuwa sio sawa kwa shule za sekondari za kibinafsi katika mkoaa mmoja. Kwa ujumla, inatuonyesha kuwa iwe ni mmoja kati ya watatu au wanne, vijana wengi tayari wanahusika katika shughuli za kamari. Na tunafikiria, kama nilivyo sema hapo awali, hiyo ni wasiwas wa haraka wa afya ya umma.

Tunapanua mtaala wetu wa shule, tukihamia jamii tofauti nchini. Tayari tumefanya karibu majimbo manne katika Kusini Magharibi kote, na kuna majimbo sita Kusini Magharibi. Tunatazamia kupitia kwa kina eneo lote la Kusini Magharibi na kisha zaidi Kusini-mashariki, ambayo ni mambo ambayo ni sehemu ya Nigeria. Tunaamini kwamba kwa sababu watoto wanazidi kukabiliwa na kamari, tunaweza kuwapa kila siku taarifa sahihi za kutumia.

Kando na hayo, kwa sasa tunashirikiana na wasimamizi wa michezo ya kubahatisha katika maeneo mbalimbali, na tunatetea utangazaji unaowajibika. Kwanza ni sheria na sera; kuwapa waendeshaji bafa za umbali linapokuja suala la utangazaji katika maeneo ambayo wanafunzi au vijana wana uwezekano mkubwa wa kuwa; Na tunafikiri kwamba mahali ambapo wana uwezekano mkubwa wa kuwa ni shule, mikahawa ya mtandao, vituo vyta utafiti, karibu mahali popote ambapo ungepata watoto kwa idadi nzuri, kunapaswa kuwa na kizuizi cha matangazo katika mazingira hayo.

Kuna vifungu fulani tayari katika sheria, lakini tunaomba hata zaidi. Wacha tuwe na kitu thabiti zaidi, kulingana na umbali kati ya tovuti na majukwaa ya uendeshaji, maduka ya kamari, maduka ya rejareja, na mazingira ya shule. Kwa hivyo, tunaangalia hilo. Ya tatu ni ushiriki wajamii na wazazi. Tumekuwa tukipanua ziara zetu za kitaaluma, na tumefanya kadhaa kati yao kwa miaka mitano, na matoleo saba, karibu wanafunzi 30,000. Tunapanua hii hata kuhusisha jamii na wazazi wenyewe.

What our research showed us is that the normalisation of gambling by parents or important others significantly impacts whether children will end up gambling or not. In fact, most of the students who spoke to us during our research started gambling because their parents sent them to gamble, or an elderly neighbour in the community, sent them to gamble.

So, we're expanding to ensure that the communities themselves and the parents learn about the risks of underage gambling and the dangers inherent in it. And we're expecting that by doing that, we would have reduced the amount of underage gambling participation in the entire country. We believe that schools also must begin to incorporate in their curriculum now gambling prevention amongst their students. When we were in high school or secondary school, we used to have counselors in schools who would talk to us. So, we think that that should be brought back so that these students get to know what to do better, and that's what we are currently working on.

Lagos and the Southwest are major hubs for Nigeria's betting industry, with many operators competing for market share. In this competitive environment, how does Gamble Alert ensure its responsible gaming initiatives reach both operators and players effectively? And which strategies have proven most successful in creating meaningful impact?

Gamble Alert's strategy is very clear; we don't want to exist simply as critics of the gaming industry, pointing out what has or hasn't been done. At the same time, we also do not want to be an organisation that operators engage with merely to tick a compliance box. Our goal is to be a value-adding partner in the sustainability of the industry. That's why, in everything we do, we deliberately carry the industry along. We do not work from a distance or in isolation; we actively involve operators, regulators, and other stakeholders. If the industry has contributed to certain challenges, then the industry must also be part of the solution, and we have positioned ourselves to facilitate that.

What we've realised in the past five years is that when operators see that responsible gaming is being positioned as part of a long-term business viability, they respond better. And that's what we've been doing. So, you could see Gamble Alert training gaming operators, and we've done several of those. So rather than looking at the policy and then condemning it in its entirety, we will draft, share with them and then ask for their opinion. We send in our opinion on the creation of interventions, and we've realised that this has proven very successful. And it also speaks about the quality of work that we do.

It helps us also to find out exactly the pain points of gaming operators and regulators, as much as we're looking at the pain points of the players themselves. Also, when it comes to the outreach and helpline services, we work together with industry stakeholders. For instance, if you go to about 15 to 20 gaming platforms currently in Nigeria, you will find Gamble Alert listed as the responsible gaming helpline. That happened because we've been working together with these organisations, and players get the opportunity to receive the help they need.

We got the opportunity of getting players directly reaching out to Gamble Alert for help because when they go on a betting platform, they see Gamble Alert as the responsible gaming organisation they are to reach out to. We get a volume of customers who can speak to us, and they can get all the help that they need. Also, most people who are reaching out to us are those who are actively involved in it, and they need help.

Kile utafiti wetu ulituonyesha ni kwamba kuhalalisha kamari na wazazi au wengine muhimu huathiri sana ikiwa watoto wataishia kucheza kamari au la. Kwa kweli, wanafunzi wengi ambao walizungumza nasi wakati wa utafiti wetu walianza kucheza kamari kwa sababu wazazi wao waliwapeleka kucheza kamari, au jirani mzee katika jamii, waliwapeleka kucheza kamari.

Kwa hivyo, tunapanua ili kuhakikisha kuwa jamii zenyewe na wazazi wanajifunza juu ya hatari za kamari ya watoto wadogo na hatari zilizomo ndani yake. Na tunatarajia kwamba kwa kufanya hivyo, tutakuwa tumpunguza kiwango cha ushiriki wa kamari ya watoto wadogo katika nchi nzima. Tunaamini kwamba shule pia lazima zianze kuingiza katika mtaala wao sasa kuzua kamari kati ya wanafunzi wao. Tulipokuwa katika shule ya upili au sekondari, tulikuwa na washauri shulenii ambao wangezungumza nasi. Kwa hivyo, tunafikiri kwamba hiyo inapaswa kurudishwa ili wanafunzi hawa wajue nini cha kufanya vizuri zaidi, na ndivyo tunavyofanya kazi kwa sasa.

Lagos na Kusini-Magharibi ni vitovu vikuu vya tasnia ya kamari ya Nigeria, na waendeshaji wengi kushindana kwa sehemu ya soko. Katika mazingira haya ya ushindani, Gamble Alert inahakikishaje Mipango yake ya michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika huwafikia waendeshaji na wachezaji kwa ufanisi? Na ni nini ambayo mikakati imethibitisha mafanikio zaidi katika kuunda athari ya maana?

