

IDF's global voice in the diabetes landscape

What you see in the global diabetes landscape depends on your perspective. From the vantage point of distance by a policy-maker in a government office, or even by some "experts" in diabetes, the 415 million people living with diabetes today may be seen as a statistic on a health report. The real crisis can be too easily underestimated, misunderstood and ignored.

In 2011 when the 5th edition of the *IDF Diabetes Atlas* came out, it had a significant amount of data but one stood out. One person died of diabetes related complications every SEVEN seconds! Then in 2013 when the 6th edition came out, it showed that one person dies of diabetes related complications every SIX seconds!

For people with diabetes, things had become worse!

It is time to come down from the ivory towers and experience the ground realities. Big "talk" and quoting statistics have little value if we do not do initiatives which will improve the lives of all our people with diabetes.

A visit to a diabetes clinic in a low-income urban centre in Bangladesh might clear up any confusion right away. Seated amongst people with bandaged feet, amputations and walking sticks for blindness, one can immediately sense that fighting diabetes is like fighting a war. How about accompanying a child in a Rwandan village to a funeral? The child's

father died from diabetes complications before his 42nd birthday. How will that little boy survive, depending so dearly on the USD 1.50 his father earned each day?

Looking at the ground realities, we would have a truer, more direct sense of the diabetes crisis, leading to solutions to improve diabetes healthcare which could go a long way to change the shape of the current landscape.

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) has the power to change the current diabetes landscape and influence those in leadership positions with our united and authoritative global voice.

In the 2016-2017 biennium, we will work with determination to ensure our members and partners can work with the governmental health agencies to reach the Sustainable Development Goals – the reduction of premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by one third through prevention and treatment, and the provision of access to quality essential health-care services, providing safe, effective, high-quality and affordable essential medicines for all – thereby helping to create a better world for people with diabetes and those at risk.

Working in the diabetes trenches and facing the day-to-day challenges of diabetes are IDFs 230 members in 170 countries across the

world. Our members are our greatest strength to ground global advocacy in the realm of local experience. IDFs large volunteer base provides an unparalleled army of medical, allied health professional, scientific and communications experts helping us to better achieve our strategic objectives, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

IDFs 2016-2017 action plan will focus on our core mission: to be the global voice for diabetes. We will do this through partnership: providing sustainable and strong organisational leadership and philanthropy at the global and regional level; in policy: providing high quality research and policy development for diabetes advocacy; and with presence: providing the best and most authoritative global source for diabetes information.

We will deliver our objectives on diabetes with a strong united voice drawing on our wide

membership and the support of our partners in industry and across civil society. We will speak with authority based on our engagement in a wide range of research initiatives covering diabetes care and prevention, epidemiology, statistics, health economics, health education for professionals and citizens, as well as health system reform.

Together, our voice will have presence and be heard in environments where real and lasting change for diabetes awareness, care and prevention can be driven. Our global voice will drive action which creates change to make the lives of people better and help protect those at risk.

Shaukat Sadikot
President 2016-17
International Diabetes Federation

