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CEPI provides up to $12.7M to expand COVID-19 vaccines access in Africa

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To carry out clinical trials of China-based Sinopharm's BBIBP-CorV vaccine



Norway-based Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) in South Korea have announced a new programme of clinical research which aims to expand access to COVID-19 vaccines in Africa.

CEPI will provide funding of up to $12.7 million to the Expanding Access and Delivery of COVID-19 Vaccines in Africa (ECOVA) consortium led by IVI to carry out clinical trials of China-based Sinopharm's BBIBP-CorV vaccine which will support the expanded use of the vaccine on the African continent.

There have been no clinical trials of BBIBP-CorV in African populations or against the variants of concern circulating in southern Africa. The ECOVA research programme aims to generate crucial data to inform the use of the vaccine in Africa, and potentially expand use of the vaccine to HIV-infected individuals.

All results generated by ECOVA will be made available open source to inform policy makers and regulatory authorities' recommendations on the use of BBIBP-CorV in national immunization programmes.

The ECOVA consortium is led by IVI, working in partnership with Mozambique's Instituto Nacional de Saúde (INS), the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b), the University of Heidelberg, Germany (UH), Harvard University, USA, and the University of Antananarivo in Madagascar (UA).