Towards UN Joint Action on Cancer Control

Cancers are among the leading causes of illness and premature mortality worldwide. There were approximately 14 million new cases and 8.2 million cancer-related deaths in 2012. People in all countries are affected by cancer.

At least one-third of all cancer cases are preventable. Prevention offers the most cost effective long-term strategy for the control of cancer.

The burden of cancer can be reduced by implementing evidence-based strategies in the areas of prevention, early detection, and management (including diagnosis and treatment).

Some of the most common cancer types, such as breast cancer, cervical cancer, oral cancer and colorectal cancer have high cure rates when detected early and treated effectively.

Relief from physical and psychological problems can be achieved through palliative care.

A number of members of the UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (UNIATF) are now joining forces to fight cancer.

Two projects are proposed:

1. to support comprehensive cancer control in about seven selected countries; and

2. to support national efforts to prevent and control cervical cancer in an initial set of countries.

Members of the UNIATF are now looking for resources to deliver these two programmes in line with the 2011 NCD Political Declaration and the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020.

1st June 2015
IAEA, IARC and WHO are joining forces for the first time to implement a joint global project.

The purpose of the project is to increase national capacity to prevent, control and monitor cancer within a comprehensive cancer control framework.

It will build on the mandates, expertise and experience of the three agencies with regards to cancer prevention and control and in particular the successes and lessons learned from over 30 years of IAEA technical expertise in implementing radiotherapy programs and radiation medicine in LMICs and more recently, from its Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) Model Demonstration Sites, the IARC Global Initiative on Cancer Registries and WHO’s strong country presence, its leadership at regional level and the guidance it has developed in the development and implementation of comprehensive cancer control plans.

The Joint Project will provide technical assistance to governments in about seven selected countries. These countries will act as hubs to disseminate experience to neighbouring countries.

The exact nature of the technical support provided will be determined by needs assessments.

**Likely outputs of the project in each of the selected countries will include:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>A functioning cancer registration system</th>
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<td>A comprehensive costed national cancer plan within a broader multisectoral NCD action plan, with an effective governance structure to oversee its implementation</td>
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<td>Adequate and sustainable financing for implementing the national cancer plan</td>
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<td>Whole-of-government and whole-of-society activities to reduce risk factors for cancer and to reduce exposure to environmental and occupational carcinogens</td>
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| National immunization programmes for human papilloma virus and hepatitis B |
| Increase access to early detection, diagnostic and treatment services nationally, including medical oncology, radiotherapy and surgical oncology and availability of essential medicines and technologies for cancer diagnosis and treatment |
| Increase accessibility to quality and effective pain management and palliative care nationally |
| Robust monitoring and evaluation of the above with evidence of operational research being undertaken by national authorities |

*International Atomic Energy Agency-International Agency for Research on Cancer-World Health Organization*
In 2012, the number of deaths among women due to cervical cancer was estimated by IARC to be 266,000 worldwide. Most of these are preventable because feasible and effective prevention and control interventions exist which target women at different ages in their life, from adolescence to the elderly.

The objective of the collaboration is for UN agencies to work together to increase access to cervical cancer prevention and control services as an entry point for other types of cancer in low- and middle-income countries.

Potential role of UN agencies for primary, secondary and tertiary (treatment and palliative care) prevention.

![Diagram showing the roles of UN agencies for primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention]

The likely outputs of the project in a set of countries to be determined will be:

- Development of a comprehensive national cervical cancer strategy and plan
- Access to information and counselling about cervical cancer prevention and management
- Access to human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines through integrated health platforms by all girls especially those most at risk/hardest to reach
- Access to cervical cancer screening and treatment of pre cancer lesions
- Access to diagnosis and treatment (surgery/radiotherapy/chemotherapy) for invasive cervical cancer
- Access to quality and effective pain management and palliative care
- A functioning cancer registration and program monitoring system
The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (UNIATF) on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases was established in 2013 by the Secretary General and placed under the leadership of WHO to coordinate the activities of the UN System to support the realization of the commitments made by Heads of State and Government in the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs. The Task Force’s terms of reference were adopted by ECOSOC in July 2014. Joint activities included in the work plan of the Task Force are additive to various, more comprehensive efforts conducted by the UN agencies to prevent and control NCDs. These joint activities offer important opportunities to address cross-cutting issues and to advance capacity and learning in countries. www.who.int/nmh/ncd-task-force/en

For further information please contact the Secretariat of the UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (unncdtaskforce@who.int)