

Korea's SK Bioscience to boost vaccine manufacturing in Africa

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African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, SK bioscience discuss the vaccine localisation programme in the African continent



South Korea-based SK bioscience recently announced that Dr Jean Kaseya, Director General, African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) visited SK bioscience headquarters to discuss collaboration with the Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM).

Dr Kaseya was appointed as the Director General of Africa CDC in February 2023. Currently, he is visiting partners to foster partnerships and closer collaboration on African public health matters, with a particular focus on local manufacturing.

The PAVM, established by the African Union (AU) in 2021 seeks to enable the African vaccine manufacturing industry to produce, and supply over 60 percent of the total vaccine doses required on the continent by 2040. This represents a significant increase from the current level, which is less than 1 percent. There are also interim goals of reaching 10 percent by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030.

Africa CDC plans to secure a vaccine portfolio to respond to various diseases including tuberculosis, hepatitis B, HIV, malaria, Ebola, and unknown infectious diseases (Disease X). This will be achieved through the formation of strategic partnerships with global companies and the establishment of vaccine research and development (R&D) and manufacturing infrastructures, including local plants and cold chain logistics.

SK bioscience introduced the 'Glocalization Project,' a mid to long term core strategy that involves transferring R&D and manufacturing capabilities to countries with insufficient vaccine infrastructure to support the PAVM.

After the discussion session, Dr Kaseya and the visiting members toured SK bioscience's R&D Center to observe the know-hows in vaccine development.