REPORT OF PROMETRA INTERNATIONAL’S PARTICIPATION

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I. INTRODUCTION:

On July 07 - 8, 2016 was held in Guinea Bissau, the first National Conference on Modern Medicine, Traditional Medicine. This conference has as main objective to gather holders of two medicines for sharing thoughts, making exchanges and proposals for development of an integral medical system in the country.

Indeed, the Government of the Republic of Guinea Bissau wants to put an effective health system, combining Modern Medicine and Traditional Medicine.

Represented by Mamadou Diaw, PROMETRA International, was an important guest to this conference, chaired by the Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau, HE Mr. Baciro DJA.

1. Opening Ceremony:

Planned initially on July 6, 2016, the conference has been postponed for a day because of Eid. Opening ceremony took place at INASA - National Institute of Public Health, with official attendance of HE Báciro ADI, Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau.

At the head table, PROMETRA International was represented, together with Secretary of State for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Bishop of Bissau, President of Caritas Guinea Bissau and Secretariat for the Hospital Management.

PROMETRA International through his speech expressed thanks from his President, Dr. Erick GBODOSSOU, for having been associated to such important work for the health of the sister republic of Guinea Bissau, but also availability and willingness of our Organization to support the government of Guinea Bissau in this initiative by bringing all necessary technical support. As a reminder, INASA is currently headed by Dr Placido Cardoso, former Director General of WAHO (West African Health Organization).
Prime Minister, accompanied by a large delegation gave his speech by recalling collaborative attitude that needs to be taken by the conference before delivering official ceremony opening.

A products presentation of two medicines was held in the showroom of INASA. PROMETRA Guinea Bissau had a stand where were displayed their products and activities, in presence of TM practitioners associations that the chapter coordinates through 08 regions of the country.

The INASA has an educational program on acupuncture, proof of the openness of the Institute, given that the largest universities of ECOWAS, and Africa in general do not include such education in their curriculum.
As usual, PROMETRA International is always present in the exhibition stands at the sides of the world’s largest laboratories or organizations, when it comes to Modern Medicine and Traditional Medicine.

II. PRESENTATIONS:

1. Presentations of July 7, 2016:

After official opening, several presentations followed by brief exchanges were made:

- National Health System and Place of Traditional Medicine, by Dr. Evangelino Quadé,
- Medicinal Plants of Guinea Bissau and Regional and National Pharmacopea, by Ingenior Nelson Gomes Dias,
- Applications of Natural Medicine in the Treatment of Malaria in Guinea Bissau, by Dr. Zambarletti,
- Medicinal Plants of Guinea Bissau: Key Indications and Evidence of Therapeutical Success, Mr. José Lopez,
- Challenges of Traditional Medicine Affirmation in Guinea Bissau, by Dr. Alberto Zambarletti,
- Pharmacies and quality Control of drugs in Guinea Bissau: Origins and Drugs Conservation Systems and Regulation Aspects, by Francisco and Dr. Elsa Aleluia Sampaio,
- Experience of National Orthopaedic Service in Managing Cases Treated by Traditional Medicine and Vice Versa, by Dr. Felix Mandjan Sambu,
- Experiences of National Clinics Services in HIV Case Managed by Traditional Medicine and Vice Versa, by Dr. David Silva,
- Experience of use of Moringa in Guinea Bissau, by Monica Canavesi, Caritas Guinea Bissau.
This set of topics shows how organizers master subject of this conference, as well as the choice of presenters. INASA has a perfect knowledge of key actors and levers should be activated to allow integration of two health systems.

In addition, Caritas Guinea Bissau has demonstrated important work, from involvement in awareness campaigns against HIV / AIDS and Ebola disease, but also in identification of medicinal plants commonly used in Guinea Bissau and their fields of application.

2. Presentations of July 8, 2016:

2.1. Introducing PROMETRA International:

It was made first a summary of session of July 7, 2016 by Dr. Miguel Barros. Subsequently, the presentation of the PROMETRA International on Introduction of Traditional Medicine in the National Health System of Guinea Bissau was made by its representative, Mamadou Diaw.

Following the presentation, Mr. DIAW returned on the discussions of the day before, for which notes were taken on certain points. He offered the following answers:

a. Problem of dosage in Traditional Medicine: certainly, there are discomfort in traditional medicine practice because of lack of organization and training of traditional healers, but this discomfort is everywhere
and is more important in Modern medicine. In 2012, more than 400 drugs have been withdrawn from pharmacies, they were recognized carcinogenic because of paraben they contained. To resolve dosage problem, Traditional practitioners should be organized and trained, preferably through FAPEG method, a method developed by PROMETRA, adapted to analphabet people, that allows giving right message to right messenger without changing their traditional nature. The question of dosage could be taught, as well as the identification of plants or parts of plants known as toxic.

b. The packaging question: The e Representative of PROMETRA International criticized packaging method used by healers. It is inconceivable that in 2016, one can found in the showroom medicinal plants conditioned in plastic bags, in which one breath to fill them. It is not appropriate hygienically. Maghrebians and Asians products are well represented in most of our pharmacies and other shops because they have good conditioning, and sometimes, it is raw products coming from Africa that they process, package and sell us back.

c. Necessity of a Law for Traditional Medicine Practice: First and foremost, it is necessary for Guinea Bissau to get vote and promulgation of a law on exercising Traditional Medicine, otherwise, any effort of authorities in the domain risks to be reduced to nothing. A law would identify actors, define their areas of competence and exclude all charlatans.

