

UK GOVERNMENT INVESTS GBP23 MILLION FOR FIND TO DRIVE DIAGNOSTIC INNOVATION AND BOOST COUNTRY TESTING CAPACITY TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RESPONSE

- **UK aid will support activities to effectively and efficiently address the COVID-19 global health emergency in the short term, while laying the foundations for longer-term systems and infrastructure to manage and avert future health security threats**
- **Investment will help to make sure that low-cost diagnostic tests are available to those who need them, regardless of where they live**

Geneva, Switzerland – 27 March 2020 – The Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) announced today that the UK aid of GBP23 million to accelerate COVID-19 testing, [unveiled yesterday by the UK Prime Minister’s Office](#), will be used by FIND to drive global diagnostic innovation and boost country testing capacity in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The investment reflects the commitment of the UK Department for International Development to support activities that will effectively and efficiently address the COVID-19 global health emergency in the short term, while laying the foundations for longer-term systems and infrastructure to manage and avert future health security threats.

Critical gaps in diagnostic capacity and reagent supply mean that countries are having to ration diagnostic tests, despite last week’s plea from the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) to countries to “test, test, test” for SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19. Many developers and manufacturers are being stretched to meet competing demands in high-, middle- and low-income countries alike, and there is an urgent need to mobilize additional capabilities to address these diagnostic gaps. With India now in lock down, and COVID-19 cases starting to tick up across Africa, concern for LMICs with already fragile health systems is mounting.

FIND, a WHO Collaborating Centre, has been working closely with global health stakeholders since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. The organization’s pandemic response activities include ongoing collation of a global pipeline of critical diagnostic tests, development of an interactive map to track global diagnostic capacity, and independent evaluations of new tests in development, to drive availability of accurate and quality-assured tests in LMICs (see www.finddx.org/covid-19). Preliminary training and capacity-building efforts have been mobilized both at country and regional levels.

The new funding will enable FIND to drive availability of rapid tests through portfolio investment in manufacturing scale-up – including the rapid testing technology being developed by UK-based company [Mologic](#) (also with UK aid funding), that will be made in parallel with diaTROPiX, a forthcoming manufacturing facility for rapid diagnostic tests, founded by Institut Pasteur of Dakar, in Senegal.

“Mologic is dedicated to supporting global efforts to tackle COVID-19 and welcomes the investment of UK aid in our work to develop a reliable, rapid diagnostic test for the virus,” said Mark Davis, CEO of Mologic.

“Through our partnership with diaTROPIx in Senegal, we will ensure that quality testing is available in low-income countries as well as the UK, which is ultimately the only way to control the pandemic worldwide.”

FIND will also work to remove access barriers to SARS-CoV-2 testing in LMICs to reach unreached communities, and harness digital innovation to build LMIC diagnostic capacity as well as supporting community-based screening and testing.

“COVID-19 is highlighting the impact of sustained under-investment in diagnostics the world over,” said Catharina Boehme, CEO of FIND. “The UK is playing a significant role in its support for coronavirus research, and this investment is critical to fighting today’s pandemic as well as putting infrastructure and technological capabilities in place that will help us shore up diagnostic gaps in global health security and ensure we are ready to tackle future outbreaks.”

Given the global urgency, activities will commence immediately, and are expected to be completed by the end of 2020.

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About FIND

FIND is a global non-profit organization that drives innovation in the development and delivery of diagnostics to combat major diseases affecting the world's poorest populations. Our work bridges R&D to access, overcoming scientific barriers to technology development; generating evidence for regulators and policy-makers; addressing market failures; and enabling accelerated uptake and access to diagnostics in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Since 2003, we have been instrumental in the development of 24 new diagnostic tools used in 150 LMICs. Over 50 million FIND-supported products have been provided to our target markets since the start of 2015. A WHO Collaborating Centre, we work with more than 200 academic, industry, governmental, and civil society partners worldwide, on over 70 active projects that cross six priority disease areas. FIND is committed to a future in which diagnostics underpin treatment decisions and provide the foundation for disease surveillance, control and prevention. For more information, please visit www.finddx.org

About diaTROPIx

Based in Dakar, Senegal, diaTROPIx is a patient-centred alliance for the local manufacture and affordable supply of tests for neglected tropical diseases that affect over a billion people worldwide. It is a joint initiative currently supported by four core members (Fondation Mérieux, FIND, IRD & Institut Pasteur de Dakar) and two technology transfer partners (Mologic & bioMérieux).

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