

## EDCTP Update | October 2022



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### EDCTP mourns the loss of Ana Lúcia Weinberg

*In loving memory of*  
**Ana Lúcia Weinberg**

17/10/1984 - 03/10/2022



It is with deep sadness and sorrow that we announce the passing of our dear colleague and friend Ana Lúcia Weinberg which happened on 3 October 2022. She will be remembered by many as a passionate and compassionate person fully committed to building and fostering invaluable and sustainable partnerships for global health research. Ana Lúcia was very devoted to her work at EDCTP and will be dearly missed by the broader EDCTP family and research community. We offer our sincere condolences to Ana Lúcia's family and close relatives, and colleagues and friends in the global health community.

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## **The European Commission and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation progress research cooperation to combat infectious diseases in Africa**



On the occasion of the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting, co-hosted this year by the European Commission, Signe Ratso, acting Director General for Research and Innovation met with Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (the Foundation). During the meeting, they discussed their co-investment of EUR 55 million (22 million from

the EU and 33 million from the Foundation) for advancing genomic epidemiology for surveillance and control of poverty-related and emerging/re-emerging infections in sub-Saharan Africa.

The current cooperation takes place under the umbrella of the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking (GH EDCTP3 JU), in which the Foundation is a contributing partner for the 2022 call for proposals. The GH EDCTP3 JU is a partnership between the European Union and the EDCTP Association, which involves 21 African and 15 European countries as members.

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## Call for input: Public consultation on the WHA resolution on strengthening clinical trials

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World Health  
Organization

SEVENTY-FIFTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY  
Agenda item 16.2

WHA75.8  
27 May 2022

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### **Strengthening clinical trials<sup>1</sup> to provide high-quality evidence on health interventions and to improve research quality and coordination**

In May 2022, the seventy-fifth World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on [Strengthening clinical trials to provide high-quality evidence on health interventions and to improve research quality and coordination](#). WHO has published a public consultation on this resolution to collate and submit input from stakeholders on the key lessons learned from COVID-19, and other recent experience, for improving the clinical trials ecosystem, and bottlenecks that need to be addressed. The inputs will be consolidated into a report to be submitted to WHO's Executive Board and the 76th World Health Assembly in 2023. We encourage all grantees involved in clinical trials to provide their input. The deadline for the submission of comments is **11 November 2022**.

[Read the announcement](#)

Further backgrounds and guidance are provided in this guest blog on PLOS Global Public Health: [Improving the global clinical trials ecosystem – a World Health Assembly resolution](#) (Vasee Moorthy, John Reeder, Soumya Swaminathan)

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## Consortium of Universities for Global Health launch online capacity strengthening platform



The deficit in skilled workers, particularly in low-income nations, is a major obstacle to addressing current and future development challenges. For healthcare alone, the global workforce deficit is 15 million individuals. Africa is predicted to have a shortfall of 6.1 million workers by 2030. This is a significant obstacle to development. A central challenge is a lack of qualified trainers and mentors and the ability to connect existing expertise and training programmes to institutions and individuals with identified training gaps.

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH)'s new [capacity strengthening platform](#) was created to help address the skilled worker shortage globally with particular attention to low-income nations. The consortium is inviting you to list trainers and curricula your institution is seeking or trainers and educational products you can share.

[Visit the platform »](#)

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## Recent events

### World Health Summit workshop: Best Practices and New Avenues for Building Research Capacity in Global Health | 16 October 2022

Research capacity is a long-term, complex process that requires the interplay of individuals, organisations, national and international research systems. No model or mechanism has emerged as the most effective at supporting research capacity development. The aim of the session 'Best Practices and New Avenues for Building Research Capacity in Global Health' at the World Health Summit was to discuss and learn from different approaches of research capacity building, bringing together the perspectives of researchers and funders. EDCTP Executive Director, Dr Michael Makanga, was a speaker at this workshop.

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### Meeting on World Health Assembly resolution for coordination of clinical research

The 2022 Grand Challenges Annual Meeting took place in Brussels from 23-26 October 2022. During the meeting African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), EDCTP, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation co-organised a side meeting to discuss the possibility of building a fit-for-purpose mechanism that directly addresses the



paradigm shift needed to center Low- and Middle- Income Countries' needs in clinical research and trials.

