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Pakistan receives funding worth $11.7 M for mix-and-match trial of COVID-19 vaccines

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The first interim results are expected to be available in the first quarter of 2022



Norway-based Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the Aga Khan University (AKU) have announced a new collaboration to conduct a clinical trial of heterologous – or 'mix-and-match' – combinations of COVID-19 vaccines in Pakistan.

CEPI will provide up to $11.7 million of funding for the project to an international consortium led by AKU, comprising the National Institute of Health in Pakistan (NIH), University of Oxford, the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) and Harvard Medical School.

The clinical trial will assess the safety and immunogenicity of mix-and-match combinations of three vaccines that are currently being deployed in Pakistan, developed by AstraZeneca, Sinopharm and CanSinoBIO.

Data on mix-and-match combinations of these vaccines, which are commonly used in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), are urgently needed to contribute to the design of more flexible vaccination strategies and mitigate against shortages of vaccine at times of uncertain or fluctuating supplies.

The trial will also generate valuable data on the immune response after vaccination to the different variants circulating in Pakistan. All of the data will be made available open source to inform policy makers and regulatory authorities' recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines.