

## ITM partners in new African Salmonella vaccine project

ITM researchers are taking part in a research project for a vaccine against invasive non-typhi Salmonella in sub-Saharan Africa.

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Dit is de omschrijving

**Invasive non-typhoidal salmonellosis (iNTS) is an emerging neglected infectious disease in sub-Saharan Africa that mainly affects children under five years of age and people with a weakened immune system. Researchers from the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) in Antwerp are part of the research project Vacc-iNTS that was launched on 24 October. ITM is joining forces with 11 partners from eight different countries to advance the clinical development of an innovative vaccine against invasive non-typhoidal salmonellosis.**

Invasive non-typhoidal salmonellosis has emerged as a prominent cause of bloodstream infections in sub-Saharan Africa. The disease causes 600.000 deaths each year, especially young children are at risk. Left without treatment, the disease has a case fatality rate of 20 – 25%. The difficult diagnosis and increasing antibiotic resistance require the rapid development of an effective vaccine that is currently not available.

The Vacc-iNTS consortium, consisting of 12 partners from eight different countries including three iNTS disease- endemic countries, aims to advance the development of an urgently needed iNTS vaccine by conducting a Phase I clinical study of adults in Europe and Africa. Vacc-iNTS will investigate the immunogenicity and safety of the iNTS-GMMA vaccine, a novel vaccine based on outer membrane blebs released by genetically modified bacteria, developed by the GSK Vaccine Institute for Global Health (GVGH) using the GSK-owned outer membrane (GMMA) technology. The technology is characterised by a simple, robust and scalable manufacturing process that makes it a suitable platform for the development of vaccines against poverty-related diseases. Exploratory immunological analyses and sero-epidemiology studies will also be performed to support further vaccine development. Vacc-iNTS will strengthen the collaborative network in order to enhance disease awareness and drive advocacy.

“The Vacc-iNTS network will generate data to accelerate further vaccine development and tackle major roadblocks that affect the uptake and efficient deployment of a sustainable iNTS vaccine by endemic countries. The Institute will contribute to the project by assessing the iNTS disease burden and its economic impact, thereby increasing disease awareness and allowing to measure the potential impact of different immunization strategies,” says Prof Jan Jacobs from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp.

The Vacc-iNTS project represents an important step towards developing a vaccine to counter a poverty-related disease responsible for a huge health and socioeconomic impact in resource-poor countries. The 5-year project has a total budget of € 6.8 MM and is funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme.

Partners:

- Scavo Vaccines Association (Italy)
  - Fondazione Achille Scavo ONLUS
- GSK Vaccines Institute for Global Health (Italy)
  - GSK Biologicals
- University of Oxford (United Kingdom)
- Kenya Medical Research Institute (Kenya)
- University of Cambridge (United Kingdom)

- University of Siena (Italy)
- Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp (Belgium)
- University of Liverpool (United Kingdom)
  - University of Malawi
- University of Otago (New Zealand)
- Université Ouaga I Professeur Joseph Ki-Zerbo (Burkina Faso)
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Kumasi (Ghana)
- MMGH Consulting GMBH (Switzerland)