

CEPI | New vaccines for a safer world

Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations

Newsletter 17 April 2018

Address from our CEO



Greetings to you all.

As we head into the Northern Hemisphere spring it feels like a timely moment to reflect on all that has happened at CEPI since I last wrote.

Establishment of Partnership Agreements

We've announced our first two partnership agreements with Themis and Inovio Pharmaceuticals. Both companies will develop vaccine candidates for Lassa Fever and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome.

These partnership agreements are now the leading edge of CEPI's product development portfolio. We anticipate the portfolio will ultimately include 4-6 vaccine candidates against each of our priority diseases (Lassa Fever, MERS and Nipah).

But perhaps more than that they represent the 'green shoots' of a revolution in vaccine R&D and exemplify what CEPI was set up to do: support the development of vaccines that will protect us all from some of the world's most deadly diseases while promoting innovation in vaccine science.

We of course have a long way to go but we celebrate these two announcements as signalling the true beginning of CEPI's vaccine development efforts.

Inauguration of CEPI's Permanent Board

At the beginning of March CEPI held the inaugural meeting of its new permanent Board in Addis Ababa. The transition from CEPI's interim to permanent Board represents an important moment for us as we move from being a 'start-up' to being an established global organisation.

We were also delighted that our Board meeting provided Ethiopian Minister of Health Professor Yifru Berhan Mitke the opportunity to announce his Government's intention to join CEPI as a contributing member. Ethiopia thus became the first African nation, and first developing country, to commit to joining CEPI.

Ethiopia has made significant progress in primary health care over the past twenty years thanks to successive ambitious Health Sector Development Plans, through effective health system reform and governance. However, a major epidemic in Ethiopia could put the health and economic gains being achieved at risk. Ethiopia's decision to join CEPI reflects an understanding that epidemic threats, which disproportionately affect lower and middle income countries, are a global problem that requires a global solution – and that all countries have an important role to play.



Spanish Flu

Just over one hundred years ago, the first clearly identified record of the catastrophic 1918 influenza pandemic was documented. 'Patient Zero' was Private Albert Gitchell, a cook at Camp Funston-Fort Riley Kansas. Within three weeks of his being admitted to the military camp's infirmary 1,100 other soldiers at Fort Riley were struck down and hospitalized with the same symptoms. This outbreak would spread and spread until it became a global pandemic claiming the lives of over 50 million people and infecting a third of the world's population. You can read more about the lessons of this pandemic for our efforts today [here](#)

Richard Hatchett, CEPI CEO



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