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Draft global traditional medicine strategy 2025–2034

Introduction

Traditional medicine is used by people across all six regions of WHO.[1]

Traditional medicine refers to codified or non-codified systems for healthcare and well-being, comprising practices, skills, knowledge and philosophies originating in different historical and cultural contexts, which are distinct from and pre-date biomedicine, evolving with science for current use from an experience-based origin. Traditional medicine emphasizes nature-based remedies and holistic, personalized approaches to restore balance of mind, body and environment.

Complementary medicine refers to additional healthcare practices that are not part of a country's mainstream medicine. Evidence-based complementary medicine has the potential to support mainstream medicine and more comprehensively support people's health and well-being needs.

As people become more empowered to choose the appropriate healthcare for their needs, health services continually adapt to meet the challenge of delivering people-centred care. Whether government-led or people-led, the practice of integrative medicine[2] that combines traditional and complementary medicine and biomedicine is gaining popularity.

In 2017, WHO began supporting the developing field of integrative medicine by introducing the concept of "traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine" (TCIM). This draft strategy offers an expanded vision that includes traditional, complementary and integrative medicine, bringing together these three approaches to address individual health needs and expectations.

The draft strategy was developed through an extensive consultative process, including global and regional Member States consultations, a public hearing and consultations with a broad range of stakeholders and partners, including representatives of Indigenous Peoples.

The draft strategy aims to support Member States in designing and implementing national strategic plans and actions in accordance with their national capacities, priorities, relevant

[1] WHO global report on traditional and complementary medicine 2019. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2019. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO (accessed 4 April 2025).

[2] An interdisciplinary and evidence-based approach to health and well-being by using a combination of biomedical and traditional and/or complementary medical knowledge, skills and practices.

legislation, culture and circumstances. The draft strategy does not imply a preference for TCIM practice over biomedical practice. It seeks to harness the potential contribution of TCIM to health and well-being based on evidence. The draft strategy is also designed to prevent misinformation, disinformation and malinformation while ensuring an evidence-based approach to TCIM. WHO emphasizes the principle of "do no harm" and consistently refutes any claims that are not supported by scientific evidence.

Vision

A world in which there is universal access to safe, effective and people-centred TCIM for the health and well-being of all.

Goal

To advance the contribution of evidence-based TCIM to the highest attainable standard of health and well-being.

Guiding principles

The draft strategy was developed based on the following principles, which may also guide the implementation of actions by Member States, partners and stakeholders, and WHO in achieving the draft strategy's vision and goal.

Evidence-based. Scientific or research evidence refers to knowledge that is explicit, systematic and replicable, and can be judged by its methodological standards. Decisions for the use of TCIM should be based on the best available evidence of safety and effectiveness from research and practices. Correspondingly, no healthcare practices or treatments, be they in biomedicine, public health or TCIM, will be supported or recommended by WHO unless they are evidence-based.

As with all health sciences, traditional medicine should incorporate the highest scientific standards by employing rigorous and robust research methods, integrating continuous methodological and technological advancements, adhering to ethical principles, and using a multidisciplinary approach to select the most stringent and relevant research methods for specific topics and applications to ensure validity, generalizability, reliability and positive impact for people's health and well-being.

Robust scientific validation includes ensuring the quality of the design of research and the quality of the evidence in the way that research is interpreted to ensure safe and effective interventions, and taking into account research ethics, conflicts of interest and issues such as scalability and sustainability for global health, including through health technology assessments. These principles are agnostic to the discipline from which the interventions come and focus on benefits to people's health and well-being based on the most stringent standards of science.

Holism and health. TCIM encompasses various medical systems rooted in holistic perspectives of health. It emphasizes the internal connections within the human body and its connection to the environment.

Sustainability and biodiversity. Healthcare should consciously support environmental sustainability and biodiversity. TCIM is rooted in natural resources, traditional medical knowledge, culture and history. It should contribute to safeguarding biodiversity by promoting sustainable TCIM practices and aligning with One Health principles.

The right to health and autonomy. The Constitution of the World Health Organization states that the "enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being[.]" The right to health requires that health services and products be available, effective, accessible, acceptable and of good quality for all without discrimination.[3] Autonomy in health decisions necessitates support for informed choices.