Participants drawn from selected funders, donors and clinical research institutions from Africa that attended the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting discussed common challenges of greatest priority, and the potential architecture, governance, and financing for a mechanism that sufficiently addresses them currently and in the long term. This discussion builds on recent dialogues, including the [2019 Pan Africa Clinical Trials Alliance \(PACTA\) meeting](#) jointly organised by AUDA-NEPAD and EDCTP. This discussion also addresses the World Health Assembly Resolution 75.8 which calls for member countries to support the coordination of clinical research and trials. Members of the EDCTP secretariat and several African and European EDCTP member states attended the meeting. It is expected that the recommendations of the meeting will feed into broader consultations to make coordination of clinical trials ecosystem in Africa a reality.

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## Project news

### Recruitment of EPI-Biostat Fellows' at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine completed



EDCTP and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) have partnered to train 150 epidemiologists and biostatisticians across Africa. The first eight of these "EPI-Biostat Fellows" enrolled in their Master's training at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in 2021 as part of the East and Southern African Consortium for Outbreak Epidemiology Training (ENTRANT). The consortium has selected another seven Fellows, who have enrolled in their Master's training.

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### Fifteen 'EPI-Biostat Fellows' start their training at the University of Cape Verde



Fifteen "EPI-Biostat Fellows" have enrolled in their Master's training at the University of Cape Verde. The Master in Field Epidemiology Training for Portuguese-speaking West African Countries (FETP-CV) consortium has developed a 24-month full-time Master's in Field Epidemiology training programme based on the accumulated experiences of Mozambique and Angola. Classes commenced on 3 October 2022 and the [official opening of the Master's in Field Epidemiology](#) took place on 4 October 2022.

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## Launch ceremony of FETP-CV Master in Epidemiology Training



The Master in Field Epidemiology Training for Portuguese-speaking West African Countries (FETP-CV) held its formal launch ceremony on 4 October 2022. FETP-CV is one out of ten "[EPI-Biostat Fellow](#)" training consortia that are supported by Africa CDC and EDCTP. The consortium officially started on 1 December 2021, aiming to implement a Master's in Field Epidemiology at Cape Verde University and train 15 Fellows in epidemiology from three countries: 6 from Cape Verde, 6 from Guinea Bissau and 3 from São Tomé & Príncipe.

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## freeBILy annual meeting



The freeBILy consortium held its final annual meeting in Barcelona, Spain, from 19-21 September 2022. The main objective of the freeBILy project is to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of two well-researched circulating antigen tests to improve diagnosis in endemic field situations and reduce morbidity due to *Schistosoma* infections in women and young children. The meeting included presentations from partners, focusing on the work that has been conducted in the past years, and included preliminary results where possible.

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## PAMAFrica & SINDOFO consortia annual investigators' meetings



From 20-22 September 2022, the [PAMAFrica](#) and [SINDOFO](#) consortia held a joint annual meeting at CERMEL's in Lambaréné, Gabon. It was their first face-to-face since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting was attended by 52 participants from 12 institutions from nine countries, including four attendees joining online and representatives from EDCTP.

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## DiTECT-HAT: Dr Charlie Compaoré defends thesis on new tools to control African trypanosomiasis

Dr Charlie Compaoré, a PhD student of the



[DiTECT-HAT](#) project, successfully presented his thesis at the Nasi Boni University in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso on 15 October 2022. The DiTECT-HAT project validated the performance of diagnostic tools and algorithms for early and rapid diagnosis of *gambiense* human African trypanosomiasis (HAT). Dr Compaoré evaluated the performance of new diagnostic tools and algorithms in order to propose appropriate medical control strategies for HAT - or sleeping sickness - elimination in Burkina Faso. He demonstrated that screening by a rapid diagnostic test, followed by trypanolysis, can be a useful strategy for post-elimination surveillance in Burkina Faso. Furthermore, his results suggest that *T. b. gambiense* no longer circulates in South-West Burkina Faso and that zero transmission has probably been achieved. Dr Compaoré published his results in [Parasite](#) (2022) and in [Experimental Parasitology](#) (2020).

## CANTAM clinical trial monitors workshop



Swiss TPH (Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute) in collaboration with UPC-PV (Unite de Pharmacologie Clinique et Pharmacovigilance), Democratic Republic of the Congo, together with partner institutions of the Central African Network on Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and Malaria 3 ([CANTAM3](#)) organised a one-week complete training workshop on clinical trial monitors for better Clinical Research Associates. The main focus was on neglected tropical diseases. During the one-week training in Kinshasa, participants from several African countries dealt in-depth with how to monitor and ensure safety and reliability in clinical trials.

