

CONTINENTAL STRATEGIC MEETING ON MPOX THERAPEUTICS AND FRAMEWORK FOR NATURAL THERAPEUTICS IN AFRICA

Proposed Meeting Agenda

Date: September 17-19, 2025

Venue: Serena Hotel – Kigo

Kampala, Uganda



INTRODUCTION

The mpox outbreak that resulted in the joint declaration of Public Health Emergency of Continental Security (PHECS) and Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) continues to persist on the continent. Twenty-six countries now report cases concomitant with increased imported cases and deaths among the vulnerable populations. The current statistics reveal that recurrent mpox outbreaks threaten both endemic regions and global health security. Endemic mpox continues to resurface, yet effective medical countermeasures (MCMs) remain inadequate, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) partly due to limited research and development (R&D) infrastructure.

For Africa to leapfrog in local manufacturing, it must develop robust R&D in its natural medicines that has served its people from time immemorial. Over 70% of the global population rely on traditional medicine where Africa thrives. Yet, this remains a largely untapped opportunity due to substantial lack of clinical trials to validate the safety and efficacy of natural therapeutics. This gap limits healthcare access and weakens universal health coverage efforts in LMICs. Additionally, fragmented research efforts, insufficient funding, lack of information on African scientists leading advances in natural therapeutics and the absence of systematic clinical research networks hinder the utilization of our natural therapeutics for outbreak response. Collaborative research is essential to address ongoing and future mpox outbreaks effectively.

In response, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), in collaboration with the Makerere Lung Institute–Interdisciplinary Consortium for Epidemic Research (MLI-ICER), the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN), the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Uganda, and the Ministry of Scientific Research of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), have agreed to co-host a scientific meeting of African scientists that specializes natural therapeutics to evaluate ongoing research on mpox natural therapeutics.

Goal

To strengthen mpox outbreak response in endemic African countries by leveraging Africa CDC’s Traditional Medicines Platform, Uganda’s Clinical Trials and DRC’s Clinical Trials on Natural Therapeutics (CONAT) program to advance natural Therapeutics research and improve patient outcomes.

Specific Objectives

1. Strengthen collaborative Africa CDC, MLI-ICER and UNIKIN platforms to map and optimize existing research infrastructure and scientific products of therapeutics for mpox that can be moved to clinical trials
2. Use the meeting conduct a rapid survey of African centers specializing in infectious disease natural therapeutics
3. Engage stakeholders and evaluate natural investigational products for potential use in treating mpox

Expected Outcomes

Immediate

1. Identify candidate mpox natural therapeutic products

2. Plan a rapid safety and efficacy multi-country clinical trials of candidate mpox therapeutics
3. Identify candidate natural therapeutics for priority infectious epidemic prone pathogens

Intermediate

4. Establishment of mpox Natural Therapeutics Research Centres of Expertise for Africa

Long term

5. Development of sustainable infrastructure for natural therapeutics R&D framework
8. Lay the basis for moving synthetic molecules housed in African Universities to Phase-1 clinical trial

The meeting comprises two parts:

- I. The first 1.5 days will focus on Natural Therapeutics of mpox
- II. The second 1.5 days will focus on long-term road map and framework of natural therapeutics in Africa

AGENDA

17th – 19th September 2025, 09:00–17:30 (East Africa Time, EAT, GMT +3)