Indigenous Peoples' rights. Indigenous Peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.[4] They also have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their intellectual property over traditional knowledge, and to safeguard it against misappropriation and unauthorized use.[5] This draft strategy recognizes the role of Indigenous traditional medicine and the need to uphold the autonomy and rights of Indigenous Peoples through appropriate legislation, funding and fair engagement within their Member States' national context. It is informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[6] and the commitment to achieving the ends set forth therein, considering Member States' national contexts and priorities and the limitations set out in Article 46.2.

Culture and health. Recognizing the importance of aligning health needs and the preferences, lifestyles and cultural beliefs of diverse populations helps to foster inclusive, equitable and culturally appropriate health services that maintain respect for traditional medical knowledge and encourage intercultural dialogue.[7]

People-centred care and community engagement.[8] These are key priorities in the delivery of quality healthcare. TCIM advocates for personalized care and respects cultural preferences by considering an inclusive and collaborative approach closely aligned with the concept of primary healthcare.

Integrated health services.[9] To achieve optimal outcomes, health services should be coordinated seamlessly across different medical disciplines and should prioritize individual well-being. Integrating safe, effective and sustainable TCIM can contribute to an approach that supports health and well-being. Evidence-based practices, continuous quality assurance and regulatory mechanisms are essential to support the effective integration of TCIM into health services.

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[3] Fact Sheet No. 31: The Right to Health. Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and World Health Organization; 2008 (accessed 24 April 2025).

[4] See United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Art. 24.1.

[5] See United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Art. 31.

[6] See United Nations General Assembly resolution 61/295.

[7] Measuring intercultural dialogue: a conceptual and technical framework. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; 2020 (accessed 22 October 2024).

[8] A vision for primary health care in the 21st century: towards universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals. Geneva: World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund; 2018 (accessed 22 October 2024).

[9] See Global strategy on people-centred and integrated health services: interim report. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (accessed 22 October 2024).

Health equity. TCIM practice should be provided equitably, addressing potential barriers, such as those related to sex, age, ethnicity/race, income, education and development differentials, impact uptake.[10]

Strategic objectives, directions and actions

Strategic objective 1. Strengthen the evidence base for TCIM

Rationale

WHO surveys have demonstrated the widespread use of TCIM but also a need for more data to advance its evidence base for safety and effectiveness as a basis for its use and integration. To fully leverage the potential of TCIM in improving health and well-being, further investment in and facilitation of TCIM research is needed.

Digital technologies and health innovations can potentially enhance TCIM research health services and self-care, but they require active capacity-building and development.

Given TCIM's complexity and multidisciplinary nature rooted in diverse philosophies, relevant research methodologies and intellectual property rights modalities need to be employed, supported by a collaboration between methodological and practice experts, and between TCIM and other researchers.

Direction 1.1. Facilitate high-quality TCIM research through increased resource allocation

Rationale

An international research agenda on traditional medicine focusing on scientifically rigorous and high-impact research, with agreements on key outcome measures for TCIM, needs to be established. This should encompass all aspects of TCIM, such as healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and treatment, medicines and interventions, professions and practices, integrative services and systems, and the use of technology within TCIM.

Moreover, research should explore what traditional medical knowledge can inform and contribute to in terms of health and well-being outcomes, thus necessitating the involvement of TCIM practitioners in the co-design of research projects and supporting them with research capacity-building throughout the entire process.

Actions for Member States

- Establish a national research agenda on TCIM treatments and practices to stimulate innovation and allocate dedicated resources in alignment with objective criteria and national, regional or/and global priorities.

- Conduct appropriate scientific studies to support the evidence base regarding safe and effective TCIM.

[10] See A Global Health Strategy for 2025–2028 – advancing equity and resilience in a turbulent world: Fourteenth General Programme of Work. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025, p. 54 (accessed 13 May 2025).

- Establish a mechanism/system for collecting data from various sources, including real-world data related to TCIM.
- Support capacity-building for research and foster partnerships with research institutions and international organizations to facilitate innovation in TCIM.
- Promote participatory research approaches.
- Develop a comprehensive database of evidence-based TCIM to inform healthcare policies and practices.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Support the identification of priorities for a national TCIM research and innovation agenda.
- Support interdisciplinary research that includes TCIM.
- Conduct scientific research that facilitates evidence-informed decision-making for TCIM.
- Invest in research capacity-building and the involvement of TCIM practitioners in research design and conduct.
- Include TCIM research in broader health research initiatives and evidence summaries.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Develop, update and disseminate WHO guidelines, technical documents and tools on TCIM research.
- Encourage Member States and partners to enhance TCIM research and develop a comprehensive research agenda, based on the research gaps and responding to health needs and priorities.
- Encourage TCIM research that is culturally appropriate, socially relevant, inclusive and participative.
- Encourage Member States to register TCIM clinical trials in WHO's International Traditional Medicine Clinical Trial Registry and other WHO-recognized clinical trial registries.
- Coordinate and promote bilateral and multilateral collaboration between Member States and partners on TCIM research.