Mkakati wa Gamble Alert uko wazi sana; Hatutaki kuwepo kama wakosoaji wa tasnia ya michezo ya kubahatisha, tukionyesha kile ambacho kimefanywa au ambacho hakijafanywa. Wakati huo huo, pia hatutaki kuwa shirika ambalo waendeshaji wanajihuisha nalo ili tu kuweka alama kwenye kisanduku cha kufuata.

Lengo letu ni kuwa mshirika wa kuongeza thamani katika uendelevu wa tasnia. Ndio sababu, katika kila kitu tunachofanya, tunabeba tasnia kwa makusudi. Hatufanyi kazi kwa mbali au kwa kutengwa; Tunahuisha kikamilifu waendeshaji, wasimamizi, na washikadu wengine. Ikiwa tasnia imechangia changamoto fulani, basi tasnia lazima pia iwe sehemu ya suluhisho, na tumejiweka katika nafasi ya kuwezesha hilo.

Tulichogundua katika miaka mitano iliyopita ni kwamba wakati waendeshaji wanaona kuwa michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika inawekwa kama sehemu ya uwezekano wa biashara wa muda mrefu, wanajibu vyema zaidi. Na ndivyo tumekuwa tukifanya. Kwa hivyo, unawenza kuona Gamble Alert ikiwapa mafunzo waendeshaji wa michezo ya kubahatisha, na tumefanya kadhaa kati ya hizo. Kwa hivyo badala ya kuangalia sera na kisha kulaani kwa ukamilifu, tutaandaa, shiriki nao na kisha kuuliza maoni yao. Tunatuma maoni yetu juu ya uundaji wa uingilaji kati, na tumegundua kuwa hii imefanikiwa sana. Na pia inazungumza juu ya ubora wa kazi tunayofanya.

Inatusaidia pia kujua haswa pointi za maumivu ya waendeshaji na wasimamizi wa michezo ya kubahatisha, kama vile tunavyoangalia pointi za maumivu ya wachezaji wenyewe. Pia, linapokuja suala la huduma za uhamasishaji na nambari za usaidizi, tunafanya kazi pamoja na wadau wa tasnia. Kwa mfano, ukienda kwenye takriban majukwaa 15 hadi 20 ya michezo ya kubahatisha kwa sasa nchini Nigeria, utapata Tahadhari ya Kamari iliyoordheshwa kama nambari ya usaidizi inayowajibika ya michezo ya kubahatisha. Hiyo ilitokea kwa sababu tumekuwa tukifanya kazi pamoja na mashirika haya, na wachezaji wanapata fursa ya kupokea msaada wanaohitaji.

Tulipata fursa ya kuwfanya wachezaji wawasiliane moja kwa moja na Gamble Alert kwa usaidizi kwa sababu wanapoenda kwenye jukwaa la kamari, wanaona Gamble Alert kama shirika linalowajibika la michezo ya kubahatisha ambalo wanapaswa kufikia. Tunapata idadi kubwa ya wateja ambao wanaweza



Mr. Fisayo Oke

Chief Executive Officer, Gamble Alert

Finally, we get data, which is very important to us. When customers reach out to Gamble Alert for help, we're able to generate insights from our conversation with them, then share anonymized data insights with the industry to let them know what the trends look like, and again, what they need to do better to reach the goal of having a healthy gaming environment. That's what we've been doing in the past five years.

At the recent Enugu Gaming Conference 2025, you described Gamble Alert's approach as combining advocacy, research, and treatment all at once. In practice, which of these areas currently presents the biggest challenge, and how do you prioritise efforts without compromising impact?

I think that everyone in this responsible gaming space will tell you easily that treatment and support services will pose the biggest challenge to anyone any day, and that treatment is more expensive compared to prevention. When you go to the hospital, the amount you spend getting yourself treated will be significantly higher than the cost of an apple in a day.

Across the responsible gaming ecosystem, treatment and direct support services are, without question, the most challenging to deliver sustainably. They are complex, resource-intensive and require trained professionals, clinical governance, and continuity of care. Treatment is also significantly more expensive than prevention. Much like healthcare generally, the cost of intervening once harm has already occurred is far higher than the cost of early education and risk reduction.

That reality, however, does not mean treatment can be deprioritised. At Gamble Alert, we recognise that for individuals already experiencing harm, support is not optional. It is urgent. What we have done instead is to apply structured prioritisation. We focus our clinical and helpline capacity on calls, cases, and communities where harm is most acute and where intervention can prevent further deterioration. This includes individuals in distress, cases involving financial or psychological crisis, and environments where vulnerability is clearly elevated.

At the same time, we use data from our support services to inform prevention and advocacy efforts, ensuring that our education and policy work is grounded in real-world evidence. In this way, advocacy, research, and treatment are not competing priorities, but reinforcing ones. Our approach is to direct intensive resources where they are most urgently needed, while continuing to invest in prevention and systemic reform so that over time, fewer people require treatment in the first place.

The recent Responsible Gaming Symposium by Gamble Alert highlighted gaps in regulation, operator safeguards, and public awareness. From your perspective, what are the systemic barriers that prevent responsible gaming initiatives from being truly effective, and how do You plan to address them?

Thank you for mentioning the symposium. What we did at that symposium was necessarily just to bring all relevant stakeholders together. In fact, we brought regulators across different states and operators across the country. And then we had healthcare professionals, persons with lived experiences, and communities being represented, including the media. We wanted people to ask all the questions that they would have, so that the stakeholders, the persons who are particularly in charge of the activities of the industry, can hear directly from the horse's mouth what the problem is that is currently ongoing in the country.

kuzungumza nasi, na wanawenza kupata usaidizi wote wanaohitaji. Pia, watu wengi ambao wanatufikia ni wale ambao wanahusika kikamilifu katika hilo, na wanahitaji msaada.

Hatimaye, tunapata data, ambayo ni muhimu sana kwetu. Wateja wanapowasiliana na Gamble Alert kwa usaidizi, tunaweza kutoa maarifa kutoka kwa mazungumzo yetu nao, kisha kushiriki maarifa ya data yasiyojulikana na tasnia ili kuwahamisha jinsi mitindo inavyoonekana, na tena, kile wanachohitaji kufanya vyema ili kufikia lengo la kuwa na mazingira mazuri ya michezo ya kubahatisha. Hivyo ndivyo tumekuwa tukifanya katika miaka mitano iliyopita.