Day 1: Chairs: Professor Bruce Kirenga		
Opening Ceremony		
08:00-0830	Arrival and Registration	Workshop Secretariat
08:30-09:00	Opening Remarks – Africa CDC, MLI-ICER, CREPIT/DRC	
09:00-9:45	Official Opening of the Meeting/Remarks	Hon Dr Monica Musenero, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation -Office of the President (STI-OP)
9:45-10:10	Group Photo and Coffee Break	
Overall Progress on Mpox Response		
10:10-10:35	The Background & Meeting Objectives	Prof Misaki Wayengera & Dr. Mosoka P. Fallah
10:35-10:55	The Strategic Importance of Mpox Therapeutics in the Continental IMST-led response	Prof Yab Boum (Co-chair of the IMST)
10:55-11:40	Keynote Address: Natural therapeutics in epidemic preparedness and response: the 40-year Journey of Dubacil- a broad-based antiviral for mpox and others	Prof Constantin Bashengesi- CEO, CREPPAT LABORATORIES SARL/DIRECTOR, Organic Chemistry, Isolation and Characterization of APs
11:40 -12:00	Generating evidence on Natural Medicines: The Clinical Trial of Natural Therapeutics (CONAT) Program of Uganda	Prof Bruce Kirenga
12:00-12:30	Discussion-Q&A	
Session I: Panel Discussion#1: Moderators: Prof Elias Ntinginya & Dr Jean Pierre Metabanzoulou		
Landscape of mpox traditional medicine-based treatments in Africa- Presentations of current Mpox Natural Therapeutic Research Findings by different research groups. What are the key findings of natural therapeutics on the continent- What are the progress, innovations, and challenges in the different study areas. Identify opportunities to translate the products to clinical trial		
12:30-13:10	1- The Collaboration among METRAF CANADA, PROMETRA SENEGAL & CSIR, SOUTH AFRICA WITH MOMO30 (A TRADITIONAL PRODUCT) FROM ANTI-HIV TO MPOX” (20 mins) and the Nano-technology Lab- CISR (20 mins)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Mohammed Balogun-CISR, south Africa 2. Dr. Jean-Pierre Metabanzoulou – METRAF, Canada 3. Dr. Yaya Hills Kagali Sekagya, PROMETRA, Uganda
13:10 – 13:30	Discussion-Q&A	
13:30 – 14:20	LUNCH	
Session II: Panel Discussion#2: Moderator – Professor Teshome Degfie -Landscape of mpox traditional medicine-based treatments in Africa		

Presentations of current Mpox Natural Therapeutic Research Findings by different research groups. What are the key findings of natural therapeutics on the continent- What are the progress, innovations, and challenges in the different study areas. Identify opportunities to translate the products to clinical trial		
14:20-15:10	Pre-Clinical Trial collaboration to launch a multi-country mpox Clinical Trial in Africa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constantin Bashengezi-Founder and CEO-CREPPAT Laboratories SARL (12 mins) 2. Prof. Hulda Swai; Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) Tanzania (12 mins) 3. Lucy Ochola; Head of the Tropical and Infectious Diseases Department at the Institute of Primate Research, Kenya (12 mins) 4. Victor Jape Project Manager, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST), Tanzania (12 mins)
15:10 – 15:40	Discussion-Q&A	
Session III: High Level Presentations on potential Mpox Research		
15:40 - 16:10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Topic1 2. Topic2 3. , 3.Topic 3 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jamil Lutaaakome 2. Jesca Tintini 3. Barbara Nakintu
16:10 – 16:30	Discussion-Q&A	
Session V: Moderator ***Presentations -Translational Research in Africa- Repurposing Synthetic molecules for outbreaks and Chronic Diseases		
16:30 -17:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring existing libraries for synthetic molecules & vaccinesDr Olawale Salami 2. Repurposing Synthetic molecules against RNA viruses.....Prof Nhlanhla Msomi 	
17:30 - 18:00	Q&A and Discussions	
18:00-18:05	Closing Announcements	
Day 2: Chairs: Prof Wilber Sabiiti & Prof Edmund Ekuadzi		
08:00-08:30	Arrival & Registration	Secretariat
Session IV: Technical Presentations on Challenges and solutions in mpox drug development- 15 Min/		
08:30 – 09:45	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advances in bioassays and compound screening for mpox..... Professor Fidele Ntie-Kang 2. Resources, Challenges and critical need for an urgent mpox multi-country Trial.....Dr. Jibril Murtala 3. Critical role of Nano-formulation in accelerating mpox drug Development..... Prof. Hulda Swai 4. The role of Animal Studies to drive mpox natural therapeutics..... Dr. Lucy Ochola 	