Direction 1.2. Explore relevant research approaches and optimize the utilization of technological advancements

Rationale

There is a need to explore innovative approaches to TCIM research that are appropriate to the unique characteristics of TCIM knowledge and practices, including consideration of the use of complexity science, system biology, big data and real-world data approaches, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration. It is also important to explore relevant research approaches for non-codified traditional medicine.

Maximizing the rational use of advanced technologies is important for developing appropriate and innovative approaches to research on TCIM. The application of technological advancements can enhance and complement TCIM health services and access to care, including self-care.

Actions for Member States

- Explore innovative, scientifically valid approaches for research appropriate to TCIM.
- Enable the development and application of digital technologies in TCIM research.
- Facilitate digitization and the use of electronic health records inclusive of TCIM-related information to enable comprehensive healthcare in a responsible and ethical manner.
- Develop mobile health solutions and telehealth services and utilize advanced technologies such as those based on artificial intelligence for relevant TCIM.
- Explore relevant research approaches for non-codified traditional medicine.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Contribute to developing research methods for the ethical and robust scientific validation of individualized TCIM approaches and knowledge in ways that are culturally appropriate, socially relevant and inclusive.
- Develop digital health applications together with TCIM end-user communities and beneficiaries in support of delivering people-centred care.
- Contribute to developing/implementing electronic patient record systems accessible by TCIM practitioners and promote interoperability.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Support the development of research methodologies appropriate to complex, holistic and individualized approaches of TCIM.
- Strengthen capacity-building on TCIM research methodologies and evidence-collection strategies.
- Encourage the development and use of TCIM-specific responsible artificial intelligence tools.[11]
- Contribute to the bridging of digital and technological innovations across the TCIM continuum of care, translate collected information into actionable knowledge tailored to Member States, and propose interventions maximizing TCIM contributions.

[11] Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health: WHO guidance. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO (accessed 22 October 2024).

Strategic objective 2. Support the provision of safe and effective TCIM through appropriate regulatory mechanisms

Rationale

Appropriate regulatory mechanisms are crucial for TCIM to safeguard the public from unsafe or substandard TCIM products and services. A risk-based regulatory approach is well suited to TCIM, tailoring regulatory requirements to the specific type of TCIM products or services based on safety and efficacy. This involves establishing appropriate participatory mechanisms, quality control measures, standards and labelling requirements, as well as ensuring that the intended use is justified and rational. The highest standard of science and stringent regulatory provisions, as appropriate to national requirements, should apply for TCIM products and services used for medical purposes to ensure their safety, quality and effectiveness in clinical settings.

Regulatory mechanisms for TCIM practitioners must prioritize patient safety. TCIM practitioners cannot be considered as a single group due to the diverse nature of TCIM modalities, therapeutic approaches, training, practice and practitioners' division of labour. The identification and establishment of common norms and standards for qualifications, competencies and ethical conduct contribute to ensuring that practitioners have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver safe and effective care.

Direction 2.1. Provide appropriate regulatory mechanisms for TCIM products that are sustainably produced and supplied

Rationale

Individuals choosing to use TCIM should have access to products with proven safety and efficacy. Appropriate regulatory mechanisms for TCIM products involve identifying and adopting norms and standards, developing rules, educating industry and ensuring mutual understanding from the supplier to the end-user.

Equitable access to TCIM products with safety, quality and efficacy is an essential outcome of balanced regulatory mechanisms and oversight. Close collaboration between stakeholders and regulators can address barriers related to affordability, availability and cultural appropriateness.

Expanding international regulatory collaboration and cooperation will advance the regulation of TCIM products, contributing to consistent standards across a broader range of products and geographical locations.

Actions for Member States

- Establish norms and standards for TCIM products to ensure the supply of products with safety, quality and efficacy through appropriate consultation and partnerships.
- Explore approaches supporting evidence-based regulatory decision-making for TCIM products that is inclusive of the principles of reliance and/or recognition.[12]

[12] Good reliance practices in the regulation of medical products: high level principles and considerations. Annex 10, WHO Technical Report Series, No. 1033, 2021 (accessed 22 October 2024).

