



> Press release

## Developing world hit by western life-style disease

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 75% of women over the age of 30 are now overweight in countries as diverse as Egypt, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey. Estimates are similar for men, with over 75% now overweight in Argentina, India, China, Kuwait and Greece.

Obesity and sedentary life styles are important risk factors for both diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Once considered a problem only in wealthy countries, WHO estimates show that the prevalence of overweight and obesity are now dramatically increasing in the low and middle income countries.

WHO predicts the global diabetes population will grow to more than 200 million in 2010 and 330 million in 2025, with developing countries bearing the brunt of this epidemic in the 21st century. Diabetes and its numerous complications are a great burden on the healthcare budgets of countries worldwide. The WHO estimates the prevalence of diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region is expected to rise from 15 million to 42 million people in the next 25 years.

“We are witnessing a large scale pandemic in terms of overweight and obesity, and related chronic diseases. Raised body mass index is a major risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Over the next ten years, the prevalence of diabetes and consequently hypertension, coronary artery disease and stroke are expected to increase most significantly in the regions of the Eastern Mediterranean and Africa. What is even more disturbing is the fact that type 2 diabetes can be easily prevented by adapting a healthy lifestyle which includes healthy eating and regular physical activity, but unfortunately very little is being done to promote healthy living in the face of aggressive marketing by the processed food industry. This inaction may prove very costly both in terms of health and economics”, elaborates Dr Anil Kapur World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) Managing Director.

Diabetes in the developing world is in focus when European Action on Global Life Sciences (EAGLES) and the World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) is organising a diabetes symposium at BioVision the 27-29 April at the New Library of Alexandria, Egypt, with the participation of more than 150 participants and world leading experts.

European Action on Global Life Sciences (EAGLES) aims at enhancing the collaboration between European researchers and researchers in the developing world to fight hunger and disease has been launched by the European Federation of Biotechnology (EFB). The project is being supported by the European Commission and is a collaboration between EFB and scientific partners in Europe, China, Egypt, Ghana, South Africa and the Philippines. Members of the Steering Committees include prominent scientists from China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mexico, South Africa, Syria and Thailand.

A number of EAGLES conferences and workshops will be organised during the next three years in Europe and various developing countries (DEC). The topics will illustrate the need for much

more effective European responses on the use of biology in combating problems in health and food supply in the DECAs and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

For further information please contact:

Jens Degett  
Executive Director

Phone +34 91 220 3157

Mail [jdegett@jubii.dk](mailto:jdegett@jubii.dk)

\*\*\*

The World Diabetes Foundation is dedicated to supporting prevention and treatment of diabetes in the developing world through funding of sustainable projects in education, capacity building, distribution and procurement of essential drugs and monitoring. The Foundation creates partnerships and acts as a catalyst to help others do more. The World Diabetes Foundation strives to educate and provide advocacy globally in an effort to create awareness, care and relief to those impacted by diabetes. By supporting 67 projects in more than 60 countries in the developing world the Foundation has to date made a direct impact on 27 million people.

For further information, please contact:

Jamal Butt  
Communication Manager

Phone direct: +45 44 43 47 36

Mobile:+45 30 75 47 36

Email:[Jmbu@worlddiabetesfoundation.org](mailto:Jmbu@worlddiabetesfoundation.org)

Web:[www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org](http://www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org)