

## **ECOSOC 2011 (Innovation Fair): Presentation of e-diabete program**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear participants

It is a pleasure for me to be with you during this lunch.

I will share with you our experience on a project called e-diabete in Africa.

### ***Background***

Globally, there is an increased prevalence of chronic non communicable diseases. This represents an important burden in our society because, ***I quote***, it is "a double blow to development. They cause the loss of billions of dollars each year at the national level, and equally, lead millions of people below the poverty line." ***End of quote***. Consequently, they affect the working age group with an weakening impact on the economy.

Among these non communicable diseases, there are four major killers: cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases and diabetes. These four diseases represent 80% of all deaths due to non communicable diseases.

Currently, non communicable diseases affect both developed and developing countries. But, according to WHO, the situation is even worse in developing countries, where 80% of deaths occurring.

Like all non communicable diseases, prevalence of diabetes is increasing. More than 220 million people worldwide have diabetes. In 2004, there were about 3.4 million deaths in the world. There are different types of diabetes, the most frequent being type 2 diabetes, representing 90% of diabetes found in the world. This type is mainly due to overweight and physical inactivity and, It can be diagnosed and treated in primary care facilities.

In Africa, one of the key problem is the lack of information and education on diabetes amongst healthcare providers and the public at large. This often leads, to late or misdiagnosis when severe irreversible complications are already present.

Thus, in order to face this challenge in sub-Saharan Africa, the program called e-diabete has been set-up as one of the measures.

### **What is this e-diabète program?**

E-diabete is an innovative educational program to improve diabetes care in Africa through training of health professionals. This program was developed by Université

Numérique Francophone Mondiale (UNFM), in collaboration with the RAFT telemedicine Network, Senghor University in Senegal and Sanofi.

On the basis of its main objective, topics of e-diabetes sessions are chosen by experts according to needs expressed by local healthcare professionals. These topics are distributed to local and international experts for preparation of an online course. The main requirement is that the content of these courses should be customized for the African context. This program started in 2009 and covers about fifteen French-speaking countries in Africa. Once a month, one course is broadcasted for the attention of healthcare professionals using an e-learning platform developed by RAFT. This technology has the advantage to operate in unstable and low bandwidth Internet connections. Therefore, it allows healthcare professionals or health centers to easily connect and interact with the speaker. All the sessions are recorded, and can be played back at any time. They can also be recorded on USB keys or Compact Discs. Otherwise, the e-diabetes program is deployed in the side of English-speaking countries in Africa. Currently, it covers three countries.

### **What are the key elements of success of e-diabetes program?**

To us, the e-diabetes program has some specificities, which can explain its success in Africa:

- First, the human network: Like all the other specific programs of RAFT-UNFM, the content of the e-diabetes program is designed with the collaboration of all the members of the countries. Thus, there is an active participation of Africans in the resolution of problems associated with diabetes.
- Secondly, the tailoring of messages delivered for the attention of healthcare professionals. Teachers or experts are asked to adapt the content of their course to suit the African context and to different healthcare professionals.
- Thirdly, the technology. We use an e-learning application which was developed in the University of Geneva. This solution is usable, robust and adapted to the conditions of developing countries.
- And finally, the establishment of an effective public-private partnership. All the stakeholders are involved in the mobilization of healthcare professionals.

***Thank you for your kind attention***

*G. Bediang et al.*