[Read more »](#)

## EACCR hosts research ethics committee training



The Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) hosted a research ethics committee training with 16 participants from UVRI partner sites Jinja and Masaka Regional Referral Hospitals. The training was hosted by the East African Consortium for Clinical Research ([EACCR](#)) and ran from 17-19 October 2022.

[Read more »](#)



## TB-CAPT session at ASLM LabCop 2022 Annual Meeting



On 12 October 2022, the [TB-CAPT](#) consortium organised a session on scaling solutions for near point-of-care and point-of-care molecular testing services for tuberculosis (TB) and drug-resistant TB. The session was organised in collaboration with USAID and the Stop TB Partnership. TB-CAPT (Close the gap, increase Access, Provide adequate Therapy) will provide evidence for impactful implementation of tuberculosis (TB) and TB/HIV co-infection diagnostic strategies including drug-susceptibility testing through a series of trials in Tanzania, Mozambique, and South Africa. The session recording is available on the TB-CAPT website.

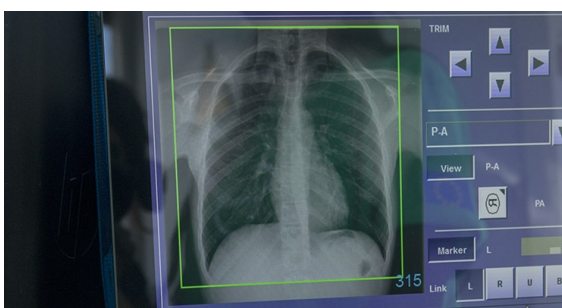
[Read more »](#)

## SIMBLE consortium meeting



The second consortium meeting of the EDCTP-funded SIMBLE project took place, like last year, in a hybrid format. The SIMBLE project is a clinical diagnostic trial in Western Africa of a simplified blood culture system “the BactInsight blood culture system” to improve healthcare in low-resource settings. A delegation from Canada, Belgium, Burkina Faso, and Spain traveled to Cotonou, Benin, to meet in person on the progress of the project. Updates of the different consortium partners and work package leaders were alternated with tours of the facilities of the Cotonou partner (CHNU-PPC): laboratory, clinic, sheep farm and finally the fully installed production facility for media preparation. After a long travel at sea, the production container was installed on the premises of CNHU-PPC, and the first batch of media was produced right after the consortium meeting.

## TB TRIAGE+: recruitment starts in Lesotho and South Africa



Recruitment for the large-scale community [TB TRIAGE+](#) trial, with 20,000 participants, has started in September 2022 in sites in Lesotho and South Africa. The TB TRIAGE+ project is assessing whether two tests – an innovative digital chest X-ray analysis system and a simple-to-use blood test – can provide a rapid indication of the likelihood of TB disease.



## BCG-COVID-RCT meets BERC-Luso



In 2020, a consortium of researchers from Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Denmark were granted [emergency funding](#) to study the impact of the BCG vaccine on health care worker absenteeism during the pandemic. The study was designed as a multi-center trial with enrollment of 350 health care workers in each African country. It would include the first clinical trial to be carried out in Cabo Verde. As clinical trials regulations were not in place yet when the clinical trial was planned to start, the trials were conducted in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. As a result of this unfortunate situation, however, the Ministry of Health in Cabo Verde created a National Task Force on Clinical Research Legislation (Order No.2/2021) to coordinate and monitor the process of elaboration and implementation of a legal framework in the field of biomedical research, clinical trials, and public health research. The "Biomedical Ethics and Regulatory Capacity Building Partnership for Portuguese Speaking African Countries (BERC-Luso)" project played an important role in this process.

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## BREEDSAFCA: ethics review and pharmacovigilance in Cameroon



National regulatory agencies play a critical public health role in protecting populations, during clinical trials and when new medicines are licensed and introduced. The [BREEDSAFCA](#) project is strengthening national systems for ethics review of research and pharmacovigilance in Cameroon. Most of the regulatory instruments that were developed by BREEDSAFCA were integrated in the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects law in Cameroon that was adopted in April 2022, and the project set up two regional ethics committees, namely the Littoral and the West Regional ethics committee, dramatically changing the human health research landscape in Cameroon.

