

The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP): Coronavirus-related activities

The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership¹ (EDCTP) brings together the EU, 16 African and 14 European countries to fund research to combat infectious diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. EDCTP funds clinical research to accelerate the development of new or improved medical interventions against infectious diseases in sub-Saharan Africa.



New actions to address Coronavirus

Call for expressions of interest for Coronavirus research in sub-Saharan Africa - Research and Innovation Actions

Objective: To support projects tackling the following: Understanding infection; Improve surveillance capabilities; Promote the development and implementation of point-of-care diagnostic tests; Support standardised approach for clinical management by contributing to implementation of randomised, controlled trials for diagnostics and therapeutics; Validation and adaptation of existing serological tests, and establishment of biobanks.

Budget EUR 4.75 million – Call will open on 3 April 2020 - Deadline: 17 April 2020

Coordination and Support Actions for Capacity development for disease outbreak and epidemic response in sub-Saharan Africa, in collaboration with Africa CDC

Objective: To establish an African cohort of epidemiologists by supporting institutions in Europe and sub-Saharan Africa that provide master's training in epidemiology and biostatistics, as part of the Africa CDC's framework for public health workforce development.

Budget EUR 5 million – Call will open on 10 April 2020

Coordination and Support Actions for the strengthening of the EDCTP Regional Networks

Objective: To strengthen clinical research capacity to conduct multi-country clinical trials; optimising the use of resources and infrastructures; offering training to promote professional development and scientific leadership in clinical trials; strengthening South-South and North-South collaborations between researchers and institutions; promoting networking between researchers, communities and policy makers to maximise the impact of clinical research in Africa.

Budget EUR 18 million - Call will open on 10 April 2020

¹ <https://www.edctp.org/>

Ongoing actions to address COVID-19

Two major EDCTP networks for strengthening the capacities of African countries to respond to infectious diseases outbreaks to have already redirected efforts to tackle Coronavirus:

The **[PANDORA-ID-NET](#)**- Pan-African Network for Rapid Research, Response, Relief and Preparedness for Infectious Diseases Epidemics.

On 11-13 March 2020, PANDORA and the African Centre for Disease Control (CDC) jointly conducted a workshop covering laboratory diagnosis skills, clinical case management and risk assessment at points of entry, with 33 participants from 20 countries. The consortium has adapted the WHO's "*First Few X (FFX) Cases and contact investigation protocol for COVID-19*" (see [FFX protocol](#)) to the African context, to identify transmission dynamics (asymptomatic patients).

PANDORA-ID-NET members have published several important papers addressing urgent Coronavirus- questions, such as 'Is Africa prepared for tackling the COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) epidemic. Lessons from past outbreaks, ongoing pan-African public health efforts, and implications for the future' by [Kapata N et al. 2020](#).

[ALERRT](#) - The African coalItion for Epidemic Research, Response and Training - is a multi-disciplinary consortium building a patient-centered clinical research network. Following activation of its Outbreak Response Assessment Mode on 9 Feb 2020, ALERRT has revised the [FISSA study](#) (Febrile Illness in Sub-Saharan Africa) protocol to allow inclusion of a research response component in the event of a Public Health Emergency (Coronavirus-19 for now) declaration by national or international health authorities, in one or more countries participating in the FISSA study.

FISSA study procedures will incorporate caring of individuals and collection of Coronavirus-relevant data. Sample collection, testing and cases management will follow the standardised procedures recommended by WHO via the International Severe Acute Respiratory and Emerging Infections Consortium (ISARIC) COVID-19 clinical characterisation protocol that was used in China and is presently in use across Europe and other parts of the world.

FISSA teams in each country will work with social science colleagues to explore social aspects with implications on patients and care givers (formal and informal). ALERRT is contributing to the development of a Coronavirus-19 healthcare worker preparedness survey in collaboration with ISARIC.