Katika Mkutano wa hivi majuzi wa Enugu Gaming 2025, ulielezea mbinu ya Gamble Alert kama Kuchanganya utetezi, utafiti, na matibabu yote mara moja. Kwa mazoezi, ni ipi katika maeneo haya Hivi sasa inatao changamoto kubwa zaidi, na unawezaje kutanguliza juhudini bila athari ya kuhatarisha?

Nadhani kila mtu katika nafasi hii ya michezo ya kubahatisha atakuambia kwa urahisi kwamba huduma za matibabu na usaidizi zitaleta changamoto kubwa kwa mtu yeyote siku yoyote, na matibabu hayo ni ghali zaidi ikilinganishwa na kuzuia. Unapoenda hospitalini, kiasi unachotumia kujitibu kitakuwa kikubwa zaidi kuliko gharama ya tufaha kwa siku.

Katika mfumo ikolojia wa michezo ya kubahatisha unaowajibika, matibabu na huduma za usaidizi wa moja kwa moja, bila shaka, ndizo zenyehu changamoto zaidi kutoa kwa uendelevu. Ni ngumu, zinazotumia rasilimali nyingi na zinahitaji wataalamu waliofunzwa, utawala wa kliniki, na utunzaji unoaoendelea. Matibabu pia ni ghali zaidi kuliko kuzuia. Kama huduma ya afya kwa ujumla, gharama ya kuingilia kati mara tu madhara tayari yametokea ni kubwa zaidi kuliko gharama ya elimu ya mapema na kupunguza hatari.

Uhalisia huo, hata hivyo, haimaanishi kuwa matibabu yanawenza kupunguza kipaumbele. Katika Gamble Alert, tunatambua kuwa kwa watu ambao tayari wanakabiliwa na madhara, msaada sio hiari. Ni haraka. Tulichofanya badala yake ni kutumia kipaumbele kilichopangwa. Tunazingatia uwezo wetu wa kliniki na nambari ya usaidizi kwenye simu, kesi, na jamii ambapo madhara ni makubwa zaidi na ambapo uingiliaji kati unawezza kuzuia kuzorota zaidi. Hii ni pamoja na watu walio katika dhiki, kesi zinazohusisha shida ya kifedha au kisaikolojia, na mazingira ambayo mazingira magumu yameinuliwa wazi.

Wakati huo huo, tunatumia data kutoka kwa huduma zetu za usaidizi kufahamisha juhudini za kuzuia na utetezi, kuhakikisha kwamba kazi yetu ya elimu na sera inajikita katika ushahidi wa ulimwengu halisi. Kwa njia hii, utetezi, utafiti, na matibabu sio vipaumbele vinavyoshindana, lakini vinavyoimarisha. Njia yetu ni kuelekeza rasilimali kubwa ambapo zinahitajika haraka, wakati tunaendelea kuwekeza katika kuzuia na mageuzi ya kimfumo ili baada ya muda, watu wachache wanahitaji matibabu kwanza.

Kongamano la hivi majuzi la Michezo ya Kuwajibika la Gamble Alert liliangazia mapungufu katika udhibiti, ulinzi wa waendeshaji, na uframbo wa umma. Kwa mtazamo wako, ni nini kimfumo vizuizi vinavyozua mipango ya michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika kuwa na ufanisi wa kweli, na jinsi gani Unapanga kuzishughulikia?

Asante kwa kutaja kongamano hilo. Tulichofanya kwenye kongamano hilo lilikuwa lazima tu kuwaleta wadau wote husika pamoja. Kwa kweli, tulileta wasimamizi katika majimbo tofauti na waendeshaji kote nchini. Na kisha tulikuwa na wataalamu wa afya, watu walio na uzoefu wa kuishi, na jamii zinazowakilishwa, pamoja na vyombo vya habari. Tulitaka watu waulize maswali yote ambayo wangekuwa nayo, ili wadau, watu ambao wanasiyamia

At that symposium, gaming operators, regulators, and community stakeholders were able to identify some of the persistent barriers in the industry, one of which would be the fragmented regulation of gaming activities across different states. So, it means that across different states, you find different standards for responsible gaming enforcement. For instance, if Lagos state has a very strong and solid responsible gaming regulation, you may go to a different state, and they don't have it at all. Some unscrupulous gaming operators may take advantage of that by going to a state where they have a lax responsible gaming framework, operating there without incurring any cost, and continuing to get patronage from vulnerable populations. And we think that this is a challenge.

We also learned from the conversation that there's a limited enforcement capacity even where the policies exist. So, some of the states have come up with fantastic gaming policies. But then, when it comes to enforcement, because Nigeria is quite a big country, and then even the states are quite large, and you know that in different communities, especially in the suburban areas where gambling exists, you see that because of the limited amount of resources, enforcement may not extend to those environments.

Furthermore, think about having twenty, thirty licensed operators in the country, and only a few of them are doing significantly well in terms of responsible gaming. It doesn't encourage them because they think that if they invest money and time in responsible gaming, and others are not doing it, and there is no repercussion for not doing it, there's no incentive for doing it. So, it discourages them as well.

Another point raised by participants at the symposium was the absence of a unified self-exclusion portal or framework. And we are happy that after that symposium, we saw that the Lagos State Lotteries and Gaming Authority launched the SafePlay platform. I'm sure you are aware of that. It is a unified self-exclusion platform for the entire gaming industry, particularly in Lagos State.

We're hoping that extends to other states. So, when a person excludes themselves on the Safe Play platform, they are automatically excluded from all other gaming platforms across different categories.

As I said, we're happy that SafePlay is already coming on, and we're hoping to work with them to achieve that. We are currently working very hard with the industry stakeholders, talking about regulators and the operators alike, to ensure that there is industry-wide adoption of this responsible gaming, particularly all the issues that I have highlighted at this symposium that they addressed.

We're also happy that the Association of Nigerian Bookmakers, that is, the trade unions of all the sports betting companies in the country is working with Gamble Alert hand in hand, and we're addressing all these barriers one after the other. We are making significant progress in that regard. We've, in fact, been going on different advocacy programs together. We are also working with them to ensure that there is long-term investment in public education, treatment, and research.

We're currently building stronger partnerships with regulators, operators, civil societies, and communities. So, for us, the objective is that we want to shift responsible gaming to a long-term gesture. We want it to be a mandatory thing. There should be shared accountability amongst all stakeholders.

shughuli za tasnia, waweze kusikia moja kwa moja kutoka kwa wahusika wenyewe shida ni nini ambayo inaendelea nchini.

