



WORLD **DIABETES** FOUNDATION

## Letter of Invitation



If we don't act now, our children will bear the future burden of diabetes!

### **Diabetes Summit Africa** **29th-30th June 2007, Nairobi, Kenya**

**One of the most significant public health challenges of the 21st century addressed by leading specialists**

Chronic diseases such as diabetes are common and becoming increasingly so. They already take a huge toll on human health and resources and yet, despite the mounting evidence, continue to be neglected by states, individuals, communities, development aid and funding agencies.

It is widely believed that the common form of diabetes (type 2) is a mild condition that does not kill, yet every 10 seconds a person dies from diabetes related conditions and complications. It is also widely believed that diabetes is a disease related to affluence, yet 80% of the 246 million people with diabetes live in the less-developed or developing world. Another misconception is that providing care for people with diabetes is expensive. On the contrary the high costs ascribed to diabetes are related to complications - the result of an undiagnosed, uncared and poorly managed condition.



International Diabetes Federation  
African Region



Ministry of Health  
Kenya



### **The Socio-economic Burden of Diabetes**

In the developing world the cost of educating a person with diabetes on how to take care of his feet is about USD 3, whereas the cost of treating a non-healing foot ulcer is about USD 450. The cost of amputation when treatment fails is over USD 550 and the cost of buying foot prosthesis exceeds USD 650. While health care systems may fund emergency amputation surgery, they typically do not invest in providing education and training to patients in order to prevent the ulcers and amputations.

The toll that diabetes takes on individuals, societies and economies especially in the developing and less developed world cannot be overstated. Those who require advanced and more expensive care for diabetes-related complications are often the very people who cannot afford such care. When burdened with debilitating or life threatening complications, which require expensive advanced care, many of them are forced to borrow money in order to pay for treatment. This places them in a debt trap with disastrous consequences for the individuals, their families and society. We need to be aware of the factors that drive costs. Effective prevention and treatment strategies for diabetes are not costly and can effectively bring down costs for other related Non Communicable Diseases. Both in health and economic terms, the continued neglect of chronic diseases such as diabetes is going to be very expensive. The costs and productivity losses will undermine and stunt economic growth and negatively impact on the millennium development goals.

### **Partnering to Conquer the Challenges**

The World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) in collaboration with the Kenyan Ministry of Health, the World Health Organizations Regional Office for Africa and the International Diabetes Federation (Africa), is organising a Diabetes Summit in Kenya, Nairobi, at the Safari Park Hotel on 29th-30th June 2007.

The purpose of the Summit is to bring together international experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), national health authorities, development aid and funding agencies, WDF project partners, local diabetes associations, health care providers, academics, NGOs, local, regional and global media to:

- **highlight the rising prevalence of diabetes and its complications in the developing world in general and Africa in particular**
- **discuss issues related to prevention and care and debate who is responsible for what – individual, community, state**
- **develop strategies to reduce the socio-economic burden of diabetes**
- **show through examples of ongoing WDF projects what is being done**
- **create a network of committed global and regional key opinion leaders who can drive the agenda on diabetes prevention and care in Africa**

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### Future Objectives and Aims

The ultimate aim is to encourage governments in Africa, policy-makers, and funding bodies to initiate and support much needed sustainable, local programmes for diabetes prevention and care as entry points which over time can evolve into more comprehensive complementary Non Communicable Disease programmes.

The Diabetes Summit is the first major diabetes event in Africa following the adoption of the UN Resolution on Diabetes and thus provides an interesting platform and opportunity for stakeholders in Africa to show their commitment to the cause of Non Communicable Diseases in general and diabetes in particular.

The Summit will be attended by relevant people involved in policy planning, implementation, development assistance, bilateral and multilateral donors, and other key diabetes stakeholders in Africa.

We invite you to join this very important Summit and recommend that you contact the organising secretariat as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

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