As such, there is no need to reinvent the wheel, it would be interesting to learn from existing documents in terms of laws, a prototype is already available in the book resulting from UNDP/PROMETRA International project.

d. Necessity to Change approach: Cartesian system is currently deadlocked. The only existing alternative in medical area is to return to the traditional medicine, or alternative medicine, or soft medicine, according to naming. PROMETRA advocates a change of paradigms, why is it necessary to continue to try to kill viruses and other bacteria? Many diseases develop resistances to answer the aggressiveness among which viruses and germs are subjects. PROMETRA demonstrated through its presentation that during some of our therapeutic researches, viruses were "deactivated" and "extirpated". These fundamental notions allow to open the door to new theories which are going to change fundamentally medicine in a general way.
Given difference of approach between two medicines, Ministry of Health of Guinea Bissau needs to create two independent managements:

- A Modern Medicine Management,
- A Traditional Medicine Management.

**e. Necessity to Update Existing Texts:** It is not interesting to always restart a work that is already launched.

**In 2010, two documents were prepared by the Ministry of Health of Guinea Bissau:**

- Strategic Plan of Traditional Medicine (June 2010)
- National Policy and Regulation of Traditional Medicine (Nene Badadje, June 2010)

Also, WHO-AFRO, in collaboration with OAPI developed with the help of key experts, two repositories for all African countries:

- Repository for Harmonization Of Approval of Procedures Of Drugs Coming From Traditional Pharmacopoeia
- Repository For Harmonization Of Procedures Of Identification Of Traditional Healers.
These documents can already serve as a basis of work for elaboration of national policy on Traditional Medicine of Guinea Bissau.

Alongside these works, Dr Placido Cardoso, current Director of INASA completed a working of international reference with WAHO through the book on Monograph of Medicinal Plants in West Africa, with sufficient information on their use, chemical composition and other parameters.

III. WORKING SESSION WITH PROMETRA GUINEA-BISSAU:

On the sidelines of the conference, a working session was held with PROMETRA Guinea Bissau on their current activities and perspectives:

1. Activities Executed:

PROMETRA Guinea Bissau became a member of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Health for Prevention of Epidemics. This committee meets every Tuesday to assess the progress of the work. PROMETRA Guinea Bissau benefited from UNICEF funding to train and sensitize healers on prevention of Ebola (2014-2015), work has been done in 08 regions of the country.

2. Current Activities:

A sensitizing and training work is underway in 2016 regarding the Prevention of Zika epidemic. Healers Associations are trained in each region.

National Representation of PROMETRA Guinea Bissau has had to play a leading role in organizing the national conference Medicine Modern, Traditional Medicine. Thanks to the close partnership with the Ministry of Health, PROMETRA Guinea Bissau weighed all his influence for holding this conference.
The presence of PROMETRA International is highly appreciated and allowed the Representation gain respect and esteem.

3. Needs:

National representation is looking for a better headquarters than the old. Funding is still being sought for implementation of activities. PROMETRA Guinea Bissau wants to upgrade training of its officers in order to make it more functional. The National Chapter would like to receive enough FAPEG and PROMETRA / UNDP books for their documentation.

44. Perspectives:

PROMETRA Guinea Bissau plans to:

- A census of healers association,
- Make FAPEG training in 08 regions,
- Establish a system for collecting and exploitation of medicinal plants of the country,
- Develop a strategy for harvesting and storage of medicinal plants,
- Acquire a unit of processing and packaging of medicinal plants.

IV. WORKING GROUPS:

For compiling the recommendations of the conference, three working groups were formed:

1. traditional healers,
2. Health Technicians,
3. Researchers and partners.

V. CLOSING CEREMONY:

After working groups, closing ceremony took place in the presence of WHO Representative, State Secretary to Hospital Management, together with PROMETRA Guinea Bissau who each gave a speech.
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. At political level:
   1. Advocating is necessary for the adoption of a law for integration of Traditional Medicine in the current health system,
   2. Strengthening mechanism of articulation of public policies at an inter-sector level (health, education, culture, economy etc.) for an adoption of the process,

2. At Strategic level:
   1. Bringing needed revisions in health development plan that will lead to integration of Traditional Medicine, including all legal, conceptual and administrative processes promoting articulation with conventional medicine,
   2. Necessity to provide health and financial information on impact of using medicinal plants traditional and modern medicine, particularly in pharmacies,
   3. It needs to be proceeded to a significant investment on knowledge of medicinal plants, safeguarding traditional knowledge used in pharmacopeia through educative system and applied research.