- Consider an evaluation of TCIM products utilizing a risk-based approach to ensure that they are indicated appropriately for use.
- Enforce relevant restrictions on the use of endangered species and wider biodiversity for medicinal products, subject to stringent regulatory oversight, in line with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and other applicable international conventions and national legislation, including, as appropriate, timebound plans to phase out current usage and to research and implement sustainable alternatives.
- Encourage sustainable practices in the production, supply, use and disposal of TCIM products that contribute to the preservation and repopulation of endangered species.
- Participate in international regulatory cooperative arrangements such as the WHO International Regulatory Cooperation on Herbal Medicines.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Encourage different stakeholders to be involved in devising regulatory mechanisms for TCIM products.
- Participate in and provide training on criteria, norms and standards for TCIM products.
- Support ethical advertising and promotion to avoid any misleading or unsubstantiated claims regarding TCIM.
- Industry and practitioners should cooperate and participate in monitoring and surveillance systems for the risk management of TCIM products.
- Stakeholders should comply with biodiversity and conservation requirements in the production and supply of TCIM products.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Develop standards for herbal medicines in the form of the International Herbal Pharmacopoeia and other such documents.
- Develop, update and disseminate guidelines, technical documents and tools to support TCIM regulatory mechanisms, including pharmacovigilance.
- Develop standardized terminologies and an international classification of TCIM products.
- Enhance the WHO International Regulatory Cooperation on Herbal Medicines network.

Direction 2.2. Provide appropriate regulatory mechanisms for TCIM practices and practitioners

Rationale

Regulatory frameworks should be adapted to the different forms of TCIM practices and practitioners. They should also be aligned with TCIM policies to support the preservation and strengthening of TCIM knowledge and practices that are safe and effective, while preventing misappropriation.

Regulatory frameworks should consider – based on health system objectives, risk profiles and regulatory capacity in the local context – appropriate standards for educational programmes, certification and licensing requirements to ensure that TCIM practitioners have the knowledge and skills to deliver safe and effective care. Balanced frameworks contribute to interprofessional collaboration and the coordination of service delivery across the spectrum of health and social care systems, enabling a holistic and integrated approach to people-centred care.

Actions for Member States

- Establish or strengthen appropriate regulatory mechanisms to promote safe and effective TCIM practices, while recognizing their diversity.
- Develop appropriate quality standards of medicinal preparations made by TCIM practitioners.
- Develop standards, guidelines and codes of conduct to promote responsible and accountable TCIM practices.
- Adopt or refer to WHO technical documents in developing minimum training requirements, including ethics for TCIM practitioners.
- Set training requirements for TCIM practitioners, including ongoing professional development.
- Collect, analyse and use data on the TCIM health workforce for improved planning and accountability.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Promote a dialogue between TCIM professional associations with regulatory authorities for standards pertaining to education, practices and practitioners.
- Encourage regulators, training institutions and professional organizations to support national and local health workforce data collection, analysis and use for improved planning and accountability.
- Support research on the impact of regulatory systems in reference to patient safety and population health outcomes.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Develop a WHO international classification and qualification framework for TCIM practitioners and provide technical guidance to countries.
- Develop and/or update WHO technical documents in TCIM.
- Improve health workforce data on TCIM practitioners through regular reporting in the WHO National Health Workforce Accounts Data Portal and complementary surveys and reports.

- Facilitate information sharing between Member States and partners regarding approaches to and experiences with the regulation of TCIM practices and practitioners in different settings.

Strategic objective 3. Integrate safe and effective TCIM into health systems

Rationale

The integration of safe and effective TCIM into health systems will play a key role in the reorienting of health services.[13] TCIM can be integrated into all of the building blocks of a health system, covering all levels of healthcare across the care continuum and life course, in line with the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2023.[14]

Primary healthcare[15] is a foundation of universal health coverage and a natural entry point for the integration of TCIM.

Direction 3.1. Incorporate safe and effective TCIM services into national and local health-related frameworks and policies for the integration of safe and effective TCIM into health systems

Rationale

Political commitments and policy frameworks are essential for the safe and effective integration of TCIM into health services that are safe, effective, efficient, coordinated and sufficiently resourced by governments.

Policy frameworks for professional education and communication are also essential for effective integration, especially at the level of educational institutions. Recognizing and educating practitioners of both TCIM and biomedicine promotes mutual understanding, respect, communication, collaboration and integration.

Actions for Member States

- Determine if and how the integration of safe and effective TCIM into national and local health systems can support the reorientation of health systems and services.

