



PROMOTION DES MEDECINES TRADITIONNELLES PRO.ME.TRA INTERNATIONAL

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INTEGRATION OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN HEALTH SYSTEMS: PROGRESS TO DATE

No one is free from suffering. Since man wants to be human, he has duty to help others and to make known what can help the other. This implies that any knowledge that can bring relief to men must be known and spread.

Traditional Medicine is a knowledge that can bring relief to man, therefore it must be known and widespread even if it runs against certain principles of modern conventional science.

We must indeed acknowledge that there have always been healers among men. This medicine is as old as mankind, as ancient as pain. We can never know who the first healer was: this notion is lost in the mist of time.

In 2003, Office for South-South Unit Cooperation of United Nations Development Program in New York has strongly supported PROMETRA Research Project entitled: *Introduction of Traditional Medicine in National Health Systems of the Third World.*

This three-year project enabled PROMETRA to:

- assess the situation of Traditional Medicine in African countries,
- meet with several political leaders at different levels in Africa,
- make a statement without complacency of the worrying situation of Conventional Medicine in Africa ,
- make the situation of limits for introduction of traditional medicine in teaching curriculum at different levels,
- Implement a strategy for the judicious introduction of Traditional medicine in health care systems of 1/3 world.

It is therefore with unpretentious joy and with legitimate pride that PROMETRA welcomes this topic of integration of Traditional Medicine into health systems as the theme of African Traditional Medicine Day 2018. Problematic to evaluate its progress to date is to be saluted, as well as the courage of WHO-AFRO in its choice.

Since Alma-Ata conference about 04 decades ago, WHO-AFRO has set an extremely important milestone and invited African Heads of State to engage in primary health care policies with recommendation to involve Traditional Medicine agents in achieving its objectives.

Many other activities have been carried out, including:

- WHO 2001-2005 Action Plan, recalling the position taken by African Heads of States at Lusaka Summit in July 2001, making the Decade 2001-2010 the one for rehabilitation of Traditional medicine,
- Making August 31th of each year as African Traditional Medicine Day throughout Africa. This day will be celebrated in its fifteenth edition.

We welcome WHO-AFRO initiatives which have realized that this medicine needs to be rehabilitated and put to the service of people of our continent. Indeed, 80% of populations living in Southern SAHARA address to traditional healers not only for their health care but also to receive their education for health. It remains clear, therefore, that any health policy that excludes healers is doomed to failure. In terms of health, we cannot adopt exogenous medicine, but we have a duty to adapt it to our endogenous realities. Health integrates with culture and faith of beneficiary populations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Topic of 15th African Traditional Medicine Day: "Integration of Traditional Medicine in Health Systems: Progress to Date" is very relevant and will awaken conscience of each and all.

WHO, in agreement with 47 African countries, is organizing its sixty seventh session of Regional Committee from August 28th to September 1st 2017 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. As you can see, this session, which brings together 47 Health Ministers from 47 countries, coincides with the African Traditional Medicine Day 2017.

As we went through the program spread over five days, we noticed with bitterness that there is not a small session dealing with Traditional Medicine. **This is worrisome.**

This shows very clearly "the progress to date" of integration of Traditional Medicine into health systems.

Are health policy makers in our countries aware of the revival interest in Traditional Medicine worldwide over the past three decades?

Are health policy-makers in our countries aware of the limitations of Conventional Medicine, which itself recognizes that 60% of illnesses are psychological or psychosomatic, in which it is limited? This same medicine recognizes many diseases as incurable.

Are health policy makers in our countries aware that the consumption of Traditional Medicine products has increased exponentially over the past three decades?

Are health policy-makers in our countries aware that in the area of health we can find local solutions to our local health problems?

In this same context, we certainly have more to give to the North than to receive from it.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Progress to date of integrating Traditional Medicine into health systems in Africa is still very timid, and in some of our countries almost all population health problems are handled by exogenous hands.

If "Health is basis of all development", we are not yet thinking of development.

In view of this, PROMETRA International and its network throughout the world call African decision-makers and WHO to put in place a strategic plan with 05 key actions:

1. advocacy and public policy

This advocacy must be directed towards politicians so that everywhere a legal framework is put in place for the benefit of practitioners of this medicine.

2. Education and Training

Knowledge of plants, their virtues and their use must begin from kindergarten and continue in post-graduate studies.

3. Encouraging Collaboration Between Two Medicines

Collaboration based on mutual respect and mutual respect, but also for exchanges to the benefit of suffering populations.

4. Documentation Shall Provide a Picture of Traditional Medicine in Each Country:

- at legislative level,
- in terms of protection of endogenous knowledge,
- at level of practice of Traditional Medicine in a formal framework,
- in the frame of protection of biodiversity.

5. Dissemination of Best Practices

This action aims to the judicious introduction of Traditional Medicine into African health systems.

After implementation of these 5 actions, it remains clear that Traditional Medicine will be rehabilitated as an inspiration for discovery, innovation, progress and sustainable development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The topic of the 15th African Traditional Medicine Day: "Integration of Traditional Medicine in Health Systems: Progress to Date" challenges the conscience of each and all. In this noble quest for endogenous and sustainable development of our continent, PROMETRA is available to provide technical support and to accompany all needed strategies for the judicious introduction of our health heritage into health systems of our communities, our cities, our countries, our sub region and our continent.

Thank you.

Dr Erick GBODOSSOU

President

PROMETRA International