Katika kongamano hilo, waendeshaji michezo ya kubahatisha, wasimamizi, na washikadau wa jamii waliweza kutambua baadhi ya vizuizi vinavyoendelea katika tasnia, mojawapo ikikuwa udhibiti uliogawanyika wa shughuli za michezo ya kubahatisha katika majimbo tofauti. Kwa hivyo, inamaanisha kuwa katika majimbo tofauti, unapata viwango tofauti vya utekelezaji wa michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika. Kwa mfano, ikiwa jimbo la Lagos lina kanuni thabiti na thabiti ya michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika, unaweza kwenda katika jimbo tofauti, na hawana kabisa. Baadhi ya waendeshaji michezo ya kubahatisha wasio waaminifu wanaweza kuchukua fursa hiyo kwa kwenda katika jimbo ambalo wana mfumo wa michezo ya kubahatisha unaowajibika, kufanya kazi huko bila gharama yoyote, na kuendelea kupata ufadhili kutoka kwa watu walio katika mazingira magumu. Na tunafikiri kwamba hii ni changamoto.

Pia tulijifunza kutoka kwa mazungumzo kwamba kuna uwezo mdogo wa utekelezaji hata pale ambapo sera zipo. Kwa hivyo, baadhi ya majimbo yamekuja na sera nzuri za michezo ya kubahatisha. Lakini basi, linapokuja suala la utekelezaji, kwa sababu Nigeria ni nchi kubwa sana, na kisha hata majimbo ni makubwa sana, na unajua kwamba katika jamii tofauti, haswa katika maeneo ya miji ambapo kamari ipo, unaona kwamba kwa sababu ya kiwango kidogo cha rasilimali, utekelezaji hauwezi kuenea kwa mazingira hayo.

Kwa kuongezea, fikiria juu ya kuwa na waendeshaji ishirini, thelathini walio na leseni nchini, na ni wachache tu kati yao wanafanya vizuri sana katika suala la michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika. Haiwatii moyo kwa sababu wanafikiri kwamba ikiwa watawekeza pesa na wakati katika michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika, na wengine hawafanyi hivyo, na hakuna athari ya kutofanya hivyo, hakuna motisha ya kuifanya. Kwa hivyo, inawakatisha tamaa pia.

Jambo lingine lililoibuliwa na washiriki kwenye kongamano hilo lilikuwa kutokuwepo kwa bandari au mfumo wa kujitenga uliounaganishwa. Na tunafurahi kwamba baada ya kongamano hilo, tuliona kwamba Bahati Nasibu na Mamlaka ya Michezo ya Kubahatisha ya Jimbo la Lagos ilizindua jukwaa la SafePlay. Nina hakika unafahamu hilo. Ni jukwaa la umoja la kujitenga kwa tasnia nzima ya michezo ya kubahatisha, haswa katika Jimbo la Lagos.

Tunatumahi kuwa hiyo itaenea kwa majimbo mengine. Kwa hivyo, mtu anapojitenga kwenye jukwaa la Safe Play, hutengwa kiotomatiki kutoka kwa majukwaa mengine yote ya michezo ya kubahatisha katika kategoria tofauti.

Kama nilivyosema, tunafurahi kwamba SafePlay tayari inakuja, na tunatarajia kufanya kazi nao ili kufanikisha hilo. Kwa sasa tunafanya kazi kwa bidii sana na wadau wa tasnia, tukizungumza juu ya wasimamizi na waendeshaji sawa, kuhakikisha kuwa kuna kuitishwa kwa tasnia nzima ya michezo hii ya kubahatisha inayowajibika, haswa maswala yote ambayo nimeangazia kwenye kongamano hili ambalo walishughulikia.

Tunafurahi pia kwamba Chama cha Watengenezaji Vitabu wa Nigeria, yaani, vyama vya wafanyakazi vya makampuni yote ya kamari ya michezo nchini hufanya kazi na Gamble Alert bega kwa bega, na tunashughulikia vikwazo hivi vyote moja baada ya nyingine. Tunafanya maendeleo makubwa katika suala hilo. Kwa kweli, tumekuwa tukiendelea na programu tofauti za utetezi pamoja. Pia tunafanya kazi nao ili kuhakikisha kuwa kuna uwekezaji wa muda mrefu katika elimu ya umma, matibabu, na utafiti.

Collective action was a central theme of the Symposium, but lasting change requires measurable outcomes. How does Gamble Alert plan to track and evaluate whether the commitments made by operators, regulators, and advocacy groups are genuinely reducing gambling-related harm over time?

Evaluation for every nonprofit is always a tough task, but then, for us, how we have started it is to divide it into three tiers for monitoring and evaluation. The first thing is that we want to assess operator readiness. Currently, we train gaming operators, even regulators. What that does is that the standard for responsibility is being defined by Gamble Alert, guided by the law.

The regulations and laws provide the framework and standards, but we go a step further by bringing stakeholders together across different states. We train them on what is expected and connect these requirements to industry best practices. Once trained, operators have a clear standard to follow, they understand how to manage different situations, know who to contact when customers need support, and can implement the necessary tools. We then monitor compliance by reviewing their platforms and visiting retail outlets to ensure that the responsible gaming measures we have taught are actively in place.

There is also an assessment of the responsible gaming policies. Every gaming operator is expected to have responsible gaming policies on their platform. We look at these policies. We assist some of them in drafting these policies on their different platforms. Their customer interaction protocols are very important to us.

Customers now contact us directly with complaints, some of which (non-RG) we then forward to operators to ensure timely and effective responses. In Lagos State, for example, there is robust regulation outlining how operators should manage customer interactions and the technical systems they must have in place. Our role is to monitor compliance with these standards, assessing whether operators are implementing them correctly. Where gaps are identified, we ensure that corrective action is taken, because meeting these requirements is not optional, it is mandatory.

For regulators, we monitor the level of enforcement being carried out. For example, in Ibadan, we identified a gaming operator displaying misleading gambling content, in violation of responsible gaming policies. We reported this to the regulator, who took prompt action. Additionally, we discovered that the same operator was allowing underage children into their outlets, which we also reported for corrective measures. This process is part of how we actively track and ensure the enforcement of responsible gaming policies.

We review the regulatory requirements, and whenever we identify gaps, we raise them with the relevant regulators. For example, we have identified loopholes in laws across different states that could be exploited by unscrupulous operators, and we engage regulators to address these issues. This feedback is taken into account to ensure that future drafts of laws and regulations incorporate necessary improvements. We also monitor the level of compliance being recorded by regulators, which allows us to effectively track and evaluate the commitment to responsible gaming.

