Working visit of the Director of APOC to Cameroon
Promises of diversified partnership

On the last day of the five-day working visit to Cameroon, the Director of the African Programme for onchocerciasis control (APOC) was received by the National Onchocerciasis Task Force (NOTF) in the framework of an extraordinary meeting of the group. As Dr Georges Etoundi Mbilla, Director of Disease control (DLM), said, it has been an opportunity to work together on the record of onchocerciasis control and consider the way forward.

After Dr Didier Biholong, Coordinator of the National Onchocerciasis control Programme, presented the activities and difficulties encountered, Dr Roungou proposed potential solutions to the problems raised. Regarding the multiplicity of projects, he indicated that their restructuring was considered. In addition, he said that the frequency of Mectizan distribution would be adapted to the specificity of each case, to endemicity rate, to annual or bi-annual frequency and that human resources would be strengthened, the final evaluation reports would be better shared, funds provision would shift from annual to quarterly frequency based on Plans of action and Budget (PABs), a training for research project writing to consolidate the research section as recommended by the APOC Technical Consultative Committee (TCC) would be organized.

Following the meeting, the Director of APOC held a press briefing in the conference hall of the Ministry of Public Health. Dr Jean-Baptiste Roungou presented the goal and outcomes of his mission to Cameroon in French and English, before responding to a few questions from the journalists. Then, together with the WHO Representative in Cameroon, they handed over to six CDTI projects some equipment made up of one vehicle, two printers, two desktop computers, and four laptop computers.

Thereafter, the Director of APOC had a conversation with the officials of the Faculty of Medicine and biomedical Sciences of the Université of Yaoundé I. Pr. Côme Ebana Mvogo, Dean and ophthalmologist, and Pr Alfred Njamchi, Vice-dean, were pleased to make a short presentation of the inclusion of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) in the curricula, using lectures and internships. Taking a walk, Dr Roungou also paid a courtesy call to the Research Centre for filariasis and other neglected tropical diseases (CRFiMT). This institution, managed since its creation in 2005 by Dr Joseph Kamngno and supported by many partners such as WHO, Mectizan Donation Program, McGill, the Cameroon Ministry of public health, the Research Institute for Development, and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has gathered expertise relating to training on the management of severe adverse events. It is being increasingly recognized in sub-saharan Africa.

Finally, after being invited to Actualités-hebdo, an outstanding Sunday evening programme of the state television, Dr Roungou received lots of thanks from the Minister of Public Health, André Mama Fouda. ♦

DIR/APOC press conference
DIR/APOC and MoH of Cameroon before the press
Donation of equipment to six CDTI projects
Souvenir photograph in front of the statue of Hippocrates at the Faculty of Medicine
Group photograph at CRFiMT

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