

The participants at the regional meeting of Chief Dental Officers (CDOs), which took place on 17 and 18 November 2011 in Ouidah (Benin), welcomed the initiative to analyze the challenges and opportunities of integrating oral health into Non-Communicable Disease (NCDs) programmes.

This meeting is a follow up of the global initiative against NCDs that was discussed during the United Nations high-level meeting on the prevention and control of NCDs held in New York (USA) on 19-20 September 2011 and the ensuing declaration. Both the New York and the Brazzaville Declarations on NCDs recognize that oral diseases are a major public health problem for many countries, have common risk factors with the main NCDs and can therefore benefit from common approaches to NCD prevention and control.

The CDOs from the 17 French-speaking Member States of the WHO African Region recognized that the international environment is favourable for relaunching oral health initiatives and their leadership role at country level.

The participants agreed to engage actively with national and international health authorities, research institutes, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and communities in the development of a set of integrated strategies through two priority strategies:

**1. Oral health promotion and prevention of oral disease by contributing to approaches addressing the common risk factors of NCDs and the social determinants of health.**

- a) The participation in tobacco control and actions against abusive alcohol consumption to prevent oral diseases, cancers and other health consequences;
- b) The promotion of a healthy diet including a decrease in consumption of sugar, salt, fat and an increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables;
- c) The promotion of legislation favourable to the production, distribution and accessibility to quality fluoride toothpaste;
- d) The promotion of access to safe water and improved sanitation for proper oral hygiene;
- e) The promotion of living and working environments conducive to healthy lifestyles;
- f) The promotion of optimal exposure to fluoride.

**2. Capacity building of health care systems in the areas of health information systems, surveillance of common risk factors and primary health care.**

- a) The strengthening of national health information systems related to NCDs, including data on oral diseases at all levels of the health system and their integration in the African Health Observatory;
- b) The development of skills of health personnel for prevention and management of oral diseases integrated into NCD programmes at the primary health care level;
- c) The development and integration of oral health components into the WHO STEPwise approach for assessing NCD risk factors;
- d) The promotion of production, distribution and availability of an essential medical consumables and generic drugs list for the management of NCDs;
- e) The integration of an oral health care package for reimbursement in existing or emerging national social health insurance programmes.

The participants commended the efforts of the WHO/AFRO NCD Unit, in particular the oral health programme efforts to provide technical support and to facilitate sharing of experiences among Member States of the WHO African Region.

Signed by the workshop participants at Ouidah, Benin, on 18 November 2011.