



WORLD **DIABETES** FOUNDATION

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Developing countries need assistance to deal with the double disease burden

Copenhagen, Denmark, 28 August 2007 – Representatives from the World Bank, World Health Organization, International Diabetes Federation and the Danish Ministry for Development Cooperation convened today in Copenhagen to discuss strategies for addressing the dilemmas that have arisen due to the emergence of what has been labelled “the double disease burden” in developing countries.

While traditionally infectious diseases contributed to the bulk of illnesses and deaths in these countries, an alarming increase in non communicable, chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, heart diseases and cancer is changing that picture.

It is estimated that today almost 80 % of the 246 million people with diabetes live in the developing countries, and according to the World Bank non communicable diseases (NCDs) will be the leading cause of death in low-income countries by 2015.¹

The devastating effects of diabetes on families translate into significant losses for every individual in society. The mechanisms are many; loss of investments in trained labour; increased taxation for medical care and support of the disabled; the economic failure of family units and small businesses; withdrawal of children from education (especially girls) to care for ailing relatives; and the general loss of the hope and self-reliance that ultimately drive all economic growth. These consequences will negatively impact the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.²

The discussion - convened on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) - highlighted how public-private partnerships can spur incentives for sustainable funding which can complement governmental as well as bilateral and multilateral programmes in developing countries.

“Addressing this challenge will require policy makers to design and implement economic, health, and social policies to address the links between NCDs and poverty and to minimize the health and economic losses among the population for example through public health interventions and improved health care—and simultaneously prepare to address the health system and economic pressures that will arise from the increase in NCDs due to the aging of populations”, said Dr Anne Stæhr Johansen, Senior Health Specialist from the World Bank, MENA Region

Considering mainly the effects of premature mortality, the World Health Organization estimates that (between 2005 and 2014) diabetes, heart disease and stroke combined will cost: USD 555.7 billion in lost national income in China, USD

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References

- 1) World Bank newsletter website: Public Policy and the Challenge of Chronic Non communicable Diseases: http://newsletters.worldbank.org/external/default/main?menuPK=571347&theSitePK=571341&pagePK=64133601&contentMDK=21420909&piPK=64129599#Topic_Article
- 2) Unite for diabetes media kit: http://www.unitefordiabetes.org/assets/files/UNR_media_kit_0407.pdf



336.6 billion in India and USD 2.5 billion in a very poor country like Tanzania.³

“Prevention and effective treatment of chronic diseases like diabetes is not particularly costly. In contrast, in both human and economic terms, not treating the condition is extremely costly. When that happens, the resulting costs will stunt economic growth in the developing world and undermine the benefits of improved standards of living and education. The very same countries that face the huge burden of diabetes and other chronic diseases are also struggling to cope with issues related to maternal and child health, safe drinking water and infectious diseases, and therefore need assistance to shore their efforts to tackle this challenge” said Prof Pierre Lefèbvre, Chairman of the World Diabetes Foundation.

“The health challenges for the developing countries are immense, but not impossible to overcome. Well functioning health systems are a precondition for prevention and treatment of diseases – both infectious and non-communicable. All partners – including governments, donors and private foundations - must work efficiently together and coordinate efforts in true partnership if we want to improve the health of poor people in developing countries. The Memorandum of Understanding between The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danida) and the World Diabetes Foundation demonstrates a successful model of such partnership”, said Her Excellency Mrs. Ulla Tørnæs, Denmark's Minister for Development Cooperation.

The World Diabetes Foundation experience

The World Diabetes Foundation was founded in 2002 by Novo Nordisk A/S, a Danish pharmaceutical company in response to the epidemic growth rates of diabetes in developing countries. Since its inception, the Foundation has funded 119 projects in 71 countries focusing on diabetes awareness, education and better access to care at local, regional and global levels. Over the next three to four years, the Foundation's programmes are set to positively impact 55.7 million people in the developing world.