	5. Challenges and solutions in mpox drug development Dr. Abebe Genetu Bayih
09:45 – 10:15	Discussion Q&A
	Session VIIA: Moderators: Dr Barnabas Bakamutumaho Technical Presentations: Bridging traditional knowledge with scientific validation: Capacities, infrastructures, Experiences and ongoing Research. Brief presentations on status of Therapeutic Research in each institution and what capacities do they have for potential collaborations with others
10:15 – 11:05	Part I: Laying the Foundation: The Clinical Trials of Natural Therapeutics (CONAT) Program of Uganda: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof Bruce J Kirenga- Makerere University Lung Institute/Interdisciplinary Consortium for Epidemics Research 2. Ms Brenda Nakazibwe – Science, Technology and Innovation Secretariat 3. Dr Grace Nambatya -Natural Chemotherapeutics Research Institute 4. Dr Jackline Lugemwa – Uganda Virus Research Institute 5. Diana Kesi Nakitto – National Drug Authority
11:05-11:20	Tea Break
11:20 – 12:00	Part II: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fidele Ntie-Kang – University of Bua, Cameroon: Discovery of anti-viral Compound 2. Professor Edmond Ekuadzi – Kwame Nkrumah of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana 3. Prof. Richard Kwamla Amewu, University of Ghana 4. Dr. Dr. Teshome Degfie, Adama Science and Technology University, (ASTU), Ethiopia 5. Dr. Firehiwot Teka Assamo- Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI), Ethiopia
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion Q&A
12:30 – 13:30	Moderators: Professor Eyasu Makonnen & Dr. Asfaw Debella – Part III: Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, Rwanda and South Africa <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Rianasoambolanoro RAKOTOSAONA- University of Antananarivo, Madagascar 2. Dr. Obi Adigwe, Director, National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research & Development, Nigeria 3. Prof Hamisu Salihu, CEO, Kano Independent Research Centre Trust 4. Dr. Nyanda Elias Ntinginya and Dr. Peter Emmanuel Lyimo- NIMR, Tanzania 5. Rwanda-Dr Kagisha Vadeste, School of Pharmacy and Medicine, University of Rwanda 6. Prof. Quinton Johnson, Director; UCT International Office; University of Cape Town, South Africa
13:30 – 13:50	Discussion Q&A
13:50 – 14:45	Lunch
14:45 – 15:45	TOUR OF THE DEI PHARMA

Capacity building in Natural Therapeutics: Methodology, Lessons learned, Challenges and Opportunities		
Moderator: Mosoka Fallah: Presentations followed by targeted questions from the moderator and open questions from the audience		
15:45-16:25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study Panel Discussion #1 Researchers and Student: Training of a Master Student on anti-diabetic treatment: Case Study Panel Discussion #2 Researchers and Student: Training of a PhD student in the development of an edible Cholera Vaccine: 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration between: Prof. Nicholas Kingoyi, Prof. Michael A. Odeniyi for Fayiah Samukai (Student) Professor Losenge Turoop and Dr. Beenzu Siamalube (Student)
16:25 – 17:45	Discussion Q&A	
Session VIIIA: Moderators: Professor Michael Odeniyi High-Level Presentations – Natural therapeutics beyond mpox: opportunities for Africa. This will focus on natural therapeutic products of other infectious and NCDS		
17:45-18:25	Part I <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Diabetes treatment Research- Collaborative Research for the drug discovery of Diabetes Hypertension/diabetes: Cancer 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prof Jethro Mavungu: University of Kinshasa Dr. Frehiwot Teka (AHRI) & Dr. Teshome Degfie (ASTU) Prof. Samuel Masamba Wayiza & Constantin Bashengezi Prof. Samuel Masamba Wayiza & Constantin Bashengezi
18:25-18:45	Discussion Q&A	
Day 3: Chairs:		
Session VIIIB: Moderators: Professor Nicholas Gikonyo High-Level Presentations – Natural therapeutics beyond mpox: opportunities for Africa. This will focus on natural therapeutic products of other infectious and NCDS		
08:00-08:50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hepatitis HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis NTDs/Malaria Hematology/Sickle Cell – Natural Therapeutics for Acute Respiratory Illnesses (CONAT – ARI trial) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Jean-Pierre Meabanzolou Richard Kwamla Amewu Prof. Adiarotou Togola Professor Adiaratou Togola Dr Winters Muttamba

