

NEWS RELEASE

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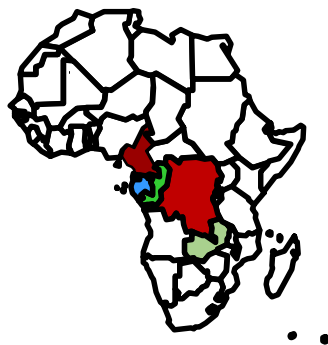
Research ethics strengthening in Central Africa through a collaboration with the European Union (EDCTP)

Despite being home to >16% of the world's population, Africa currently only hosts <5% of the clinical studies that are executed worldwide. Especially the number of clinical trials in Central African countries such as Republic of the Congo (RoC), Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Chad are lagging behind, compared to other African regions. Among the possible reasons, there is the lack of proper ethics review capacity to ensure efficient and timely evaluation and approval of clinical research proposals.

Within this context, the following African and European institutions : Fondation Congolaise pour la Recherche Médicale (FCRM, Republic of Congo), Comité Scientifique de Validation des Protocoles et Résultats de Recherche en Santé at Institut Pasteur de Bangui (Central African Republic), Comité national d'éthique de la santé (CNES - Democratic Republic of Congo), Unité De Pharmacologie Clinique et Pharmacovigilance (UPC-PV, Democratic Republic of Congo), Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche et de l'innovation, Comité National de Bioéthique du Tchad (CNBT, Chad) and the European not for profit organization R-Evolution Worldwide (R-EvoWW, UK and Italy) were successful in their response to a call of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP www.edcpt.org) with a project entitled: **"AfriEthique - A European-African network for strengthening the Ethics capacity for clinical research review in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Central Africa, Chad, and the Republic of Congo"** (Grant Agreement CSA2019ERC-2675).

"This is an extraordinary example of collaboration between the Central African countries and European organizations, with the substantial support from the European Union (EDCTP) in the common efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals", said Prof. Francine Ntoumi, AfriEthique Coordinator and FCRM Executive Director.

The main aim of the AfriEthique project is to strengthen the Ethics review capacity for clinical research in DRC, CAR, Chad, and RoC, with a specific focus on emerging and re-emerging diseases. To achieve this, a sustainable collaborative network will be established connecting Central African National Ethics Committees (NECs), European NECs and ethics supporting initiatives (AVAREF, www.avaref.org and CANTAM, www.cantam.org).



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