[Read more »](#)

## STReK project mentorship programme on research ethics

The University of Nairobi (UoN) in partnership with the National Commission



for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) received a grant from EDCTP to build the capacity of newly established research ethics committees in a project titled “Strengthening Research Ethics Oversight in Kenya (STReK).” One of the key activities was to conduct mentorship for members from accredited research ethics committees. In this regard, UoN and NACOSTI developed a mentorship guide with tools and a mentorship logbook to be used by the selected mentees during the programme.

[Read more »](#)

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## EDCTP Fellows

### EDCTP Fellow: Dr Caroline Cleopatra Chisenga



In cholera-endemic areas, the periodicity of cholera outbreaks remains unpredictable, making it difficult to organise preventive efforts. Through the ChoVaxim study, [Dr Caroline Cleopatra Chisenga](#) set out to report on (i) the immunogenicity and waning of immunity to Shanchol™ and (ii) the impact of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and micronutrient deficiency as indicated by serum retinol levels (a proxy for vitamin A) in Lukanga Swamps where oral cholera vaccine (OCV) was deployed for the first time during the 2016 outbreak. Dr Chisenga [found](#) that Shanchol™ was immunogenic in the study population and that vibriocidal antibodies may not be a good marker for long-term immunity. The observed rise in titres after 36 months suggests natural exposure, and this may be a critical time window opening for natural transmission in an endemic area. Therefore, re-vaccination at this time point is recommended in high-risk areas.

[Read more »](#)

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## Publications

EDCTP is a member of [Europe PMC](#). This enables EDCTP-funded researchers to share their publications via one central location. Sharing publications by EuropePMC also ensures that they will satisfy the requirements for EDCTP-funded research projects: making publications openly accessible as soon as possible.

[Submit your manuscript through Europe PMC Plus](#)

- *PloS One*: [The role of cooking practices in the transmission of the foodborne parasite \*Taenia solium\*: A qualitative study in an endemic area of Southern Tanzania.](#) Møller KS *et al.* (5 October 2022)
- *Wellcome Open Res*: [Population disruption: observational study of changes in the population distribution of the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#) Gibbs H *et al.* (3 October 2022)
- *PLoS Pathog*: [The effect of Omicron breakthrough infection and extended BNT162b2 booster dosing on neutralization breadth against SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern.](#) Graham C *et al.* (3 October 2022)
- *Pilot Feasibility Stud*: [Impact and operational feasibility of adding malaria infection screening using an ultrasensitive RDT for placental and fetal outcomes in an area of high IPTP-SP coverage in Burkina Faso: the ASSER MALARIA pilot study protocol.](#) Tahita MC *et al.* (1 October 2022)
- *Int J Infect Dis*: [Increased outbreaks of monkeypox highlight gaps in actual disease burden in Sub-Saharan Africa and in animal reservoirs.](#) Haider N *et al.* (20 May 2022)
- *Malaria journal*: [The choice of reference chart affects the strength of the association between malaria in pregnancy and small for gestational age: an individual participant data meta-analysis comparing the Intergrowth-21 with a Tanzanian birthweight chart.](#) Mtowe G *et al.* (12 October 2022)
- *Dev World Bioeth*: [An ethics of anthropology-informed community engagement with COVID-19 clinical trials in Africa.](#) Edwards SJL *et al.* (9 August 2022)
- *BMC Med Educ*: [Training needs of health researchers in research ethics in Cameroon: a cross-sectional study.](#) Ateudjieu J *et al.* (29 September 2022)
- *Sci Rep*: [Effectiveness of a structured stimulated spontaneous safety monitoring of medicines reporting program in strengthening pharmacovigilance system in Tanzania.](#) Mwamwitwa KW *et al.* (27 September 2022)
- *Front Med*: [Collaborative reliance in medicine safety and quality regulation: Investigation of experiences in handling N-nitrosamine impurities among ZaZiBoNa participating countries.](#) Shabangu PP *et al.* (9 September 2022)
- *Ther Innov Regul Sci*: [A Retrospective Analysis of Applications for Registration of Generic Medicines Processed by the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe.](#) Samunda BT *et al.* (21 October 2022)

