



EDCTP

EDCTP and Africa CDC partner to train highly skilled epidemiologists and biostatisticians in Africa

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 4 March 2021. A new training programme funded by the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is set to support the training of 150 highly skilled epidemiologists and biostatisticians in sub-Saharan Africa over a period of three years.

The training is expected to start by October 2021 and end by 2024 and will be led by ten consortiums comprised of institutions from Africa and Europe. When completed, the programme will boost the capacity of National Public Health Institutes, Ministries of Health and other health institutions in Africa to collectively conduct public health research and effectively respond to disease emergencies across the continent.

“This funding of the training of 150 epidemiologists and biostatisticians with a balanced regional distribution represents a very important milestone in the partnership between EDCTP and Africa CDC. We hope this tangible outcome will help reduce the severe shortage of expertise in these important fields,” said Dr Michael Makanga, Executive Director of EDCTP.

For decades, Africa has faced challenges in responding to public health emergencies; epidemiological data is often unavailable or severely limited and there is a shortage of skilled personnel and systems to collect and analyse available data and efficiently translate them into policy and practice. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the severe shortages of public health workforce and infrastructure and the inadequate capacity for public health research and emergency response across Africa.

In response to this capacity need, EDCTP and Africa CDC partnered in this €5 million initiative to support institutions in Africa and Europe to help raise a cadre of public health workforce that will boost epidemiological and biostatistical capacity in the continent through master’s degree programmes in epidemiology and biostatistics.

“To strengthen healthcare systems in Africa, we must pay attention to our healthcare workforce and find ways to strengthen their capacity. A highly skilled workforce that can implement multi-disease surveillance and effectively respond to disease outbreaks is necessary for our collective health security in the continent, and this is what this programme is about,” said Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

Following a call published in April 2020, 10 of 45 proposals submitted were selected and this network of ten consortiums will implement their training programmes across the continent over a period of three years.

ABOUT AFRICA CDC

Africa CDC is a specialized technical institution of the African Union which supports Member States in their efforts to strengthen health systems and improve surveillance, emergency response, prevention and control of diseases. For more information, [visit the Africa CDC website](#).

ABOUT EDCTP

The mission of the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) is to reduce the social and economic burden of poverty-related diseases in developing countries, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, by accelerating the clinical development of effective, safe, accessible, suitable, and affordable medical interventions for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected infectious diseases. EDCTP is supported by the European Union under Horizon 2020, its Framework programme for Research and Innovation. For this call, co-funding received from the United Kingdom is gratefully acknowledged. For more information [visit the EDCTP website](#).