

10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on **TRADITIONAL & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**

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**Integration of traditional medicine in national health systems in countries of the World Health Organization African Region****Ossy Kasilo***Regional Office for Africa, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo*

Traditional medicine (TM) has continued to enjoy widespread acceptability among the global population throughout the centuries, with the past few decades witnessing an upsurge of interest in its use both in high, middle, and low-income countries. WHO plays an important role in supporting countries to integrate Traditional and Complementary Medicine into their national health systems, while ensuring safety, efficacy, and quality? WHO Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) responds to requests from countries related to developing and implementing national policies, regulations and programmes on TM. Between 2000 and 2021, WHO/AFRO placed emphasis on assisting countries with the implementation of Regional Strategies on "Promoting and Enhancing the Role of TM in Health Systems: Strategies for the African Region (2000-2010) and (2013-2023) respectively. By 2020, 40 countries had developed national TM policies, as compared with eight in 2000; thirty-eight countries had established national TM programmes in ministries of health as compared with 10 in 2000; thirty-nine countries had a legal framework for the practice as compared to only one country in 2000.

Similarly, national institutes dedicated to TM research increased from 18 in 2000 to 34 in 2020; nineteen countries had reported having small-scale manufacturing facilities of herbal medicines as compared to 15 in 2000; twenty-five countries had registration systems that include herbal medicines as compared to only 10 in 2000; and registered over 90 herbal medicines from across 14 countries as compared to 20 in 2000; eight countries had included 43 herbal medicines in their National Essential Medicines Lists and this was an increase from 14 in 2000; and finally 25 countries had included TM in the university curricula for training health sciences students as compared to only one in 2000. Despite progress made, no country in the African Region has achieved full integration system. Worldwide China, Korea, and Vietnam have fully integrated TM into their health care systems.

**Biography**

Ossy Kasilo, PhD, Regional Adviser for Traditional Medicine (TM) at the WHO Regional Office for Africa has expertise in TM, Toxicology and Pharmaceuticals. She has over 30 years of experience in academia and international health development. At WHO she served as Team Leader for Health Products during which she provided technical leadership and oversight, coordinated innovative and integrated approaches, developed and delivered strategic regional policy frameworks, programmes and initiatives including interventions for impactful support to Member States on health products. She was instrumental in the development of conceptual and regulatory framework for the establishment of the African Medicines Agency (AMA); tools and guidelines for policy, regulation of TM and protection of intellectual property rights. Ossy has led the development of research protocols for clinical trials to generate evidence supporting the quality, safety and efficacy of herbal medicines for priority diseases, including against COVID-19 and strengthening of country capacities in these areas.