



PROGRESS REPORT
AUTUMN/WINTER 2011

PACT

PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR CANCER THERAPY

“Non-Communicable Diseases Deemed Development Challenge of ‘Epic Proportions’”

On 19 September 2011, during the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), held in New York City, UNGA unanimously adopted the “Political declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases”, thereby recognizing the rising prevalence, morbidity and mortality of non-communicable diseases, such as cancer, worldwide.



Left: The opening of the general debate of the General Assembly's 66th session. (Photo: Mark Garten/UN) **Right:** Gary Francis Quinlan (centre), Vice-President of the General Assembly, signals the adoption of the political declaration of the Assembly's High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. (Photo: Marco Castro/UN)

The resolution refers to The High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), which was held in New York City the same week. IAEA representatives at the meeting spoke to those in attendance about the need to strengthen national capacity to address the prevention and control of cancer, mentioning the imPACT review as an available tool to assist countries in evaluating their current capacity and PMDS as a comprehensive and collaborative method for addressing all facets of cancer control. A leaflet on the IAEA's work with NCDs was also produced and distributed.

The meeting, whose goal was to acknowledge the growing burden of NCDs and analyse the evolving global health landscape, particularly in LMI countries, convened representatives from 113 Member States, including 34 heads of state and government, as well as representatives of international organizations and civil society. It is hoped that the resolution adopted from the meeting will help to establish NCDs as a major focus for global health organizations and will garner additional support to fight NCDs, which receive less than 1% of overseas health aid, despite accounting for 60% of global mortality.

“ The IAEA is constantly motivating governments to get their cancer control plan completed and implemented and encourage national experts to collaborate. This is invaluable. ”

*Professor Robert Burton
Public Health and Cancer Control specialist at Monash University, Australia*

IAEA Reaffirms its Commitment to Cancer Control

As roughly 3000 participants gathered at the IAEA Secretariat in Vienna to take part in the IAEA's 55th General Conference, PACT diligently prepared to discuss cancer control needs with many low and middle income (LMI) countries. At the conclusion of the five-day conference (19–23 September), PACT had met with 43 delegations, received pledges or contributions totalling over US \$815 000 and had held an event to celebrate the donors that have contributed to building cancer control capacity in LMI countries through the PACT initiative.

“The Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy, now in its 6th year, remains among the most successful activities of the Agency and receives extensive support from Member States.”

Yukiya Amano,
IAEA Director General

During the course of the week, the General Conference adopted a resolution recognizing the progress of PACT, in collaboration with international partners and donors, to strengthen Member States' capabilities to fight cancer, and requested that the Secretariat continue advocating and building support for the IAEA's work on cancer control. The passing of the resolution confirms the IAEA's commitment to PACT and validates the effort and services provided to the IAEA's Member States.



Meeting of the Plenary Session at the 55th General Conference of the IAEA.

Promoting Cancer Control in Latin America

In the face of estimations that nearly 600 000 people lost their lives to cancer in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2010, IAEA representatives from the PACT Programme Office, the Division of Human Health (NAHU) and the Department of Technical Cooperation (TC), in collaboration with World Health Organization headquarters and regional offices, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the National Atomic Energy Commission of Argentina, held a regional meeting (17–18 October) to discuss the challenges and opportunities for cancer control in Latin America. This meeting served to provide a platform for Latin American and Caribbean countries to share their experiences with cancer control and identify potential cancer control solutions.

Held in Buenos Aires and hosted by the National Cancer Institute and the Ministry of Health of Argentina, the meeting brought in experts and participants from 15 Latin American countries, as well as representatives of international health and cancer control organizations. Speakers addressed areas spanning cancer prevention to palliative care, and particular emphasis was given to discussing the implementation of radiation medicine programmes within a national cancer control plan, through the presentation of success stories from countries in the region. One highlight of the meeting was a panel discussion which included a representative of Nicaragua, who discussed the PACT Model Demonstration Site (PMDS) experience. This was the first time a PMDS has presented on its experience at a regional meeting.

IAEA/PACT Holds Second AGaRT Meeting



AGaRT analysing the current global availability of radiotherapy.

