2018 LUNG CANCER in AFRICA FACT SHEET

THE REALITY:

- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death worldwide. Every year, lung cancer causes more than 1.7 million deaths—more than breast, colon and prostate cancers combined.\(^1\)
- Funding for lung cancer research is critical due to the disease’s pervasiveness and because doctors often find lung cancer in later stages, when it is less treatable. New advances hold great promise for screening, early detection and personalized therapies, but they need continued financial support.
- Not only smokers get lung cancer. For example, in the U.S. about 31,000 people die each year from non-smoking-related lung cancer (about the same number die from prostate cancer).
- Other causes of lung cancer include radon gas in homes (20,000 deaths/year), workplace exposure, second-hand smoke, cancer treatments and genetics.\(^2\)
- Lung cancer does not have to be fatal. Groundbreaking new treatments dramatically alter lung cancer survival rates every day.
- The number of new cases of cancer is expected to rise by about 70% over the next two decades.\(^3\)
- Late-stage presentation and inaccessible diagnosis and treatment are common. In 2017, only 26% of low-income countries reported having pathology services generally available in the public sector. Treatment services are reportedly available in more than 90% of high-income countries versus in less than 30% of low-income countries.\(^4\)

REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT – AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST:

- Although lung cancer incidence and mortality rates and are still low in the Arab world as compared to Europe or the U.S., they are gradually increasing in the region.\(^5\)
- Approximately 70% of deaths from cancer occur in low- and middle-income countries.\(^6\)
- Percentage data for both sexes of lung cancer in the Arab world show that 68.1% of the Arab countries have lung cancer as one of the top five most frequently diagnosed types of cancer.\(^7\)
- Between 1990 and 1997, cigarette consumption increased 24% in the Middle East, one of only two regions of the world where cigarette sales increased during that period.\(^8\)
- Only 1 in 5 low- and middle-income countries have the necessary data to drive cancer policy.\(^9\)
- Despite major advances in understanding and treating cancer, the five-year relative survival rate in North Africa and the Middle East is only 8%\(^.\)\(^x\)
- 50% of African countries do not allow morphine.\(^xi\)
- 95% of Africans don't get cancer therapy.\(^xii\)
- Thirty of 55 African countries have NO radiotherapy units.\(^xiii\)
- Twenty or 30 years from now, we will see a peak in lung cancer cases in Africa. People in Africa began smoking later than in the U.S. and Europe and there is an approximate 40-year latency period between when one starts smoking and lung cancer peak.\(^xiv\)
RESEARCH AND PROMISING DEVELOPMENTS:

- New immunotherapy (using the body’s own immune cells to attack cancer cells) shows great promise for patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).
- Personalized medicine is providing hope by treating a patient already diagnosed with lung cancer with drugs that are effective based on specific characteristics of their tumor.
- Evidence suggests that quitting smoking measurably improves patient survival.
  - Read the IASLC’s complete 2015 Statement on Tobacco Control and Smoking Cessation.
- Screening with low-dose CT can reduce lung cancer deaths by 20 percent compared to standard chest X-ray among adults with a 30 pack year smoking history who were current smokers or had quit within 15 years. xv

For more information, visit www.iaslc.org. To speak with a lung cancer expert from any region, please contact Becky Bunn.

About the IASLC:
The International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) is the only global organization dedicated solely to the study of lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies. Founded in 1974, the association’s membership includes more than 7,500 lung cancer specialists across all disciplines in over 100 countries, forming a global network working together to conquer lung and thoracic cancers worldwide. The association also publishes the Journal of Thoracic Oncology, the primary educational and informational publication for topics relevant to the prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment of all thoracic malignancies. Visit www.iaslc.org for more information.

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xi International Prevention Research Institute, “Cancer is...Attaching Africa (59-min version),” Access Date: Feb 21, 2018: https://i-pri.org/2017/02/02/cancerisattackingafrica59/.
xii International Prevention Research Institute, “Cancer is...Attaching Africa (59-min version),” Access Date: Feb 21, 2018: https://i-pri.org/2017/02/02/cancerisattackingafrica59/.
xiii International Prevention Research Institute, “Cancer is...Attaching Africa (59-min version),” Access Date: Feb 21, 2018: https://i-pri.org/2017/02/02/cancerisattackingafrica59/.
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