The 37th session of the Technical Consultative Committee (TCC) of the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control (APOC) was opened on 9th September 2013 for five days. It gathered statutory members, observers, technical advisers, technical review committees chairpersons from three APOC countries, representatives of research institutes, the West Africa Health Organization and the WHO/African Region Office. The agenda of this statutory body, that meets twice a year in March and September, included the review of the results of onchocerciasis control in endemic countries as well as the management of APOC Trust Funds.

Dr Jean-Baptiste Roungou, the newly appointed Director of APOC, opened the session by raising a number of issues relating to the objective of onchocerciasis elimination. These technical and strategic issues included: the transformation of the Programme (two drafts concept notes relating to the transformation of APOC after 2015 and to the issue of hypo-endemic zones are submitted to TCC expert perusal), the need for close collaboration with the Lymphatic Filariasis Programme, the perspective of including other strategies to control the disease, the adoption of two-yearly treatment in some CDTI projects, the response to donors’ concerns about weak performance and futher support to entomological and research activities.

Finally, with the decrease in funding, Dr Roungou highlighted that the success of elimination can only be achieved through collective efforts. A cry from the heart heard by the participants who, since then, have been working hard on the agenda with a lot of interest.

Day 1 Agenda

1. The salient outcomes of 140th and 141th sessions of the Committee of Sponsoring Agencies (Dr Jean-Baptiste Roungou);
2. Follow-up of the key recommendations of TCC 36 (Dr Laurent Yaméogo);
3. Update on the results of epidemiological evaluations in Chad and in Equatorial Guinea (Dr Noma Mounkalla and Honorat Zouré);
4. Cross-border delineation of CDTI in the context of elimination (Honorat Zouré);
5. Conceptual note on the elimination of the onchocerciasis in hypo endemic zones (Dr Afework H. Tekle).

Useful telephones numbers

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.Tools for measuring the true volume of liquid in a vessel are provided.

World Health Organization

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