



WDF delivering visible results

With 29 funded projects up and running throughout the developing countries, the World Diabetes Foundation has indeed managed to place diabetes on the global health agenda. Our close collaboration with local health authorities has improved access to and quality of diabetes care for millions of people in the countries hardest hit by diabetes. In this first issue of WDF News we will be sharing with you some of the achievements of the last two years.

More than 190 million people worldwide suffer from diabetes, and the number is growing rapidly. At least 50% of all people with diabetes are unaware of their condition. In some countries this figure may be as high as 80%, leaving a pressing need for targeted activities that will leverage global awareness of diabetes. Added to this is the general belief that non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases will become the world's main disablers and killers within the next 25 years.

Facing the challenge

With the 29 WDF-funded diabetes projects, however, we have taken the

first steps towards curbing this alarming development. Three projects have a global perspective, while the other 26 focus on geographical regions or specific countries. Eight of the 29 projects have been launched within the last year, and it is estimated that the current efforts being made to meet the diabetes challenge are having a direct impact on 18 million people in the developing countries. This result has been achieved by training healthcare professionals, opening diabetes clinics and creating increased personal awareness of diabetes treatment. Indirectly, our projects are estimated to have an impact on 59 million people, for example via project activities, media campaigns, word of mouth and distribution of publications.

The overall impact is a result of the multi-sectoral approach adopted by the WDF and our various partners. Close collaboration with local governments, the pharmaceutical industry, national diabetes associations and healthcare providers is essential if the strategies implemented for preventing and treating diabetes are to have a permanent effect.

Partners, patients and different parameters of success make each project distinctive. In that respect, the stories and the lessons learned all deserve individual attention. In this first edition of WDF News we have, however, concentrated on two of the most vulnerable countries, India and Tanzania, to give you a first-hand impression of the improvements achieved through diabetes foot care in India and access to diabetes care in Tanzania.

That we are facing a major threat to the global public health is evident when confronted with the latest estimates of diabetes related deaths provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). In the article *A Call to Action* you can read about the WDF sponsored “Diabetes Action Now” initiative - a global programme initiated by WHO and the International Diabetes Federation in order to put diabetes on the public agenda.



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