The World Diabetes Foundation is one of the largest funding sources for projects directed at prevention and improving access to diabetes care in the developing world. The total project portfolio has reached USD 108.5 million, of which USD 35.5 million are donated by the World Diabetes Foundation, ensuring a multiplier effect; i.e., every USD dollar contributed by the Foundation is able to attract approximately two USD in cash or in-kind from other funding sources to the projects.⁴

“During the last five years of the Foundation's existence, we have learned to respect and understand the importance of using local knowledge and drive to our advantage. Identifying committed partners, funding their initiatives and ideas and strengthening their capacity for advocacy has helped us create strong local champions, thereby ensuring political commitment and long term sustainability. Our “mantra” is to be a catalyst- help others do more - making a much greater impact than the Foundation's size would suggest,” explains Dr Anil Kapur, Managing Director of the World Diabetes Foundation.

3)
Unite for diabetes media kit: http://www.unitefordiabetes.org/assets/files/UNR_media_kit_0407.pdf

4)
World Diabetes Foundation website: www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org



Congratulating the WDF on its fifth anniversary Prof Martin Silink, President of the International Diabetes Federation said "The WDF is unique and effective because it commands the respect of policymakers and key stakeholders. On behalf of the IDF- the global advocate for the 246 million people with diabetes worldwide, I would like to commend the outstanding successes of the WDF and thank them for their selfless work which has not only relieved immense suffering among the poorest in the world, but has also helped develop local skills to allow the programmes to be sustainable."

Notes to the editor

About Diabetes: According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), diabetes is expected to cause 3.8 million deaths worldwide in 2007, roughly 6% of total world mortality, about the same as HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. Today, there are almost 246 million people with diabetes worldwide. Within 20 years, this number is expected to rise to 380 million.

Source: IDF Atlas, Third Edition. www.idf.org

Diabetes mellitus occurs as a result of problems with the production and supply of insulin in the body. When the body produces no or insufficient insulin, or when it cannot use the insulin it produces, the glucose levels in the blood rise, leading to potential heart and blood vessels damage, kidney failure, blindness and nerve damage.

Source; www.unitefordiabetes.org

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions globally, with more than 1.6 billion adults being overweight - at least 400 million of them clinically obese - and is a major contributor to the global burden of chronic diseases and disability. Often coexisting in developing countries with under-nutrition, obesity is a complex condition, with serious social and psychological dimensions, affecting virtually all ages and socio-economic groups.

Obesity and overweight pose a major risk for serious diet-related chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and stroke, and certain forms of cancer. The health consequences range from increased risk of premature death, to serious chronic conditions that reduce the overall quality of life. Of especial concern is the increasing incidence of child obesity.

Source: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/index.html>

World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) is dedicated to supporting prevention and treatment of diabetes in the developing world through funding of sustainable projects in education, capacity building, prevention and awareness of diabetes. The Foundation strives to educate and advocate globally in an effort to create awareness, care and relief to those impacted by diabetes.

The WDF presently supports 119 projects with a total portfolio of USD 108.5 million of which USD 35.5 million are donated by the Foundation. The projects funded by the WDF will in the coming 3-4 years potentially influence the diabetes treatment of 55 million people directly in the developing countries. The WDF was founded in March 2002 by Novo Nordisk A/S and is governed independently of Novo



Nordisk A/S by a 6 member Board of Directors. The WDF is registered in Denmark as an independent trust.

For further information please visit our website: www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org

Novo Nordisk A/S is a healthcare company and a world leader in diabetes care. The company has a leading position within areas such as haemostasis management, growth hormone therapy and hormone replacement therapy. Novo Nordisk A/S manufactures and markets pharmaceutical products and services that make a significant difference to patients, the medical profession and society. With headquarters in Denmark, Novo Nordisk A/S employs more than 25,000 full-time employees in 79 countries, and markets its products in 179 countries.

www.novonordisk.com

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