Kwa sasa tunaunda ushirikiano thabiti na wasimamizi, waendeshaji, asasi za kiraia, na jamii. Kwa hivyo, kwetu, lengo ni kwamba tunataka kuhamisha michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika kwa ishara ya muda mrefu. Tunataka iwe jambo la lazima. Kunapaswa kuwa na uwajibikaji wa pamoja katika wadau wote.

Hatua ya pamoja ilikuwa mada kuu ya Kongamano, lakini mabadiliko ya kudumu yanahitaji matokeo yanayoweza kupimika. Gamble Alert inapangaje kufuatilia na kutathmini ikiwa Ahadi zilizotolewa na waendeshaji, wasimamizi, na vikundi vya utetezi zinapunguza kweli Madhara yanayohusiana na kamari kwa muda?

Tathmini kwa kila shirika lisilo la faida daima ni kazi ngumu, lakini basi, kwetu, jinsi tumeanza ni kuigawanya katika viwango vitatu vya ufuatilaji na tathmini. Jambo la kwanza ni kwamba tunataka kutathmini utayari wa waendeshaji. Hivi sasa, tunatoa mafunzo kwa waendeshaji michezo ya kubahatisha, hata wasimamizi. Kinachofanya ni kwamba kiwango cha uwajibikaji kinafanuliwa na Gamble Alert, ikiongozwa na sheria.

Kanuni na sheria hutoa mfumo na viwango, lakini tunaenda mbali zaidi kwa kuwaleta wadau pamoja katika majimbo tofauti. Tunawafundisha juu ya kile kinachotarajiwa na kuunganisha mahitaji haya na mazoea bora ya tasnia. Mara baada ya kufunzwa, waendeshaji wana kiwango wazi cha kufuata, wanaelewa jinsi ya kudhibiti hali tofauti, wanajua ni nani wa kuwasiliana naye wakati wateja wanahitaji usaidizi, na wanawenza kutekeleza zana zinazohitajika. Kisha tunafuatilia utiifu kwa kukagua majukwaa yao na kutembelea maduka ya rejareja ili kuhakikisha kuwa hatua zinazowajibika za michezo ya kubahatisha ambazo tumefundisha zimewekwa kikamilifu.

Pia kuna tathmini ya sera zinazowajibika za michezo ya kubahatisha. Kila opereta wa michezo ya kubahatisha anatarajija kuwa na sera zinazowajibika za michezo ya kubahatisha kwenye jukwaa lao. Tunaangalia sera hizi. Tunasaidia baadhi yao katika kuandaa sera hizi kwenye majukwaa yao tofauti. Itifaki zao za mwingiliano wa wateja ni muhimu sana kwetu.

Wateja sasa wanawasiliana nasi moja kwa moja na malalamiko, ambayo baadhi yake (yasiyo ya RG) tunawapeleka kwa waendeshaji ili kuhakikisha majibu ya wakati na madhubuti. Katika Jimbo la Lagos, kwa mfano, kuna kanuni thabiti inayoelezea jinsi waendeshaji wanapaswa kusimamia mwingiliano wa wateja na mifumo ya kiufundi ambayo lazima wawe nayo. Jukumu letu ni kufuatilia utiifu wa viwango hivi, kutathmini ikiwa waendeshaji wanazitekeleza kwa usahihi. Ambapo mapungufu yanatambuliwa, tunahakikisha kwamba hatua za kurekebisha zinachukuliwa, kwa sababu kukidhi mahitaji haya sio hiari, ni lazima.

Kwa wasimamizi, tunafuatilia kiwango cha utekelezaji kinachofanya. Kwa mfano, huko Ibadan, tuligundua mwendeshaji wa michezo ya kubahatisha anayeonyesha maudhui ya kupotosha ya kamari, kwa kukiuka sera zinazowajibika za michezo ya kubahatisha. Tuliripoti hii kwa mdhibiti, ambaye alichukua hatua haraka. Zaidi ya hayo, tuligundua kuwa mwendeshaji huyo huyo alikuwa akiruhusu watoto wadogo kuingia kwenye maduka yao, ambayo pia tuliripoti kwa hatua za kurekebisha. Utaratibu huu ni sehemu ya jinsi tunavyofuatilia kikamilifu na kuhakikisha utekelezaji wa sera zinazowajibika za michezo ya kubahatisha.

Tunakagua mahitaji ya udhibiti, na wakati wowote tunapogundua mapungufu, tunayaibua na wasimamizi husika. Kwa mfano, tumegundua mianya katika sheria katika majimbo tofauti ambayo inaweza kutumiwa na waendeshaji wasio waaminifu, na



The final area I want to highlight is player harm indicators. When people reach out to us, we collect data to monitor treatment cases and identify emerging trends. In addition, during our community outreach across multiple states, we gather feedback, not to instruct, but to understand public perceptions of gambling, gambling-related harm, and where support is most needed. It's one thing to provide help; it's another to ensure that people actually feel supported. This feedback also informs our public awareness efforts and helps us measure impact. All of this forms part of our broader five-year plan, spanning 2023 to 2028.

So, our strategy is to show the outcome that gambling harm is decreasing across different populations. We want to know which interventions are working. So, at the end of the five years, we want to be sure that these interventions worked, or if they did not work, what additional reforms will be needed. So that's how we track some of these metrics.

Events like the Responsible Gaming Summit in South Africa have set a high continental standard. From your perspective, how does Gamble Alert view these kinds of events, as potential collaborators, as benchmarks to learn from, or as spaces you hope to complement with your own large-scale initiatives?

We viewed the summit's set-up, and we loved the entire event. We view events as a collaborative space. We also see them as an essential benchmark for different responsible gaming organisations.

It helps us in many ways to compare progress across different regions and the continent. But we have a responsible gaming symposium that we started this year. Next year, we will be holding another edition of the responsible gaming symposium, which is in June 2026, and it's going to be African-focused, not just Nigeria now. So, we are inviting a lot of people across the region, across the continent to share notes, compare notes, you know, bounce ideas off each other. And for us, we don't want to compete with existing events; we want to complement them.

Our goal is to build a strong, Africa-focused network of responsible gaming institutions, integrating policy, research, and practice. This is a step forward in creating a continental framework for responsible gaming. We do not see this as competition; rather, we learn from existing events, using them as benchmarks. We aim to complement these initiatives by developing our own Africa-centric programs that strengthen collaboration and shared standards across the continent.

