

## **Joining forces for better diagnosis and care of blood disorders in Burkina Faso**

We are delighted to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Fondation Pierre Fabre (FPF) and the Novo Nordisk Haemophilia Foundation (NNHF) to jointly improve diagnosis and care of blood disorders in Burkina Faso. According to the terms of the agreement, the two foundations will collaborate on programmes focusing on sickle cell disease and haemophilia in Burkina Faso through their operating partner, the Groupe d'Intervention en Hématologie (GIH), for a period of two years.

Both NNHF and FPF are currently running independent projects in Burkina Faso, where an estimated 4.63% of the population lives with sickle cell disease<sup>1</sup> and more than 2,000 people are expected to live with haemophilia. The two foundations have identified specific activities where synergies will enable increased impact, primarily through awareness, advocacy and educational activities. Together, NNHF and FPF expect to double the number of healthcare professionals trained and expand the geographic reach of their programmes to 10 out of 13 regions in the country, building on their strong expertise and network in the field of haemophilia and sickle cell disease.

The Fondation Pierre Fabre is actively involved since 2006 in several programmes to combat sickle cell disease, the world's leading genetic disease which is believed to affect more than 250,000 infants in sub-Saharan Africa each year. In Burkina Faso, FPF leads the 'DREPAFASO' project designed to improve access to screening, healthcare and medicines for sickle cell disease with the objective of developing a national policy to ensure access to care and treatment for people affected by the disease.

Béatrice Garrette, Executive Director, said: "Sickle cell disease is largely neglected in the global health agenda, though its prevalence and burden for the population of sub-Saharan Africa rank highly. The partnership with NNHF will allow us to test an innovative approach to increase the number of beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, which, if successful, could be replicated in other countries."

The NNHF is currently implementing its first project in Burkina Faso to expand haemophilia diagnosis and care in partnership with the GIH team represented by haematologist Prof. Eléonore Kafando. The main project objectives are to raise awareness of haemophilia, develop outreach capability among 300 first-contact healthcare professionals, and increase by 50% the number of people diagnosed with haemophilia in the country by 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> "Prevalence study in Burkina Faso" – Ministry of Health – January 2020

Denise Braendgaard, General Manager, said: "We are excited to be embarking on this pilot project with the Fondation Pierre Fabre, whose areas of focus and geographic reach are highly complementary to those of the NNHF. We trust that by combining our efforts on blood disorders in Burkina Faso, we will demonstrate the potential to reach more people and generate greater sustainable impact together."

Both foundations are dedicated to positively impacting healthcare in low- and middle-income countries through own programmes led by local partners. The Fondation Pierre Fabre, mainly active in French-speaking African countries, was given charitable status (*reconnue d'utilité publique*) by French decree on 6 April 1999; the NNHF is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving access to care for people with bleeding disorders since 2005.

The Novo Nordisk Haemophilia Foundation and Fondation Pierre Fabre will jointly monitor set activities and evaluate shared outcomes and impacts through quarterly project updates and yearly reports.