- Recognize the potential role of TCIM as an integral part of health services and include it in the building blocks of national health frameworks, policies and plans to permit integration at all levels of the health system.

- Establish mechanisms for quality assurance, safety monitoring and evaluations of outcomes of TCIM services and products.

[13] See document A69/39.

[14] See United Nations General Assembly resolution 78/4.

[15] Traditional and complementary medicine in primary health care. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018 (accessed 22 October 2024).

- Facilitate the integration of education between traditional and complementary medicine and biomedicine.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Support the development of a national framework or policy that prioritizes health and well-being in which traditional and complementary medicine and biomedicine health practitioners collaborate and coordinate in the delivery of health services.

- Encourage traditional and complementary medicine and biomedicine educational institutions to integrate their curricula to promote interprofessional collaboration.

- Educational institutions should consider the establishment and maintenance of TCIM divisions.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Develop WHO guidance on the integration of safe and effective TCIM into national health systems.

- Organize activities to support Member States in the integration of TCIM as well its monitoring and evaluation.

- Support Member States in initiating and improving institutional education curricula on appropriate knowledge and skills of traditional and complementary medicine in biomedicine schools and vice versa in traditional and complementary medicine schools.

Direction 3.2. Facilitate the integration of safe and effective TCIM services across the care continuum and life course

Rationale

An increasing research base demonstrates TCIM's promise across the care continuum, including in the areas of health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. In this respect, it is essential to conduct evidence reviews on the impact of safe and effective TCIM services.

Integrated health services occur when biomedicine and TCIM are proven safe and effective, and are aligned or complementary, including in the clinical pathway, thus providing users with the seamless care they need, including mutual respect and coordination between practitioners to achieve the common goal of people-centred care.

Actions for Member States

- Explore, identify, design and implement the most appropriate TCIM integration models, especially at the primary care level.

- Utilize applicable guidance from WHO on effective integration models and practices.

- Promote standardized TCIM documentation, including an expanded and accelerated use of the WHO Family of International Classifications to enable data collection and evidence generation on TCIM.

- Establish sustainable financing mechanisms to support initiatives of TCIM integration.
- Develop clinical guidelines and care pathways incorporating TCIM approaches, including timely cross-referrals, for specific health conditions and stages of life.
- Include safe and effective TCIM across the care continuum and life course in essential health services' packages and the national essential medicines list.
- Enhance the education and training of healthcare practitioners in TCIM practices, safety considerations and potential interactions with biomedical treatments.
- Promulgate educational materials and public information explaining TCIM modalities, benefits and risks, including for appropriate self-care options.
- Highlight the importance of evidence-based health literacy on TCIM interventions and on when to seek critical, life-saving biomedical care and to avoid delay.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Support the integration of safe and effective TCIM across the care continuum and life course.
- Support the conduct of regular evaluations of integration.
- Promote the research and inclusion of safe and effective TCIM interventions across the care continuum and life course.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Conduct surveys and disseminate information on the identified integration models.
- Provide technical and policy support for integration based on the needs of Member States.
- Set up standardized indicators to enable monitoring of the access, coverage and utilization of TCIM practices and assessment of their safety and effectiveness.
- Continue to develop and promote the series of WHO technical documents on TCIM to support integration, including on self-care.
- Establish a global network of TCIM reference clinical centres for data collection and monitoring based on the WHO Family of International Classifications.
- Facilitate information exchange among Member States, partners and stakeholders, through activities and mechanisms that are accountable and transparent, to support collaboration on integration.

Strategic objective 4. Optimize the cross-sector value of TCIM and empower communities

Rationale

The knowledge, attributes and unique value of TCIM serve to address challenges across multiple dimensions such as health, culture, environment, and social and economic factors, including a wide range of knowledge and practices. Policies and approaches for the appropriate use of TCIM include capitalizing on its potential in health services and self-care.

Capitalizing on the attributes of TCIM, while engaging communities and stakeholders, may harness its potential across sectors and inform governance and societal approaches to maximizing its contribution to health, well-being societies, One Health and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Direction 4.1. Include TCIM in cross-sector policies and action plans for health, well-being societies, One Health and Sustainable Development Goals

Rationale

The promotion of TCIM concepts, knowledge and practices will assist in integrating human, animal and environmental health. The rich cultural heritage and diversity of TCIM's healing traditions and principles promote a positive health vision that focuses on the whole person and reinforces the sources of health.