Essentially, we bring all stakeholders together. The symposium is not just for operators and regulators, it also includes the community, media, and all key stakeholders, including public health practitioners. At our last event, participants included the Ministry of Health, psychiatric hospitals, mental health advocates, academics, and treatment centres. The goal is for everyone to examine gambling-related issues through a public health lens and collaborate on solutions to emerging challenges such as gambling addiction in the industry.

Is Gamble Alert considering extending its work beyond Nigeria? If so, are there particular African markets you are looking at first, and what factors would guide those decisions?

We are planning to expand and are already in early discussions with Ghana and Kenya. We are looking at South Africa, Rwanda, Zambia, and Uganda too. Our criteria for expansion include the existing regulatory frameworks, the readiness of the industry, and the level of interest from operators in responsible gaming and related investments. We aim to enter markets where the regulatory environment supports our work and where operators are committed to sustainable, responsible practices.

tunashirikisha wasimamizi kushughulikia maswala haya. Maoni haya yanazingatiwa ili kuhakikisha kuwa rasimu za baadaye za sheria na kanuni zinajumuisha maboresho muhimu. Pia tunafuatilia kiwango cha kufuata kinachorekodiwa na wadhibiti, ambayo inatuwezesha kufuatilia na kutathmini kwa ufanisi kujitolea kwa michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika.

Eneo la mwisho ninalotaka kuangazia ni viashiria vy a madhara ya wachezaji. Watu wanapotufikia, tunakusanya data ili kufuatilia kesi za matibabu na kutambua mitindo inayoibuka. Kwa kuongezea, wakati wa ufikiaji wetu wa jamii katika majimbo mengi, tunakusanya maoni, sio kufundisha, lakini kuelewa maoni ya umma juu ya kamari, madhara yanayohusiana na kamari, na mahali ambapo msaada unahitajika zaidi. Ni jambo moja kutoa msaada; Ni jambo lingine kuhakikisha kuwa watu wanahisi kuungwa mkono. Maoni haya pia yanafahamisha juhud zetu za uhamasishaji wa umma na hutusaidia kupima athari. Haya yote ni sehemu ya mpango wetu mpana wa miaka mitano, kuanzia 2023 hadi 2028.

Kwa hivyo, mkakati wetu ni kuonyesha matokeo kwamba madhara ya kamari yanapungua kwa watu tofauti. Tunataku kujuu ni hatua gani zinafanya kazi. Kwa hivyo, mwishoni mwa miaka mitano, tunataku kuwa na uhakika kwamba hatua hizi zilifanya kazi, au ikiwa hazikufanya kazi, ni mageuzi gani ya ziada yatahitajika. Hivyo ndivyo tunavyofuatilia baadhi ya metriki hizi.

Matukio kama vile Mkutano wa Kuwajibika wa Michezo ya Kubahatisha nchini Afrika Kusini yameweka viwango vy ju ya bara. Kwa mtazamo wako, Gamble Alert inaonaje aina hizi za matukio, kama washirika wanaowezekana, kama vigezo vy kujifunza kutoka, au kama nafasi inazotarajia kukamilisha na mipango yake mikubwa?

Tulitazama mpangilio wa mukutano huo, na tulipenda tukio zima. Tunaona matukio kama nafasi ya kushirikiana. Pia tunawaona kama alama muhimu kwa mashirika tofauti ya michezo ya kubahatisha yanayowajibika.

Inatusaidia kwa njia nyngi kulinganisha maendeleo katika mikoa tofauti na bara. Lakini tuna kongamano la michezo ya kubahatisha ambalo tulianza mwaka huu. Mwaka ujao, tutakuwa tukifanya toleo jingine la kongamano la michezo ya kubahatisha linalowajibika, ambalo ni Juni 2026, na litalenga Afrika, sio Nigeria pekee sasa. Kwa hivyo, tunawaalika watu wengi katika eneo lote, kote bara kushiriki maelezo, kulinganisha maelezo, unajua, kutoa maoni kutoka kwa kila mmoja. Na kwetu, hatutaki kushindana na hafla zilizopo; Tunataku kuwakamilisha.

Lengo letu ni kujenga mtandao thabiti, unaolenga Afrika wa taasisi za michezo ya kubahatisha zinazowajibika, kuunganisha sera, utafiti na mazoezi. Hii ni hatua mbele katika kuunda mfumo wa bara wa michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika. Hatuoni hii kama ushindani; badala yake, tunajifunza kutoka kwa matukio yaliyopo, tukiyatumia kama vigezo. Tunalenga kukamilisha mipango hii kwa kuendeleza programu zetu zinazozingatia Afrika ambazo zinaimarisha ushirikiano na viwango vy pamoja katika bara zima.

Kimsingi, tunaleta wadau wote pamoja. Kongamano hilo sio tu la waendeshaji na wasimamizi, pia linajumuisha jamii, vyombo vy habari, na washikadau wote muhimu, ikiwa ni pamoja na watendaji wa afya ya umma. Katika hafla yetu ya mwisho, washiriki walijumuisha Wizara ya Afya, hospitali za magonjwa ya akili, watetezi wa afya ya akili, wasom, na vituo vy matibabu. Lengo ni kwa kila mtu kuchunguza masuala yanayohusiana na kamari kuititia lenzi ya afya ya umma na kushirikiana katika suluhu za changamoto zinazoibuka kama vile uraibu wa kamari katika tasnia.

We look at that where responsible gaming is something that is paramount to the operators and regulators in that market. We also want to look at the availability of local partners for counselling and treatment. As much as we want to replicate the Gamble Alert model in these markets, we know that the sensibilities of these local markets are also important. And that's why, for treatment, we want to have partners who can tailor the treatment system to the cultural needs of the people.

Additionally, we assess the demand for research and public education, understanding the level of awareness around gambling, the existing data and studies we can leverage, and where new initiatives may be needed. Our approach is not about rapid expansion; it is about strategic and sustainable scaling, ensuring that the Gamble Alert model adapts effectively to the local context. This forms the core of our expansion plan.

Some observers suggest that technological innovation in African gambling markets may be Advancing faster than regulation can keep up. From your perspective, do you see this as a real risk, and if so, what would you say is the single biggest risk currently being overlooked?

I would say that, yes, technology innovation is certainly outpacing regulations. In fact, I believe our regulators are merely playing catch-up. You see, it continuously outpaces regulation. There is the risk, and it's growing, of technological innovation certainly, outpacing regulation.