With soaring cancer incidence rates set to reach nearly 17 million by 2020, the global health community is preparing to confront a worldwide epidemic. With an estimated shortfall of as many as 5000 radiotherapy units, many cancer patients in LMI countries will be left without the radiotherapy treatment required in over 50% of cancer cases.

To confront the shortage of radiotherapy units in LMI countries, the IAEA's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy, held on 17–18 November, once again convened the Advisory Group on increasing access to Radiotherapy Technology in low and middle income countries (AGaRT), bringing together regional experts, radiotherapy unit manufacturers and international organizations from around the world to find affordable, suitable and sustainable solutions to address the shortfall in radiotherapy services in LMI countries.

The meeting brought more than 40 participants to the IAEA Secretariat in Vienna to discuss radiotherapy needs and to deliberate on the essential requirements for a basic radiotherapy package, including training and service, which, it is hoped, manufacturers can develop and make available for no more than one million dollars.



Participants in the second meeting of AGaRT.

PACT Model Demonstration Site Evaluation

The PACT Programme Office has, for the past six years, been closely monitoring the progress of PMDS and evaluating the impact of the IAEA's cancer control support, provided through PACT, in the 8 countries that are designated as PMDS.

On 16–17 August 2011, PACT hosted a meeting at the IAEA Secretariat in Vienna to share results from the most recent report on the progress of PMDS, which was carried out by independent public health expert Prof. E. Trapido, an Associate Dean for Research at Louisiana State University.

During the August meeting, Prof. Trapido was joined by two additional cancer control experts, who, together, emphasized the importance of a comprehensive approach to controlling the disease. The meeting was also attended by PACT representatives from NAHU, TC and the Office of Internal Oversight.

In the two-day meeting, the experts shared their experiences and their evaluations of the progress and potential of PMDS with meeting participants. Participants also had an opportunity to review the findings of Prof. Trapido and to discuss future methods of monitoring and evaluating PMDS. The monitoring of PMDS will continue over the course of the next year as mechanisms for evaluation are finalized.



Left: A medical professional at Khu Xa Tri Gia Toc Linac Radiation Therapy Center in Vietnam. Right: A cancer patient waits for treatment with her mother at Centro Nacional de Radioterapia in Nicaragua.

VUCCnet holds Annual Stakeholders Meeting



The Chair of the VUCCnet Annual Stakeholders Meeting, Bhadransain Vikram of the US National Cancer Institute.

In order to offer comprehensive cancer control to their national populations, Virtual University for Cancer Control (VUCCnet) Africa Pilot Project countries, Ghana, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, hope to train 250 oncologists, over 8000 nurses, 2800 community health workers and several other health professionals, all within the next 10 years. However, with limited resources, achieving this goal will require commitment, determination and outside assistance.

Deciding the most efficient and effective means of training the health professionals so desperately needed in these four Member States was the precise goal of the annual stakeholders meeting for the VUCCnet Africa Pilot Project, held by the PACT at the IAEA Secretariat, in Vienna, on 22–24 June 2011.

The meeting aimed to bring together representatives from the four VUCCnet countries with those involved in cancer control across all sectors, whether private or public, governmental or NGO. These groups shared their insights into the fight against cancer and worked to understand the cancer burden in the four countries in order to target the areas requiring the most urgent action. The committee then outlined the next steps needed to prepare for the integration of the VUCCnet into local government, education and health care programmes, setting the stage for the project's expansion.

Thank you!

PACT recently received contributions from:

	France €30 000
	KIRAMS US \$200 000
	KONICOF US \$20 000
	Spain €20 000
	UNFCU US \$5000
	UNWG €7000

New Partners



INCa, the French National Cancer Institute, works to coordinate scientific research in the fight against cancer by serving as a reference point for State or State-affiliated institutions in France. INCa regularly funds cancer research and is actively involved in the management of multiple cancer research programmes, while maintaining several international public and private partnerships.

“This effort by the IAEA and its PACT team is to be commended and supported... The work is the finest expression of the founding ideals of the Agency to bring the power of the atom of nuclear technology to bear for the benefit of people.”

HE Mr. Glyn T. Davies
Ambassador, Permanent
Mission of the United States
of America to the IAEA