08:50-09:20	Discussion Q&A
09:20 -09:50	<p>Presentation: What role does regulatory Authorities plays in moving natural therapeutics to National Drug list- the 3 drugs in Burkina Faso</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Prof Kampadilemba Ouoba</p>
09:50 -10:20	Discussion Q&A
10:20 -10:40	Coffee Break
<p>Session IX: Moderator: Dr. Firehiwot Teka Assamo- Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI), Ethiopia CO-CREATING THE FRAMEWORK FOR NATURAL THERAPEUTICS IN AFRICA During this session, the team of Scientists will be broken into small groups to work on one of 10 objectives that will inform the framework.</p>	
10:40 -12:40	<p style="text-align: center;">Small Group will work for 1 hour:30 minutes <u>Key Elements of a Traditional Medicine R&D Framework</u></p> <p>Group 1: Botanical Verification and Quality Assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species Identification: Establish standardized procedures for identifying and verifying the plant species used in traditional medicines. • Quality Control: Implement quality control methods to ensure the purity and consistency of herbal materials and finished products. • Good Agricultural and Collection Practices (GACP): Promote adherence to GACP for the sustainable sourcing of medicinal plants. • Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP): Develop and enforce GMP for herbal medicines to ensure consistent quality and safety. <p>Group 2: Safety and Efficacy Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methodologies: Employ rigorous scientific and multidisciplinary research methods to assess the safety and efficacy of traditional medicine products and practices. • Pharmacovigilance: Establish and integrate pharmacovigilance systems to monitor the safety of traditional medicine products on a continuous basis. • Clinical Trials: Conduct clinical trials using validated protocols to provide evidence-based data on the benefits and risks of traditional medicines. <p>Group 3: Standardization and Product Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardized Products: Develop and produce standardized, validated traditional medicine products based on scientific research.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodological Advancements: Continuously integrate methodological and technological advancements into the R&D process to enhance scientific rigor. • Clinical Trials: Conduct clinical trials using validated protocols to provide evidence-based data on the benefits and risks of traditional medicines. <p>Group 4: Regulatory Framework and Integration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Policies: Develop national policies and legal frameworks to support and regulate the development and use of traditional medicine. • Regulatory Bodies: Establish effective statutory bodies and regulatory agencies responsible for the quality, safety, and efficacy of traditional medicine products and practices. • Integration into Health Systems: Create mechanisms for the safe and effective integration of validated traditional medicine into national health systems. <p>Group 4B: Capacity Building and Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Cooperation: Foster cooperation among traditional medicine practitioners, conventional healthcare providers, researchers, and regulators. • Knowledge Preservation: Support efforts to document and preserve traditional knowledge while critically evaluating it through scientific research.
12:40-13:40	Session IX: Group Presentations and Plenary discussions of the work of 4 Groups- Coordinator and Secretary
Closing Ceremony	
13:40-14:30	<p>Presentation of Key Highlights to the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation... The Chairs of Day 1, 2 &3 (supported by the Secretariat)</p> <p>Key Next Steps and Future Directions: Mosoka (Africa CDC) and Professor Misaki (ICER-MLI)</p> <p>Closing Remarks: (2 min each): 1. Uganda, 2. Cameroon, 3. DRC, 4. Ethiopia 5. Ghana, 6. Kenya 7. Madagascar 8. Nigeria, 9. Tanzania</p> <p>Feedback and Official Closing of the Workshop.....Honorable Minister Monica Musenero</p>
END OF MEETING	