For me, the biggest overlooked risk will still be the emerging class of invisible high-risk players. You will see those individuals whose gambling continues to be motivated by data-driven engagements, and personalised algorithm packaging. You may sit in the comfort of your room and then the gaming operator sends you a bulk SMS, asking you to gamble, you know, all these notifications, personalised promotions, all of these actually have a way of worsening the risk of gambling harm in the country. We think that this is one of the biggest risks.

We believe that without any proactive measures, these players will represent the next wave of problem gamblers on the continent, and that's why it is a risky thing. Some of them are not even gambling yet; they are just there, trying to enjoy sports. And then, because of push notifications and personalized promotions, they are drawn to gambling. And because they're not necessarily gambling for fun, they become vulnerable, and they become harmed by gambling.

Across Africa, if you could enforce just one non-negotiable responsible gaming standard, one rule every operator must abide by, what would it be, and why do you consider it the most urgent?

One non-negotiable responsible gaming standard that I would add for the industry is that every gaming operator must have a responsible gaming manager at the top management level. If we took data protection and anti-money laundering very seriously, then there is no reason not to take player protection seriously too, to have someone at the top management level who will respond to, or who will be accountable to the regulator. That person will feel the heat when there is laxity and noncompliance with responsible gaming standards, rules, and regulations.

If we have something like that, I believe that the gaming operators will begin to do better because they will be called to account, and every month, as they send suspicious transaction reports to regulators, they will file responsible gaming reports in the same way in partnership with solid organisations recognized by the regulators. This is one standard that is non-negotiable for me.

Je, Gamble Alert inazingatia kupanua kazi yake zaidi ya Nigeria? Ikiwa ndivyo, kuna masoko fulani ya Kiafrika unayoangalia kwanza, na ni mambo gani yanaweza kuongoza maamuzi hayo?

Tunapanga kupanua na tayari tuko kwenye majadiliano ya mapema na Ghana na Kenya. Tunaangalia Afrika Kusini, Rwanda, Zambia, na Uganda pia. Vigezo vyetu vya upanuzi ni pamoja na mifumo iliyopo ya udhibiti, utayari wa tasnia, na kiwango cha maslahi kutoka kwa waendeshaji katika michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika na uwekezaji unaohusiana. Tunalenga kuingia katika masoko ambapo mazingira ya udhibiti yanaunga mkono kazi yetu na ambapo waendeshaji wamejitlea kwa mazoea endelevu na ya uwajibikaji.

Tunaangalia hilo ambapo michezo ya kubahatisha inayowajibika ni jambo ambalo ni muhimu kwa waendeshaji na wasimamizi katika soko hilo. Tunataka pia kuangalia upatikanaji wa washirika wa ndani kwa ushauri nasaha na matibabu. Kwa kadiri tunavyotaka kuiga mfano wa Gamble Alert katika masoko haya, tunajua kuwa hisia za masoko haya ya ndani pia ni muhimu. Na ndio sababu, kwa matibabu, tunataka kuwa na washirika ambao wanaweza kurekebisha mfumo wa matibabu kulingana na mahitaji ya kitamaduni ya watu.

Zaidi ya hayo, tunatathmini mahitaji ya utafiti na elimu ya umma, kuelewa kiwango cha ufahamu kuhusu kamari, data na tafiti zilizopo tunazoweza kutumia, na ambapo mipango mipya inaweza kuhitajika. Njia yetu sio juu ya upanuzi wa haraka; ni juu ya kuongeza kimkakati na endelevu, kuhakikisha kuwa muundo wa Gamble Alert unabadijika vyema kulingana na muktadha wa ndani. Hii ni msingi wa mpango wetu wa upanuzi.

Waangalizi wengine wanapendekeza kuwa uvumbuzi wa kiteknolojia katika masoko ya kamari ya Afrika unaweza kuwa unasonga mbele kwa kasi zaidi kuliko udhibiti kunavyowezwa kuhimili. Kwa mtazamo wako, unaona hii kama hatari halisi, na ikiwa ni hivyo, unaweza kusema ni hatari gani kubwa zaidi inayopuuzwa kwa sasa?

Ningesema kwamba, ndio, uvumbuzi wa teknolojia hakika unazidi kanuni. Kwa kweli, ninaamini wasimamizi wetu wanacheza tu kukamata. Unaona, inaendelea kupita udhibiti. Kuna hatari, na inakua, ya uvumbuzi wa kiteknolojia hakika, kuzidi udhibiti.

Kwangu mimi, hatari kubwa zaidi iliyopuuzwa bado itakuwa darasa linaloibuka la wachezaji wasioonekana katika hatari kubwa. Utaona wale watu ambao kamari yao inaendelea kuhamasishwa na ushiriki unaoendeshwa na data, na ufungaji wa algorithimu ya kibinafsi. Unaweza kukaa katika faraja ya chumba chako na kisha mwendeshaji wa michezo ya kubahatisha anakutumia ujumbe mfupi nyingi, akikuuliza ucheze kamari, unajua, arifa hizi zote, matangazo ya kibinafsi, yote haya yana njia ya kuzidisha hatari ya madhara ya kamari nchini. Tunafikiri kwamba hii ni moja ya hatari kubwa.

Tunaamini kwamba bila hatua zozote madhubuti, wachezaji hawa watawakilisha wimbi linalofuata la wacheza kamari wenyewe matatizo barani, na ndiyo maana ni jambo hatari. Baadhi yao hata hawana kamari bado; Wapo tu, wakijaribu kufurahiya michezo. Na kisha, kwa sababu ya arifa za kushinikiza na matangazo ya kibinafsi, wanavutiwa na kamari. Na kwa sababu sio lazima wacheze kamari kwa kujifurahisha, wanakuwa hatarini, na wanadhirika kwa kucheza kamari.



Kote Afrika, ikiwa ungeweza kutekeleza kiwango kimoja tu cha michezo ya kubahatisha kisichoweza kujadiliwa, sheria moja ambayo kila mwendeshaji lazima atie, itakuwa nini, na kwa nini unaiona kuwa Haraka zaidi?

Kiwango kimoja cha michezo ya kubahatisha kisichoweza kujadiliwa ambacho ningeonzeza kwa tasnia ni kwamba kila mwendeshaji wa michezo ya kubahatisha lazima awe na meneja wa michezo ya kubahatisha anayewajibika katika kiwango cha juu cha usimamizi. Ikiwa tulichukua ulinzi wa data na kupambana na utakatishaji fedha kwa umakini sana, basi hakuna sababu ya kutochukulia ulinzi wa wachezaji kwa uzito pia, kuwa na mtu katika ngazi ya juu ya usimamizi ambaye atajibu, au ambaye atawajibika kwa mdhibiti. Mtu huyo atahisi joto wakati kuna ulegevu na kutofuata viwango, sheria na kanuni za michezo ya kubahatisha zinazowajibika.