## Resources

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>EDCTP2 portfolio:<br/>Collaborative research<br/>and development</p> <p>2014-2020</p> |  <p>EDCTP2 portfolio:<br/>Clinical research capacity</p> <p>2014-2020</p> |  <p>EDCTP2 portfolio:<br/>fellowship programme</p> <p>2014-2020</p> |
| <a href="#">Collaborative clinical R&amp;D</a><br>online   | <a href="#">Clinical research capacity</a><br>PDF   | <a href="#">Fellowships</a><br>online  |

- EDCTP | [Knowledge Hub: Tools and guidance for conducting clinical research](#)
- EDCTP | [Guidelines for grantees - Progress report](#)



- EDCTP | [Template for Grant Agreement Annex 5](#)
- ERUDIT | [Planning for Financial Sustainability manual](#)
- Europe PMC webinar | [Watch the recording](#) and [download the slides](#)
- TRUST project | [Video introducing the Global Code of Conduct](#)

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## Training and funding opportunities

### **ADVAC (Advanced Course for Vaccinology) | 8-19 May 2023**

ADVAC is an annual two-week training programme for decision-makers, including academia, industry, governmental and non-governmental agencies. ADVAC has opened a Call for application with a deadline of **15 November 2022**. Participants (maximum 75) will be selected by the ADVAC Scientific Committee according to their educational background, involvement in vaccinology, decision-making responsibilities in vaccinology, and expected impact of the course at personal, institutional and national levels. With support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), EDCTP will provide fellowships for selected candidates from Sub-Saharan African countries.

[More information on how to apply »](#)

### **Funding to support Research Leaders in sub-Saharan Africa | Deadline: 1 December 2022**

The UK Medical Research Council (MRC) has launched a further call to support 'rising star' African Research Leaders. The aim of the scheme is to strengthen research leadership across sub-Saharan Africa by attracting and retaining exceptionally talented individuals who will lead high-quality programmes of research on key global health issues pertinent to the region and beyond. The award is jointly funded by the MRC and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). As part of the scheme the African Research Leader should be supported by a strong linkage with a UK partner/mentor. The deadline for applications is 1 December 2022.

[More information »](#)

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## Mark your calendar

### **Events with EDCTP participation**

#### **Life Science 2.0 (Stockholm Life Science Conference 2022) | 28 November 2022**

On 28 November 2022, the Stockholm Life Science Conference will take place under the theme 'Life Science in the wake of COVID-19'. EDCTP Executive Director Michael Makanga will take part in a panel discussion on 'Precision medicine & New Generation - Clinical bringing clinical trials to a new level and accelerating the development treatment and prevention of neglected diseases.'

[More information and registration »](#)

#### **The Global Health Network Conference 2022 | 24–25 November 2022**

Under the theme 'Enabling Health Research in Every Healthcare Setting', this conference aims to bring together health research teams, organisations, health-workers, policy makers and practitioners to explore together how health research can be embedded into every healthcare setting. The conference will be hosted by University of Cape Town, South Africa. EDCTP Strategic Partnerships & Capacity Development Manager, Dr Thomas Nyirenda, will be a plenary speaker at the conference.

[More information and registration »](#)

The EDCTP Regional Networks of Excellence and DELTAS consortia are organising a pre-



conference symposium in Cape Town on 23 November 2022 entitled 'Enhancing research capacity strengthening lessons from EDCTP and DELTAS consortia'. The objective is to share the experience of implementing various Theories of Change for research capacity building amongst the EDCTP Networks of Excellence and DELTAS-funded consortia. Amongst the speakers will be Ms Michelle Nderu, EDCTP Project Officer, who will be presenting on Gender and Geographical inclusivity in capacity building.

[Updates on sessions will be available soon.](#)

## **Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2022) | 13-15 December 2022**

The second Annual Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2022) will take place from 13-15 December 2022. The conference provides a unique platform for African researchers, policymakers and stakeholders to come together and share perspectives and research findings in public health, while ushering in a new era of strengthened scientific collaboration and innovation across the continent. EDCTP is represented in the conference's Scientific Programme Committee by Dr Thomas Nyirenda, Strategic Partnerships & Capacity Development Manager will, Together with Professor Rose Leke, Emeritus Professor of Immunology and Parasitology and founder of HIGHER Women Consortium Cameroon, Dr Nyirenda will co-lead Track 8: 'A renewed focus on Africa's major infectious diseases: HIV, TB, Malaria and NTD's'.

[More information »](#)

*EDCTP Communications thanks everyone who provided information for this Update.*



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