Recognizing its contribution to multiple Sustainable Development Goals would help to further engage TCIM in the achievement of related targets. This requires coordination and collaboration from multiple sectors related not only to healthcare but also other areas such as culture, education, agriculture, the environment, intellectual property, trade, economic and social protection.

Actions for Member States

- Establish cross-sector collaboration in healthcare for well-being societies and sustainable development.
- Collaborate with international organizations, regional bodies, neighbouring countries and relevant stakeholders to share TCIM best practices and experiences.
- Protect biodiversity and environment in accordance with international obligations, while facilitating a sustainable supply of raw materials for good quality TCIM products.
- Preserve traditional practices by organizing intercultural dialogue to facilitate knowledge exchange between diverse health systems.
- Advocate for a healthy lifestyle and environmental conservation through a holistic approach and traditional medical knowledge, and enhance understanding of TCIM concepts, knowledge and practices.
- Raise awareness on the importance of and need for the preservation of biodiversity.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Support cross-sector coordination by generating data and incorporating TCIM concepts, knowledge and practices.
- Contribute to the implementation of the One Health Joint Plan of Action.
- Raise awareness among stakeholders about TCIM's holistic concepts of health and well-being.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Support Member States in building cross-sector collaborations to enhance the TCIM contribution to healthy societies.
- Facilitate intersectoral dialogue to contribute towards One Health by promoting synergy between TCIM and related stakeholders.
- Liaise across the United Nations system and promote cross-sectoral initiatives for TCIM-related information exchange and the promotion of collaborations.
- Provide a traditional medical knowledge perspective in the implementation of the One Health Joint Plan of Action.
- Establish a TCIM library by linking with existing information or creating new ones for knowledge-sharing.

Direction 4.2. Develop inclusive approaches and models for the protection of and access to traditional medical knowledge, and for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge and/or associated genetic resources

Rationale

All custodians of traditional medical knowledge can benefit from the appropriate protection of their knowledge. Inclusive approaches and models for access to traditional medical knowledge and for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge are needed.

These approaches and models should be informed, as applicable and appropriate, by the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the World Intellectual Property Organization's Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge.[16]

Actions for Member States

- Develop policy frameworks for traditional medical knowledge that ensure appropriate access to this knowledge and associated genetic resources, and for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use.
- Establish guidelines for the documentation and registration of traditional medical knowledge and associated practices.
- Foster intergenerational learning to preserve and pass traditional medical knowledge to future generations, support its documentation by traditional medicine practitioners and establish knowledge databases.

[16] At the date of publication of this report, the Treaty is still open for signature and has not yet entered into force.

- Promote collaboration to share best practices, policies and experiences related to traditional medical knowledge.

- Facilitate the development of technology to strengthen the conservation of biodiversity for the sustainability of medicinal plants and germplasm banks.

Actions for partners and stakeholders

- Participate in the development of policy frameworks for traditional medical knowledge.

- Contribute to capacity-building for the protection of traditional medical knowledge and prevention of its possible misappropriation.

- Propose access and benefit-sharing models to incentivize and protect traditional medical knowledge.

Actions for the WHO Secretariat

- Strengthen coordination and collaboration with other United Nations entities and relevant organizations to address issues pertinent to traditional medical knowledge.

- Organize training programmes for building the capacity of Member States in traditional medical knowledge.

- Raise awareness among the scientific community about ethical aspects and the need to address rights regarding genetic resources in traditional medical knowledge.

- Facilitate information sharing regarding appropriate approaches and models for traditional medical knowledge.

Implementation of the draft strategy

General comments on implementation

The guiding principles of the draft strategy also guide its implementation. To help to achieve the objectives, it is necessary to regularly monitor and report on the implementation of the strategy. A mid-term review of the objectives and directions in terms of Member States' progress, for reporting in 2030, can help to identify whether there is a need to modify the strategy to better fit countries' needs.

Monitoring, measuring and reporting

The main purposes of monitoring, measuring and reporting are to ensure adequate implementation, measure success and adapt the strategy, if needed. The role of WHO in this regard is to:

- support Member States in the implementation and adaptation of the strategy at the country level, including the design and development of national indicators;

- organize workshops and on-site studies in Member States across the regions to identify and share experiences and lessons learned in the implementation; and

- report to the Eighty-third World Health Assembly in 2030 and the Eighty-seventh World Health Assembly in 2034 on the implementation of the strategy for follow-up actions and decisions based on updated WHO surveys.