Ikiwa tuna kitu kama hicho, ninaamini kuwa waendeshaji michezo ya kubahatisha wataanza kufanya vizuri zaidi kwa sababu watawajibishwa, na kila mwezi, wanapotuma ripoti za shughuli zinazotiliwa shaka kwa wadhibiti, watawasilisha ripoti za michezo ya kubahatisha zinazowajibika kwa njia ile ile kwa kushirikiana na mashirika thabiti yanayotambuliwa na wasimamizi. Hiki ni kiwango kimoja ambacho hakiwezi kujadiliwa kwangu.

GAMBLE ALERT: A SUCCESS STORY OF COURAGE, IMPACT & NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Gamble Alert began as a simple conviction that Nigeria deserved a gaming ecosystem where people are protected, informed, and supported. Today, that conviction has grown into one of the most influential responsible gaming movements in Africa, shaping policy, education, research, and player protection across the country. At the heart of Gamble Alert's work are three pillars: Prevention, Research, and Treatment; each one delivering measurable results, shifting national conversations, and touching real lives every day.

1. Prevention: Building A Safer Future Before Harm Occurs

A. School-to-School Underage Gambling Advocacy

Gamble Alert is Nigeria's most consistent and far-reaching advocate for the protection of minors from gambling harm. Our school tours have spanned 7 editions across 34 schools, with over 24,000 students reached directly, four states covered: Oyo, Osun, Lagos, and Ogun. Thousands of students have received tuition support, notebooks, textbooks, and responsible gaming handouts. Teachers and school administrators have become partners, with Gamble Alert gradually shaping a culture of early prevention in secondary schools. This program has grown into a national model, often referenced by regulators and replicated by NGOs who now look to Gamble Alert as the benchmark.



B. Financial Literacy Programs

Gamble Alert understands that poor financial habits are a major gateway into risky gambling behaviour. To address this structural root, we introduced financial literacy as a prevention strategy. Hosted at Yabatech and Ojuelegba market, reaching an estimated 1,500-2,000 students, traders, artisans, and young adults, participants were taught budgeting, savings discipline, risk understanding, and the psychology of impulsive spending; all core drivers of gambling vulnerability. This innovative connection between financial health and responsible gaming is a Gamble Alert signature approach and now serves as part of our training modules for operators and regulators.



C. NYSC Responsible Gambling Campaigns

Twice, Gamble Alert has taken responsible gaming to the Iseyin NYSC Orientation Camp, Oyo State, where the future of the country gathers. Over 6,000 corps members reached, dozens of lived experiences documented and used to inform program design and research. Corps members received training on identifying harmful habits, supporting peers, and creating a culture of moderation. This remains one of the largest youth-focused responsible gaming interventions in Nigeria.



D. Community Outreaches

Gamble Alert has carried responsible gambling education into the heart of communities:

- Four major community outreaches in different parts of Ibadan
- Reaching traders, transport workers, market women, artisans, and vulnerable populations
- Addressing real-world harms and connecting people with immediate support pathways

E. National-Level Conversations, Media Engagement & Industry Accountability

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• Responsible Gaming Symposium (Flagship Event)

The Responsible Gaming Symposium, inaugurated in 2025, has already become the gathering of stakeholders: regulators, operators, academics, mental health professionals, civil society leaders, and policymakers. It is the first of its kind in Nigeria, and Gamble Alert sits at the center of it as convener and thought leader.



• Press Conferences (2 Major Editions)

These high-profile events brought together top operators, state regulators, industry CEOs, journalists and public observers. They became unprecedented platforms where the gaming industry was called to public accountability on player protection.

• Radio Shows & Media

7+ radio shows, including "Across the Wave" featuring industry experts, academics, psychologists, and regulators, and engaging thousands of listeners on how to identify, prevent, and treat gambling-related harm. This has placed responsible gaming firmly in public consciousness.



2. Research: Providing Nigeria with the Data it Has Never Had

Gamble Alert is not just an advocacy organization; it is a research institution. We have produced some of the most important gambling-related data in Nigeria's history. Our major research achievements include Nationwide Prevalence Study (34 states), the most geographically comprehensive gambling prevalence mapping ever conducted by a Nigerian-led organization; Underage Gambling Studies (Ogun & Lagos), detailed data from hundreds of secondary school students, informing state-level policy conversations; Gambling Harm & Motivation Studies (Ibadan), a community-based analysis of gambling behaviour, psychological motivators, and harm patterns. Gamble Alert is increasingly seen as the empirical backbone of responsible gaming in Nigeria.

3. Treatment: A Safety Net for Those Who Need Help

Gamble Alert is officially listed as the Responsible Gaming partner on at least 15 gaming platforms in Nigeria, showing a remarkable recognition of credibility and trust.

What We Do

- Receive calls and reports from affected players
- Provide 24/7 clerking and triage
- Match clients with licensed psychologists
- Offer psychological evaluations, brief interventions, ongoing support, and referrals
- Maintain confidential data to track outcomes

Impact

- A consistently growing demand curve
- High recovery rates among cases who complete their treatment cycles
- Families and operators now rely on Gamble Alert as the first line of help

This positions Gamble Alert not only as an educator and researcher but also as a treatment and recovery hub for gambling-harm victims.

Other Significant Achievements & Leadership Impact

Beyond the core pillars, Gamble Alert has contributed in additional transformative ways:

- i. Training for Operators & Regulators: Delivered professional responsible gambling training to management and frontline staff of major gaming companies.
- ii. Worked with multiple state gaming boards to improve regulatory understanding of layer protection.

These trainings have shaped internal policies, inspired corporate responsibility budgets, and strengthened regulatory expectations across the industry.

Recognition & Influence

- a. Meritorious awards from multiple state gaming regulators, including Enugu, Lagos and Oyo states.
- b. Invitations to speak at national and international conferences
- c. Increasing recognition as the most credible voice on gambling harm prevention in the country. Influence that now extends to Ghana, where expansion conversations are ongoing.

The Bigger Story:

From classrooms to corporate boardrooms, from community streets to national policy tables, from radio waves to research labs, Gamble Alert has grown into a movement powered by courage, data, compassion, and a refusal to ignore the silent harms affecting millions of Nigerians. Gamble Alert is not just part of the responsible gaming ecosystem. Gamble Alert is shaping it.

